



Centre for  
Homelessness Impact



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# Public perceptions of homelessness

Georgia Lowe



January 2023

## About the Centre for Homelessness Impact

The Centre for Homelessness Impact champions the creation and use of better evidence for a world without homelessness. Our mission is to improve the lives of those experiencing homelessness by ensuring that policy, practice and funding decisions are underpinned by reliable evidence.

## About the author

Georgia Lowe is senior research executive at Ipsos

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### Person-first language

This report uses person-first language, putting a person before their circumstances. This is to avoid defining an individual by homelessness, which should be a temporary experience.

Centre for Homelessness Impact

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# Foreword

Much evidence exists of the strong role that perception can play in shaping reality. Unconscious forces and biases can shape the way we see things and these, in turn, shape judgements and decisions we make. This matters not just in social science but policy development, where decision-makers come to a view based both on their own perceptions of an issue and by taking into account public opinion.

With a societal challenge such as ending homelessness, therefore, how the issue is perceived matters a great deal. For this reason we have worked with Ipsos to produce an annual, in-depth survey of public perceptions of homelessness.

This year's poll feels important for two reasons. First, this is our third such survey. Three years of data means that we are now at the stage when we have not just snapshots of public perceptions of homelessness but an evidence base that allows us to track any changes in opinion over time. We use many repeat questions for this purpose and the results will grow in significance with each successive survey.

Second, fieldwork for this poll was conducted in the midst of a cost of living crisis in which millions of United Kingdom citizens faced financial pressure from double-digit inflation, especially in the costs of energy, fuel and food. These pressures especially affect people on low incomes who spend a much higher proportion of their earnings or benefits on such items.

One of the stand-out features of our findings is their consistency. Our most recent survey found that 84% of people view homelessness as a very or fairly serious problem, compared with 83% and 86% in the previous two years. Half of people (49%) say that people who are impacted by homelessness are in that situation due to circumstances beyond their control (46% in 2021 and 52% in 2020) while just 20% believe homelessness to be the result of bad choices made by the individuals themselves (24% in 2021 and 17% in 2020). And fewer people think homelessness is an inevitable feature of our society: 45% say homelessness will always happen, down from 47% the previous year and 50% two years earlier.

Other findings are cause for concern: 74% believe homelessness is likely to increase in the next 12 months, up sharply from a year earlier when 62% predicted a rise in homelessness. We have seen two consecutive falls in the share of people who say decisions about homelessness should be made based mostly on evidence of what works: 57%, down from 61% in 2021 and from 65% in 2020. Evidence-based decision making is still the approach that commands most public support, but this downward trend is disappointing.

Of greatest concern are the continuing misconceptions highlighted by our surveys. Asked about the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness, the average answer was that 53% are living with a drug or alcohol dependency. The actual figures are between 5% and 7%. Another mean answer was that 34% are immigrants to this country, which is more than twice the figure (14%) of people from outside the UK who apply for homeless assistance from a local authority. And people massively overestimate the scale of UK homelessness. On average, people estimate that 21% of adults are currently experiencing homelessness, although this is skewed by some very high answers; the actual figure is around 0.5% of the population.

To solve a problem we must first understand it. We must then build support for action that the evidence suggests will have the most impact. Our latest survey shows we have much work still to do.



Dr Lúgia Teixeira is Chief Executive of the Centre for Homelessness Impact



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# 1. Executive summary

Ipsos conducted an online survey for the Centre for Homelessness Impact at the end of 2020 - the first year of the corona virus pandemic - and repeated this in 2021 and 2022. Survey research reflected the Centre's interest in better understanding the public's knowledge and attitudes on the issue of homelessness, and the perceived difference evidence and policy can make. The 2021 survey involved a representative sample of 2,152 UK adults aged 16-75. It was conducted between 25th November – 6th December 2022 (the 2020 survey was conducted during November and December). It used 'booster' sampling to increase the number of survey respondents in Wales (to a total of 496), Scotland (545) and Northern Ireland (193) to improve our ability to make comparisons. Data was weighted to the known population profile at the UK level.

