

Rough sleeper estimates in Kent: Autumn 2024

This bulletin presents data from the Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot published on 27 February 2025 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC). This data will be updated in February 2026.

NOTE: within this bulletin “Kent” refers to the Kent County Council area which excludes Medway

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[Kent facts and figures](#)

The Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot Estimates are single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough in local authority areas between October 1st and November 30th in 2024.

Summary

- The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in Autumn 2024 in England was 4,667. This is up by 769 or 19.7% from the previous year.
- In Kent, the estimated number of rough sleepers was 139. This is up by 13 or 10.3% from the autumn 2023 figure of 126.
- The rate of rough sleeping per 10,000 households stands at 2.0 in Kent compared to 2.0 in the South East and 1.9 in England.
- Figures across the county range from 1 in Sevenoaks to 31 in Canterbury.
- In Kent it is estimated that of those sleeping rough, 77.7% were males, 61.9% were UK nationals and 79.1% were 26 or over.

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Introduction

This bulletin presents national summary statistics on rough sleeping from the Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC). It uses information collected by local authorities in England between 1 October and 30 November 2024. Since 2016, the release has included some basic demographic information about those people found sleeping rough, including gender, age, and nationality at local authority, regional, and national level.

The street counts, evidence-based estimates, and estimates informed by spotlight street counts aim to get as accurate a representation of the number of people sleeping rough as possible. This provides a way of estimating the number of people sleeping rough across England on a single night and assessing change over time.

Obtaining an accurate number of people sleeping rough within a local authority is inherently difficult given the hidden nature of rough sleeping. There are a range of factors that can impact on the number of people seen or thought to be sleeping rough on any given night. This includes the weather, where people choose to sleep, the date and time chosen, and the availability of alternatives such as night shelters.

The rough sleeping street counts and estimates are single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough in local authority areas. Based on what is most appropriate in their area, local authorities decide whether to conduct a street count of visible rough sleeping; an evidence-based estimate; or an estimate informed by a spotlight street count on the chosen night. All the available methods record only those people seen, or thought to be, sleeping rough on a single 'typical' night. They do not include everyone in an area with a history of sleeping rough, or everyone sleeping rough in areas across the October-November period.

People sleeping rough: are defined as follows for the purposes of rough sleeping street counts, evidence-based estimates, and estimates informed by a spotlight street count:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes" which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters, or travellers.

Bedded down: is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. **About to bed down** includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding.

Local authorities consult with local agencies who are in regular contact with people sleeping rough. This includes outreach teams, the police, health workers, voluntary organisations, and faith groups.

These annual rough sleeping statistics are now established as a consistent time series and provide a way of assessing change over the years. Their robustness is enhanced by the provision of detailed guidance to authorities on how to conduct counts and estimates; the involvement of local partner agencies; and the work of Homeless Link to verify all local counts and validate local estimates and demographic information.

Nevertheless, the figures in this release are subject to some uncertainty. In addition to the difficulty of finding everyone who is sleeping rough, several factors can affect the number of people who are sleeping rough on any given night, such as the availability of alternatives such as night shelters, the weather, where people choose to sleep, and the date and time chosen for the snapshot assessment.

Rough sleeping rates used in this bulletin are calculated using estimates of the number of households from the 2018 Sub-national Household Projections (SNHP) produced by the Office for National Statistics.

This release does not provide data on the definitive number of people or households affected by homelessness in England. This data is presented in a separate bulletin, [Homelessness in Kent](#).

Further information from the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) is available.

Rough sleeping in English Regions

The Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot shows that an estimated 4,667 people were sleeping rough in England on a single night in autumn 2024. This equates to 1.9 persons per 10,000 households and is an increase of 19.7% (769 people) since the previous year.

The London region had the highest number (1,318) and percentage accounting for 28.2% of the England total. The South East accounted for the next largest percentage of England's total rough sleepers with 17.0%.

The regions of London (3.6), the South West (2.1) and the South East (2.0) all had rough sleeping rates per 10,000 households higher than the national figure of 1.9.

The estimated number and rate per 10,000 households of rough sleepers in England and English regions is shown in table 1, along with the one-year and five-year change.