As was the case in previous years, homelessness is perceived as a serious problem and one that is likely to get worse, although people are less likely to think it is a problem in their local area (46%) than nationally (82%). More than twice (52%) the proportion who think it affects the whole of society, rather than just those who experience it (20%).

There continue to be misconceptions regarding the demographic profile of people who are experiencing homelessness particularly an overestimation of the proportion who have been in care. Although most people feel homelessness is driven by factors outside individual's control, not bad life choices, alcohol and drug dependency are considered to be the main causes of homelessness and to a degree that is higher than true figures nationally.

The public are supportive of several policies designed to address homelessness, particularly those that involve the provision of housing and training opportunities. One-off payments and increases in benefits are relatively unpopular policies, although they still receive more support and opposition.

Evidence is the preferred source for deciding what to do about homelessness, particularly evidence of what has worked in the UK. As in previous surveys, the public place weight on the opinions of those who have experienced homelessness themselves, while public opinion is considered the least important of the sources asked about. Many more - 57% think decisions on homelessness should be made based on evidence, rather than what people think is the right thing to do - 12%.

The effect of the cost-of-living crisis has not affected most trends. The exception is that a considerably higher proportion more expect homelessness to rise in the UK in the next 12 months (74%) than was the case last year (61%). The cost of living is considered to be a serious problem, and around half of young people, renters and those with mortgages are concerned about their ability to pay their housing costs in 12 months' time report experiencing mental health problems - an increase in stress levels, worries or anxiety - as a consequence of concerns about the cost of housing

# 2. Survey findings

## 2.1 Public perceptions of homelessness

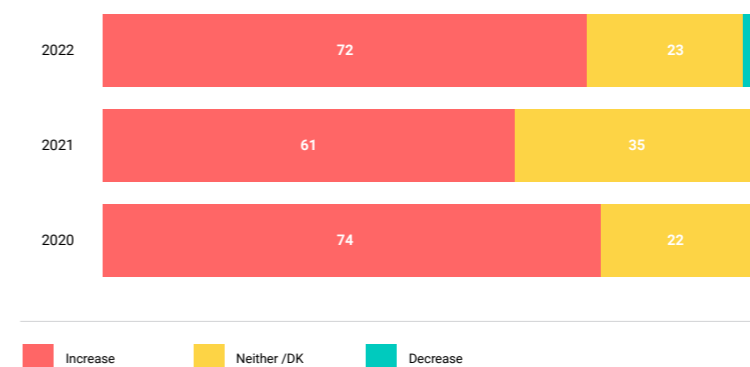
Homelessness continues to be seen as a serious problem in the UK, with 84% considering it a serious problem. 36% consider it a very serious problem, which represents a fall since 2021 (39%) and a 11-point reduction since 2020 (when it was 47%). From another list of interventions that focussed more on employment matters, support for training for people who are homeless and in work received very high support, with 74%, as did providing paid jobs for people who are homeless. Providing unpaid work was one of the least popular options, with 42% supporting this and 21% opposing, alongside providing one-off payments to those at risk of homelessness which was supported by 41% and opposed by 23%. Interestingly, despite support for the provision of affordable housing elsewhere, the concept of providing accommodation to those who are homeless without conditions attached was 49% in support versus 21% opposed.

While 84% consider it a serious problem in cities, this falls to 43% in rural areas, and only 46% consider it a serious problem in the area where they live (with 15-20 minutes' walk).

Two new options were asked about for comparison this year – Cost of living, and the number of migrants coming to live in the UK. The former was considered a serious problem by 94% and a very serious problem by 72%, and only 'not at all a problem' by 10%. In comparison, migration was considered a serious problem by 64% and considered not a problem at all by 10%.

72% think homelessness will increase in the next 12 months in the UK, and the same proportion for the next two years. This represents an increase from 2021, when 61% expected homelessness to increase in the next 12 months and 62% in the next 2 years. Currently, only 5% expect a decrease in homelessness in the next 2 years in the UK. The picture is similar within the nations of the UK - 74% expect an increase in the next 12 months in the nation where they live. This is highest among those in Wales and Northern Ireland (both 79%)

Figure 1 Homelessness increase or decrease in next 12 months - UK



Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults, 25th November – 6th December 2022; 2,180 UK adults, 10th – 16th December 2021; 2,179 UK adults, 25th November – 2nd December 2020.

## 2.2 Public perceptions of those experiencing homelessness

**On average, the public think that 21% of adults are currently homeless in the UK – however as in previous years, this is skewed by some very high answers at the upper end of the scale. 58% answered 10 or less, with 20% answering 0%. Younger people gave significantly higher estimates than older people, with the mean decreasing from 32% among 16-24s to 14% among 55–75-year-olds. Based on the available data, estimates of how many people are homeless on a given night in the UK range from 200,000-280,0000 people, around 0.5% of the population.<sup>1</sup>**

The mean estimate for the proportion of adults living in poverty in the UK was 37%, which, is much higher than estimates of 22% overall<sup>2</sup>, instead falling closer to the estimate of 40% for poverty among workless working-age families<sup>3</sup>.

Findings from the survey helps us to understand the public’s perception about who is experiencing homelessness, what they think their characteristics are likely to be, something we can compare with objective measurements where these are available ;we have therefore used two benchmarks - one of people experiencing street homelessness (CHAIN data for London) and one of people approaching their local authority for support with their housing situation (i.e., DLUHC’s statutory homelessness ‘live tables’).

Neither dataset is perfect. CHAIN data is London-specific and only covers street homelessness, which accounts for a minority of all homelessness, while DLUHC does not split all demographic data that we are interested in. Although figures are not perfect, they offer us a point of comparison so we can begin to understand the accuracy of perceptions and whether these perceptions are more aligned with visible types of street homelessness (CHAIN data) or a broader group of people experiencing homelessness (DLUHC’s statutory homelessness ‘live tables’).

- The public think that homelessness is slightly more common amongst men. The perception that 57% are men is close to the figure of 67% of all households with a single adult that have been assessed for homelessness in England,<sup>4</sup> and lower than the 84% according to CHAIN’s assessment of rough sleepers.<sup>5</sup>
- The public estimates that 46% of people who experience homelessness are under the age of 35, which is very close to the 50% of homelessness applications that come

<sup>1</sup> Crisis and Heriot Watt University published research estimating that 202,000 people experienced homelessness on any given night in 2020 although estimates published by Shelter are higher (around 280,000 people in 2019); see <https://www.crisis.org.uk/about-us/the-crisis-blog/how-many-people-are-homeless-in-england-on-any-given-night/> and [https://england.shelter.org.uk/media/press\\_release/280,000\\_people\\_in\\_england\\_are\\_homeless,\\_with\\_thousands\\_more\\_at\\_risk](https://england.shelter.org.uk/media/press_release/280,000_people_in_england_are_homeless,_with_thousands_more_at_risk)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2022>

<sup>3</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>

<sup>4</sup> Data based on homelessness applications for England April 2021-March 2022: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1105577/Annual\\_Statutory\\_Homelessness\\_release\\_2021-22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105577/Annual_Statutory_Homelessness_release_2021-22.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> See <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

from adults under 35 years old,<sup>6</sup> but higher than CHAIN’s 36% aged 18-35.<sup>7</sup>