Table 1: Estimate of rough sleepers Autumn 2024: English Regions

Area	Rough sleeping number 2024	Rate per 10,000 households	1-year number change	1-year % change	5-year number change	5-year % change
England	4,667	1.9	769	19.7%	401	9.4%
North East	124	1.0	35	39.3%	57	85.1%
North West	367	1.1	-2	-0.5%	18	5.2%
Yorkshire & The Humber	385	1.6	115	42.6%	143	59.1%
East Midlands	393	1.9	106	36.9%	88	28.9%
West Midlands	346	1.4	90	35.2%	27	8.5%
East of England	412	1.5	75	22.3%	-46	-10.0%
London	1,318	3.6	186	16.4%	182	16.0%
South East	795	2.0	125	18.7%	-105	-11.7%
South West	527	2.1	39	8.0%	37	7.6%

Source: DLUHC; Rate calculated using ONS 2018 SNHP

Rough sleeping rates per 10,000 households in English regions over the last five years are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Rough sleeping rates per 10,000 households, 2020 to 2024

Area	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
England	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.9
North East	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.0
North West	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.1
Yorkshire & The Humber	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.6
East Midlands	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.4	1.9
West Midlands	0.9	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.4
East of England	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.5
London	2.0	1.8	2.4	3.1	3.6
South East	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.7	2.0
South West	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.1

Source: DLUHC; Rates calculated using ONS 2018 SNHP

When comparing Kent to the South East and England figures, Kent has a slightly higher rate of rough sleepers per 10,000 households than seen nationally and equal to the rate seen regionally.

The number and rate of rough sleepers over the last 5 years in Kent compared to the South East and England is shown in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Number of rough sleepers in Kent, the South East and England

Area	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
England	2,688	2,443	3,069	3,898	4,667
South East	474	445	572	670	795
Kent	101	70	80	126	139

Source: DLUHC

Table 4: Rate of rough sleepers (per 10,000 households) in Kent, the South East and England

Area	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
England	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.9
South East	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.7	2.0
Kent	1.5	1.0	1.2	1.8	2.0

Source: DLUHC; Rates calculated using ONS 2018 SNHP

Rough sleeping within Kent's local authority districts

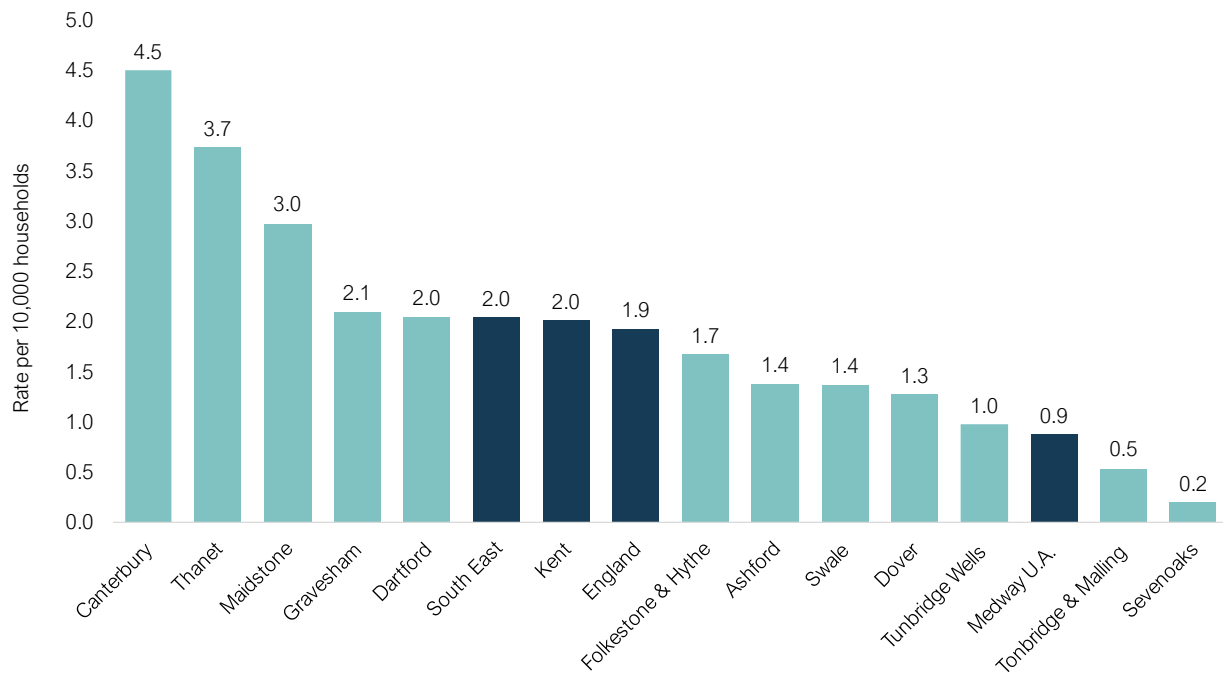
At local authority level the Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot estimates show that five local authorities had a higher rate of rough sleepers per 10,000 households than the national figure of 1.9. Canterbury had the highest number of people who were rough sleeping on a single night in autumn 2024. 31 people were sleeping rough equating to a rate of 4.5 per 10,000 households, the highest rate in Kent, and accounting for 22.3% of all rough sleepers in Kent.