- The public think that a third (34%) of people who experience homelessness are immigrants to the UK. This is far from the 14% of homelessness applications from adults born outside the UK<sup>8</sup>, but closer to 43% from CHAIN who are nationals of other countries.<sup>9</sup>
- They estimate that 27% of people who experience homelessness in the UK are employed, which compares with 24% of homelessness applications, including both part-time and full-time employment.<sup>10</sup>
- The public overestimate the proportion of people who experience homelessness who have an alcohol or drug dependency. The mean estimate given was a half (53%), which closely correlates with CHAIN data (51% of those assessed ).<sup>11</sup>
- The public estimates that 41% of people who experience homelessness have been in foster care when they were children, which is an overestimation. Of single homelessness applicants, this is put at 4%, and CHAIN data puts this at 9%.
- 51% were estimated to have grown up in poverty.
- 31% were estimated to have dependent children who were also homeless. This compares to 42% of applicants threatened with homelessness and 25% of homeless applicants.<sup>12</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Data based on homelessness applications for England April 2021-March 2022: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1105577/Annual\\_Statutory\\_Homelessness\\_release\\_2021-22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105577/Annual_Statutory_Homelessness_release_2021-22.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>8</sup> Data based on homelessness applications for England April 2021-March 2022: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1105577/Annual\\_Statutory\\_Homelessness\\_release\\_2021-22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105577/Annual_Statutory_Homelessness_release_2021-22.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> See <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>10</sup> Data based on homelessness applications for England April 2021-March 2022: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1105577/Annual\\_Statutory\\_Homelessness\\_release\\_2021-22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105577/Annual_Statutory_Homelessness_release_2021-22.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> See <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports> The 51% relates those who have one or both of alcohol and drugs support needs. Over 1 in 4 did not have needs assessed. Therefore proportion is likely to be an overestimate of the actual proportion who have support needs related to alcohol and drugs use among all people experiencing street homelessness.

<sup>12</sup> Data based on homelessness applications for England April 2021-March 2022: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1105577/Annual\\_Statutory\\_Homelessness\\_release\\_2021-22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105577/Annual_Statutory_Homelessness_release_2021-22.pdf)

To further test knowledge about homelessness, respondents were also given a list of statements which they were asked to agree or disagree with. The public are most likely to correctly identify:

- People living on the streets are ten times more likely to die prematurely than those who aren't (78% get this right).
- More adults are experiencing homelessness in the UK compared to five years ago (70% get this right).
- About half of people experiencing homelessness have done so more than once in their lives (61% get this right).

As in previous years, people tend to underestimate 'hidden homelessness – most people think the statement "There are more adults experiencing street homelessness than 'hidden homelessness'" to be true - 50% - than know it is false - 21%.

### 2.3 What do people think are the causes of homelessness?

**Around half of the public agree that experiencing homelessness is a consequence outside of an individual's control (49%) – a view which is much more prevalent than homelessness being the result of making bad life choices (20%). . The most common perceived causes of homelessness from a list of 17 options were alcohol or drug problems (70%), mental or physical health problems (63%) and poverty (61%). Relationships breaking down (56%) and domestic abuse (54%) were also thought to be causes. The latter was mentioned by 44% of men, but 65% of women. Only 22% thought personal choice was a cause.**



**Among a list of 17 options provided, the most commonly perceived main causes of homelessness were:**

1. Alcohol or drug problems (47%)
2. Mental or physical health problems (34%)
3. Poverty (29%)

### Those least frequently identified as key causes were:

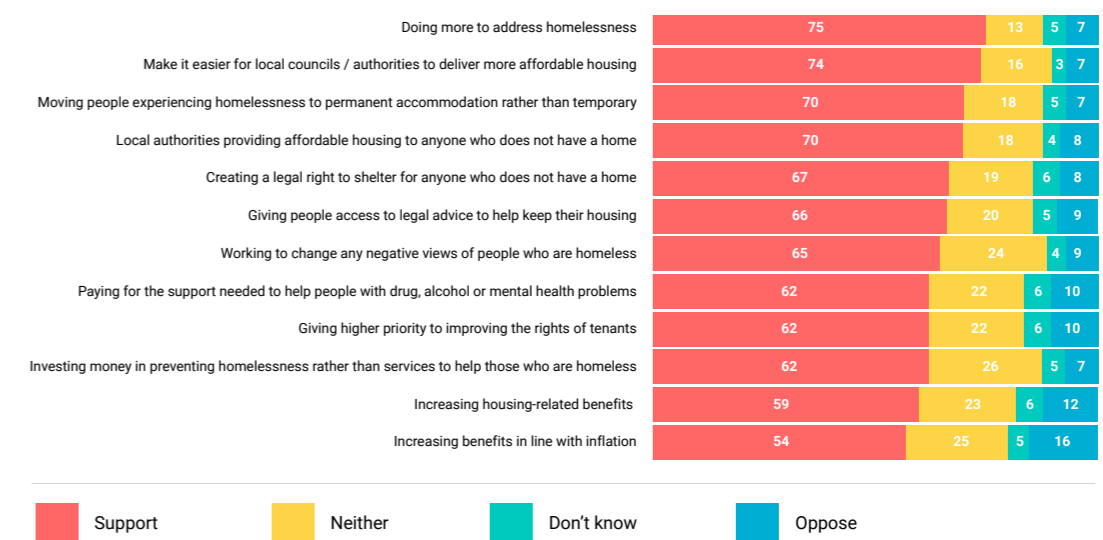
1. Discrimination (2%)
2. Lack of targeted evidence-based interventions to address the issue (3%).
3. Personal choice (4%)

Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 1,718 UK adults who answered multiple causes of homelessness, 25th November-6th December 2022

### 2.4 Addressing homelessness

Of 12 potential policy suggestions shown to respondents, all received support from a majority of people. The most popular was the general 'Doing more to address homelessness', but this was followed by several options related to housing provision – making it easier for local councils to deliver affordable housing on low incomes (74%), moving people experiencing homelessness to permanent accommodation (70%), and local authorities providing affordable housing to anyone who does not have a home (69%). The relatively less popular options related to benefit increases with the single least popular option being increasing benefits in line with inflation, supported by 54% but opposed by 16%, followed by increasing housing-related benefits, supported by 60% and opposed by 12%.

**Figure 2 Support / opposition to housing measures**



Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults, 25th November-6th December 2022



When asked which two or three of a list of 11 interventions should be highest priority the same preferences were evident; 14% selected supporting increasing these benefits in line with inflation, a lower proportion than the 27% who chose helping people who have nowhere to live when they leave hospital, prison or care. Providing emergency shelters and hostels and providing more support for people who are homeless to find a job and stay employed came second and third, with 25% selecting each of these as top priority.

The public continue to view evidence as important for deciding what to do about homelessness. When asked what should be most important when deciding what to do about homelessness and shown a list of options, evidence of what works in the UK came out on top, with 51% saying this, followed by the views of people affected by or at risk of homelessness, at 47%. There was a large gap between these and the third-place answer, evidence of what works in other countries (33%). Public opinion was chosen by 11% with a similar 12% saying the views of people making decisions should be important.

Among another list of interventions focussed more on employment and training for people who are homeless and in work received very high support, with 74%, as did providing paid jobs for people who are homeless. Providing unpaid work was one of the least popular options, with 42% supporting this and 21% opposing, alongside providing one-off payments to those at risk of homelessness which was supported by 41% and opposed by 23%. Despite support for the provision of affordable housing elsewhere, the concept of providing accommodation to those who are homeless without conditions attached was 49% in support versus 21% opposed.