Thanet (3.7) and Maidstone (3.0) also had high rates of rough sleepers per 10,000 households. Sevenoaks had the lowest number of people sleeping rough (one person).

Chart 1 shows the rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) in Kent districts compared to Kent, the South East and England in Autumn 2024.

Chart 1: Rate of rough sleepers per 10,000 households: 2024

2024 Rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) Kent local authorities, the South East & England



Source: DLUHC - Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities;
Presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 5 overleaf shows the estimated number of rough sleepers in Kent local authorities from 2014 to 2024, compared to Kent, Medway, the South East and England.

Table 6 shows the rough sleeping rate from 2014 to 2024.

The tables show that Canterbury consistently had the highest number and rate of rough sleepers between 2014 and 2024, except in 2017 when Thanet had the highest.

In 2018, Swale had a higher number of rough sleepers than usual (32) and had the highest rate (5.3). In 2020 both Canterbury and Thanet had 24 rough sleepers though Thanet had a slightly higher rate (3.7) than Canterbury (3.6).

Table 5: Estimate of rough sleepers in Kent by local authority: Autumn 2014 to Autumn 2024

Area	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Number of households in 2024 (000's)	2024 rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households)
Ashford	5	5	8	11	20	25	0	0	8	8	8	58	1.4
Canterbury	38	47	50	36	33	39	24	18	22	33	31	69	4.5
Dartford	19	10	9	9	12	13	4	6	4	3	10	49	2.0
Dover	4	9	9	13	20	9	7	5	6	9	7	55	1.3
Folkestone & Hythe	4	13	9	16	18	10	12	8	12	16	9	54	1.7
Gravesham	3	6	12	9	21	13	11	5	4	11	9	43	2.1
Maidstone	25	38	35	41	9	3	2	3	0	6	22	74	3.0
Sevenoaks	0	6	2	4	7	4	6	1	1	1	1	51	0.2
Swale	2	6	6	9	32	10	5	6	7	11	9	66	1.4
Thanet	15	17	33	46	23	17	24	14	14	23	25	67	3.7
Tonbridge & Malling	7	0	4	8	12	6	6	2	1	1	3	56	0.5
Tunbridge Wells	15	15	15	20	7	11	0	2	1	4	5	51	1.0
Kent	137	172	192	222	214	160	101	70	80	126	139	693	2.0
Medway U.A.	15	15	15	20	7	11	0	2	1	20	10	114	0.9
South East	152	187	207	242	221	171	101	72	81	146	149	807	1.8
England	609	827	956	1,119	934	900	474	445	572	670	795	3,912	2.0

Source: DLUHC

Table 6: Rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) in Kent by Local authority: Autumn 2014 to 2024

Area	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Ashford	1.0	1.0	1.6	2.1	3.8	4.6	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.4	1.4
Canterbury	6.0	7.4	7.7	5.5	5.0	5.9	3.6	2.7	3.2	4.8	4.5
Dartford	4.6	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.9	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.6	2.0
Dover	0.8	1.8	1.8	2.6	3.9	1.7	1.3	0.9	1.1	1.7	1.3
Folkestone & Hythe	0.8	2.7	1.8	3.2	3.5	1.9	2.3	1.5	2.3	3.0	1.7
Gravesham	0.7	1.4	2.8	2.1	5.0	3.1	2.6	1.2	0.9	2.6	2.1
Maidstone	3.8	5.7	5.2	6.0	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.8	3.0
Sevenoaks	0.0	1.2	0.4	0.8	1.4	0.8	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Swale	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.5	5.3	1.6	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.7	1.4
Thanet	2.5	2.7	5.3	7.3	3.6	2.7	3.7	2.2	2.1	3.5	3.7
Tonbridge & Malling	1.4	0.0	0.8	1.6	2.3	1.1	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.5
Tunbridge Wells	3.1	3.1	3.1	4.1	1.4	2.2	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.8	1.0
Kent	2.2	2.7	3.0	3.4	3.3	2.4	1.5	1.0	1.2	1.8	2.0
Medway U.A.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.8	0.6	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	1.8	0.9
South East	2.1	2.5	2.8	3.2	2.9	2.2	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.8	1.8
England	1.7	2.3	2.6	3.0	2.5	2.4	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.7	2.0

Source: DLUHC; Rates calculated using ONS 2018 SNHP

Demographics of rough sleepers in Kent

In Kent, 77.7% of rough sleepers were male (108) while 15.1% were female (21). The autumn 2024 figures show that there were more male rough sleepers than female in all Kent districts although the proportion varies across the local authorities from 100% in Dartford and Sevenoaks, to 56.0% in Thanet.