Figure 3 Support / opposition to work or training measures



Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults, 25th November-6th December 2022

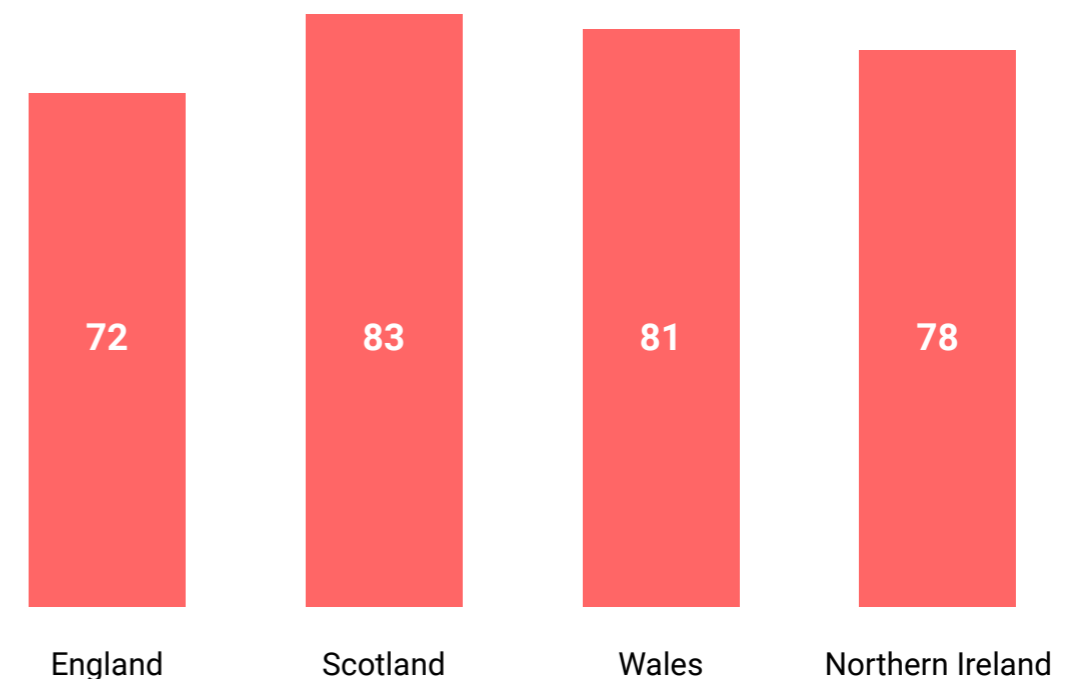
Respondents were then presented with the following statement:

Some people say that instead of aiming to 'end' homelessness, we should work to try to prevent it, so it happens as rarely as possible, and try to make sure that people aren't homeless for long, and don't become homeless again in future



Just under three-quarters - 73% - agree with this as an aim. Agreement increases with age, from 59% among 16-24-year-olds up to 82% among 55-75-year-olds. Support is especially high in Wales (83%) and Scotland (81%).

Figure 4 Agreement with CHI mission - % agree, 2022



Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults (England: 918, Scotland: 545, Wales: 496, Northern Ireland (193), 25th November-6th December 2022



## 2.5 Housing security

**One in 12, 8%, said they had personally experienced homelessness. Of those who had not, 8% thought it was likely they ever would, and the same proportion thought it was likely that they would within the next year. However, although there was little variation by age in the proportion who had personally been homeless, young people were much more likely to think it was likely they would become homeless in the next 12 months. 19% of those aged 16-24 thought this was likely, compared to just 2% among those aged 55-75.**

Among those with mortgages, 35% say they have seen an increase in its payments in the past 3 months and 3% had seen a decrease. Among renters, this was 36%, but it is higher among social renters, at 41%. More than a third, 36%, of those with a mortgage are concerned about their ability to pay it at the moment, and 49% are concerned about their ability to pay in 12 months' time, likely to be reflecting concerns about future movements of Bank of England base rate rises and associated mortgage rates. Just under half of renters are concerned - 48% are concerned about their ability to pay rent at the moment, and 52% about their ability to pay rent in 12 months' time. Lower rates of outright ownership and higher rates of renting contribute to nearly half of 16-34-year-olds (49%) being concerned about their ability to pay the rent or mortgage in 12 months' time.

All of this has an impact on people's mental health. When asked whether concerns about the cost of their housing affected their mental health - defined as their stress levels, worries or anxiety - 46% say that it has affected them a great deal or a fair amount. The equivalent is 62% among those aged 16-34 and decreases with age and propensity to own property outright. Concerns is highest among those who claimed to have experienced homelessness themselves, at 73%.

## 2.6 Key trends – 2022 versus 2020-2021

There have been few shifts in perceptions between the 2021 and 2022 surveys (both conducted during winter periods). Public perceptions have remained broadly similar during 2020, the 2021 and 2022 - each survey was conducted during winter but with different backdrops in terms of public concerns about Corona virus and the cost of living. . Table 3 summarises results across a selection of replicable questions.

**For the most part, the public continue to:**

- see homelessness as a serious issue
- expect levels of homelessness to increase
- think that alcohol and drug dependency and mental or physical health problems are the main causes of why people are homeless
- support policies to alleviate homelessness, particularly those involving employment and training

After a decrease in sympathy for homeless people between 2020 and 2021, results in 2022 show a partial movement back towards sentiment recorded in 2020.

Homelessness is still seen as a serious problem – by 84% in 2022 compared to 83% in 2021 and 86% in 2020. Currently, 47% think homelessness should be given top priority, as opposed to other problems being more important, unchanged from the previous two years, despite the onset of cost-of-living crisis which is regarded as a serious problem by 94%, and a very serious problem by 72%.

After a fall in 2021 who thought homelessness would increase in the next 12 months, the trend has reversed, and 2022 numbers are back at 2020 levels. Seven in ten, 72%, think that homeless will increase in the UK in the next 12 months, compared with six in ten, 61%, who thought this in 2021. A similar pattern is evident in terms of the proportion who think this for the country they live in, 74% predict a rise in the next 12 months, up from 61% in 2021.

Fewer agree that alcohol or drug problems are a cause of homelessness than have given this answer previously (70%, down from 74% last year and 81% the year before). Mental or physical health problems has not seen such a decrease, but poverty also has (at 61%, down from 68% in 2021 and 70% in 2020) The number that agree that the negative view of people who are homeless 'is fair' has returned to its 2020 figure of 20%, from a high of 25% in 2021 – 51% now disagree with this.



Levels of support for government policies are typically within one or two percentage points of those in 2021. However, these small changes follow larger one between 2020 and 2021. While the vast majority continue to support doing more to address the issue of homelessness, this has decreased from 79% in 2020 to 74% in 2021 and support for increasing housing-related benefits to help those who need it to afford somewhere to live, has dropped by eight percentage points from 66% in 2020 to 60% in 2021. The proportion who support creating a legal right to shelter for the homeless decreased from 73% in 2020 to 67% this year.

**Table 3: Trends from 2020 to 2022 (selection of questions)**

	2020	2021	2022
	n2180	n2179	n2152
<b>Q2 Here is a list of issues facing the country these days. Please indicate how serious a problem, if at all, you think each one is? ... Homelessness</b>			
% very/fairly serious problem	86	83	84
% not a very serious problem/not a problem at all	12	14	12
<b>Q3 ... England, Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland</b>			
% very/fairly serious problem	83	79	80
% not a very serious problem/not a problem at all	14	17	15
<b>Q3 ... the area where you live – that is within about 15-20 minutes' walk away</b>			
% very/fairly serious problem	44	46	46
% not a very serious problem/not a problem at all	51	48	48
<b>Q5 England, Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland ... do you think homelessness will increase or decrease or stay the same ... in the next 12 months?</b>			
Increase	74	62	74
Decrease	4	5	5
<b>Q19 (1) Please read the following pairs of statements about homelessness and decide which comes closest to your own opinion</b>			
A: "Decisions about homelessness should be made based mostly on evidence of what works"	65	61	57
B: "Decisions about homelessness should be made based mostly on what people think is the right thing to do"	10	14	12