Table 7: Estimate of rough sleepers by gender: Autumn 2024

Area	Number Male	Number Female	Number Unknown	% Male	% Female	% Unknown
Ashford	7	1	0	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%
Canterbury	27	4	0	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%
Dartford	10	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dover	6	1	0	85.7%	14.3%	0.0%
Folkestone & Hythe	7	0	2	77.8%	0.0%	22.2%
Gravesham	8	1	0	88.9%	11.1%	0.0%
Maidstone	16	6	0	72.7%	27.3%	0.0%
Sevenoaks	1	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Swale	6	1	2	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%
Thanet	14	5	6	56.0%	20.0%	24.0%
Tonbridge & Malling	2	1	0	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
Tunbridge Wells	4	1	0	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Kent	108	21	10	77.7%	15.1%	7.2%
Medway U.A.	7	3	0	70.0%	30.0%	0.0%
South East	663	118	14	83.4%	14.8%	1.8%
England	3,858	680	129	82.7%	14.6%	2.8%

Source: DLUHC

In Kent there were no people aged under 18 sleeping rough.

The majority of rough sleepers in Kent were aged 26 and over (79.1% or 110 rough sleepers). There were 12 rough sleepers aged 18 to 25 and these were recorded in Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Folkestone & Hythe, Gravesham, Maidstone, Swale and Thanet.

12.2% of rough sleepers in Kent were of unknown age.

Table 8 shows the number and proportion of rough sleepers in Kent local authorities by age.

Table 8: Estimate of rough sleepers by age: Autumn 2024

Area	Number 18 - 25	Number 26 and over	Number Age Not known	% 18 - 25	% 26 and over	% Not known
Ashford	1	6	1	12.5%	75.0%	12.5%
Canterbury	1	28	2	3.2%	90.3%	6.5%
Dartford	1	9	0	10.0%	90.0%	0.0%
Dover	0	7	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Folkestone & Hythe	1	6	2	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%
Gravesham	2	7	0	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%
Maidstone	3	19	0	13.6%	86.4%	0.0%
Sevenoaks	0	0	1	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Swale	2	7	0	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%
Thanet	1	13	11	4.0%	52.0%	44.0%
Tonbridge & Malling	0	3	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Tunbridge Wells	0	5	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Kent	12	110	17	8.6%	79.1%	12.2%
Medway U.A.	0	10	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
South East	52	700	43	6.5%	88.1%	5.4%
England	227	4,019	420	4.9%	86.1%	9.0%

Source: DLUHC

Tables 9 and 10 overleaf show the estimated number and proportion of rough sleepers in Kent local authorities by broad nationality.

Almost two thirds of rough sleepers in Kent were UK nationals (61.9%), 13.7% were EU (Non-UK) nationals and 12.2% were Non-EU nationals.

All Kent districts had rough sleepers that were UK nationals except Sevenoaks where the only rough sleeper's nationality was not known.

Table 9: Estimate of rough sleepers by nationality: Autumn 2024

Area	UK	EU (Non-UK)	Non-EU	Not known
Ashford	7	1	0	0
Canterbury	23	4	1	3
Dartford	3	4	3	0
Dover	3	0	4	0
Folkestone & Hythe	6	0	1	2
Gravesham	3	3	3	0
Maidstone	17	2	3	0
Sevenoaks	0	0	0	1
Swale	6	2	1	0
Thanet	11	3	0	11
Tonbridge & Malling	3	0	0	0
Tunbridge Wells	4	0	1	0
Kent	86	19	17	17
Medway U.A.	7	1	1	1
South East	514	145	89	47
England	2,956	765	495	451

Source: DLUHC

Table 10: Proportion of rough sleepers by nationality: Autumn 2024

Area	UK	EU (Non-UK)	Non-EU	Not known
Ashford	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Canterbury	74.2%	12.9%	3.2%	9.7%
Dartford	30.0%	40.0%	30.0%	0.0%
Dover	42.9%	0.0%	57.1%	0.0%
Folkestone & Hythe	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%
Gravesham	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Maidstone	77.3%	9.1%	13.6%	0.0%
Sevenoaks	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Swale	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
Thanet	44.0%	12.0%	0.0%	44.0%
Tonbridge & Malling	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tunbridge Wells	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Kent	61.9%	13.7%	12.2%	12.2%
Medway U.A.	70.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
South East	64.7%	18.2%	11.2%	5.9%
England	63.3%	16.4%	10.6%	9.7%

Source: DLUHC

Related documents

Further information related to rough sleeping can be found via the following links.

The [Deprivation & Poverty](#) webpage contains further information on homelessness.

Topics include: -

- Indices of Deprivation
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Unemployment and benefits

The [Housing Statistics](#) webpage contains more information on housing.

Topics include: -

- New housing
- House and land prices
- Housing stock