	2020	2021	2022
	n2180	n2179	n2152
<b>Q19(2)</b>			
A: "Most people who are homeless have probably made bad choices in life which has put them in that situation"	17	24	20
B: "Most people who are homeless are probably in that situation because of things outside of their control"	52	46	49
<b>Q21 (3)</b>			
A: "Homelessness is a major problem and needs to be given top priority"	46	48	47
B: "There are other more important problems than homelessness so it shouldn't be given top priority"	20	19	18
<b>Q21 (4)</b>			
A: "Homelessness only really affects those people who experience it"	20	25	20
B: "Homelessness doesn't just affect the people experiencing it, it affects the whole of society"	56	49	52

Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults (England - 918, Wales - 496), Scotland - 545 and Northern Ireland - 196), 25 November – 6 December 2022

# Appendices

## Appendix A – Sample profile

### Weighted and unweighted sample profile

Population group	Sample size (unweighted)	Unweighted %	Weighted %
UK adults aged 16-75	2,152	100	100
England	918	43	84
Scotland	545	25	8
Wales	496	23	5
Northern Ireland	193	9	3
Male	992	46	49
Female	1,149	53	50
16-24	248	12	15
25-34	314	15	18
35-44	347	16	17
45-54	372	17	18
55-75	871	40	32
Working full-time/ part-time	1,344	62	63
Not working	808	38	37

Source: Ipsos/Centre for Homelessness Impact, 2,152 UK adults (online), 25 November – 6 December 2022

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding

\*indicates percentages of all those answering/data available

## Appendix B – Statistical reliability

It is important to note that, strictly speaking, confidence intervals relate only to samples that have been selected using strict probability sampling methods but, in practice, it is reasonable to assume that these calculations provide a good indication of the confidence intervals relating to this survey given the approach used.

The table below shows that we can expect an overall sampling tolerance (this refers to the upper and lower limit of error) of up to +/- 1.5 percentage points at the '95% confidence interval' for a 50% finding the survey overall.

### Survey sampling tolerances (rounded)

Size of sample on which survey result is based and approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels			
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
2,152 UK	1	2	2
918 England	2	3	3
545 Scotland	3	4	4
496 Wales	3	4	4
193 Northern Ireland	4	6	7

For example, with a sample size of 2,152 where 10% say that they have ever personally experienced homelessness, then the chances are 19 in 20 that the 'true' value (i.e., the one which would have been obtained if the whole UK population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of +1.8 percentage points from the survey result (i.e. between 11.8% and 8.2%).

The following table indicates the sampling tolerances when comparing different groups of participants (or the same group across different questions). If we once again assume a '95% confidence interval', the differences between the results of two separate groups must be greater than the values given in the following table in order to be deemed 'statistically significant':

**Survey sampling tolerances: sub-group level (rounded)**

Sample sizes and differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels			
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
918 vs. 545 (England vs. Scotland)	4	6	6

For example, if 30% of people in England give a particular answer compared with 36% of those in Scotland (assuming sample sizes in the table above), then the chances are 19 in 20 that this six-point difference is statistically significant.

## Ipsos's standards and accreditations

This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the following quality standards:



**ISO 20252**

This is the international market research specific standard that supersedes BS 7911/MRQSA and incorporates IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme). It covers the five stages of a Market Research project. Ipsos was the first company in the world to gain this accreditation.



**ISO 27001**

This is the international standard for information security designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls. Ipsos was the first research company in the UK to be awarded this in August 2008.



**ISO 9001**

This is the international general company standard with a focus on continual improvement through quality management systems. In 1994, we became one of the early adopters of the ISO 9001 business standard.



**Market Research Society (MRS) Company Partnership**

By being an MRS Company Partner, Ipsos endorses and supports the core MRS brand values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness, and commits to comply with the MRS Code of Conduct throughout the organisation.

**Data Protection Act 2018**

Ipsos is required to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. It covers the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy.



Centre for Homelessness Impact

[www.homelessnessimpact.org](http://www.homelessnessimpact.org)

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