



# Rough Sleeping in Westminster- Evidence Base

Evaluation and Performance Team, Policy,  
Performance and Communications

Appendix 3



ASPIRATION

CHOICE

HERITAGE

# Summary of Findings

## Who?

- Embedded long term rough sleepers tend to be UK and Irish nationals
- 33% Increase in rough sleeping across London
- Significant increase in foreign national rough sleepers – 61% of rough sleepers in Westminster were foreign nationals in the November 2015 street counts.
- Due to the hidden nature of rough sleeping, it is difficult to count exact numbers but 2,570 individual rough sleepers were recorded in Westminster in 2014 - 2015

## Where?

- The top clusters for rough sleeping in the borough are within St. James Ward (from Trafalgar Square through Covent Garden, the Strand ending in Aldwych), in the West End (mainly along Oxford and Regent streets). Clusters also appear in Victoria around Victoria train and coach stations and along Marylebone Road on the southern outskirts of Regent's Park and where Edgware Road meets Marylebone flyover
- The majority of rough sleeping tends to take place in business areas, tourist hot spots and Westminster stress areas
- Begging clusters overlap with rough sleeping clusters in the borough

## Impacts

- There are a number of impacts in the borough, including to the rough sleepers themselves, residents, businesses and visitors
- The top referrers of rough sleepers are members of the public
- 20% of residents in the 2015 City Survey said that homelessness/ begging on the streets is a problem

## Costs

- 42% of assessed rough sleepers had one or more support needs in 2014/15
- Estimates were made about the costs of different types of rough sleepers to multiple services over a number of years - with more significant costs to services the more long term the rough sleeper

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# Our Research Questions

- **Who is sleeping rough in Westminster?**
- **Where do people sleep rough in Westminster?**
- **Are there any seasonal trends?**
- **Who is affected by rough sleeping and what is the impact on their lives/ livelihoods?**
- **What is the cost of rough sleeping to services?**
- **What impact does rough sleeping have on residents, businesses and visitors?**

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# What do we mean by rough sleeping?

## **Rough Sleeping is:**

People sleeping or bedding down in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation such as car parks.

## **Homelessness is:**

A broad term, but generally used to depict the condition of people without a regular dwelling. People who are **homeless** are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing, or lack fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. Under the law, even if someone has a roof over their head they can still be homeless because they may not have the right to stay where they live or their home may be unsuitable to live in.

## **Begging is:**

Begging is the solicitation of money or food. Beggars may be found in public places such as transport routes, urban parks, and near busy markets.

# Two Data Sources

There is no single data source that can be used to count rough sleeping in Westminster- two main data sources were used to build the evidence base:

## CHAIN Data

- CHAIN is the Combined Homelessness and Information Network
- It is a multi-agency database, recording information collected by outreach teams in London about people seen sleeping rough.
- CHAIN was created to capture information and track the needs of embedded Rough Sleepers and is useful for capturing information about the embedded cohort of rough sleepers.

## Westminster Street Counts

- A count is a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in local authority areas on a single night within each quarter.
- Counts are carried out with an independent verifier present to ensure high data quality
- Counts are useful in capturing changes to the population, location of rough sleepers and nationality information which is not easily recorded on CHAIN.



**EVIDENCE  
BASE**

Police data can sometimes enable us to understand information about people who will not give details to an outreach worker.

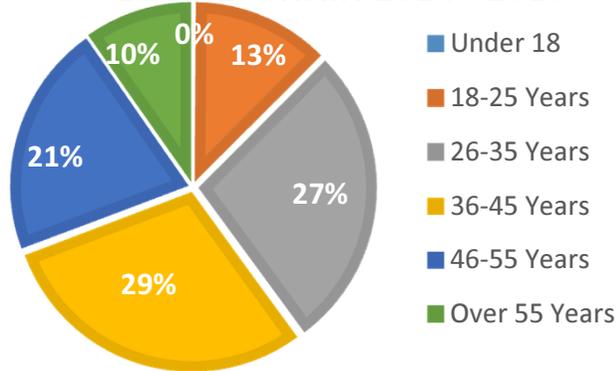
## Counting rough sleepers is not straightforward

	CHAIN Data		Rough Sleeper Street Counts
✓	Comprehensive high quality data from across London	✓	Counts all individuals seen bedded down
✓	Data captured on a daily basis	✓	Independent verifier present at the counts
✓	Personal data is taken and stored on the database	✓	Police presence encourages rough sleepers to provide their details
✓	Avoids double counting individuals seen more than once	✗	Counts carried out sporadically (3-5 times per year)
✗	Rough sleepers who refuse to give details cannot be counted		

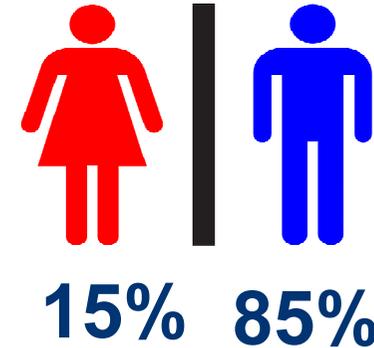
Each data set has its limitations, however together, they provide a more complete picture of rough sleeping in the borough than either would in isolation.

# Who are the rough sleepers in Westminster?

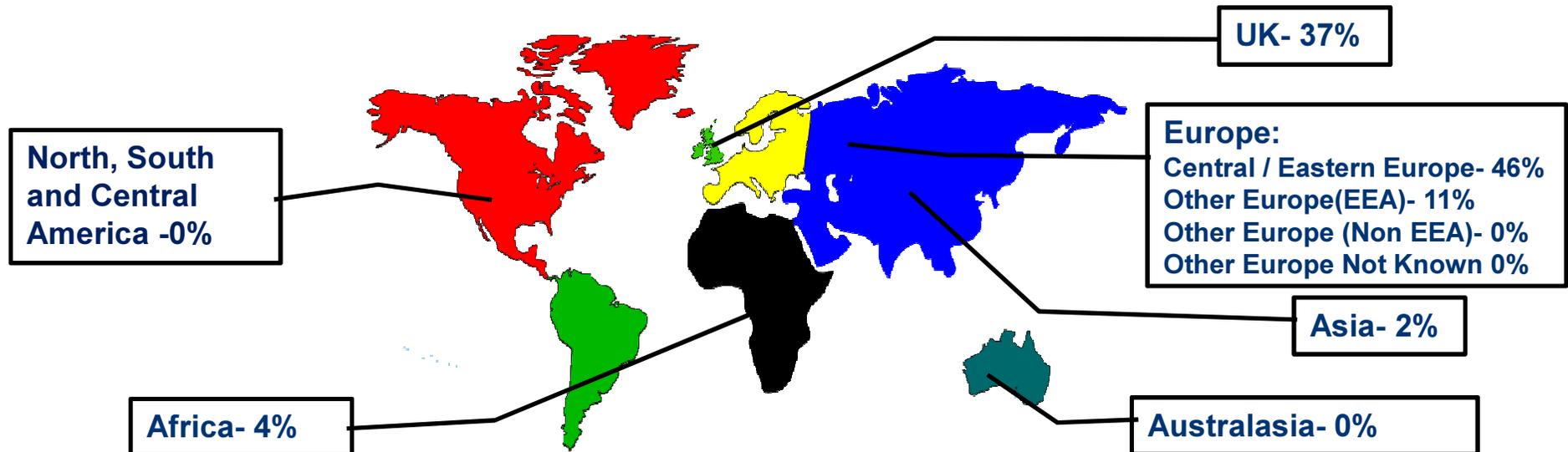
**ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY AGE- CHAIN 2014 - 2015**



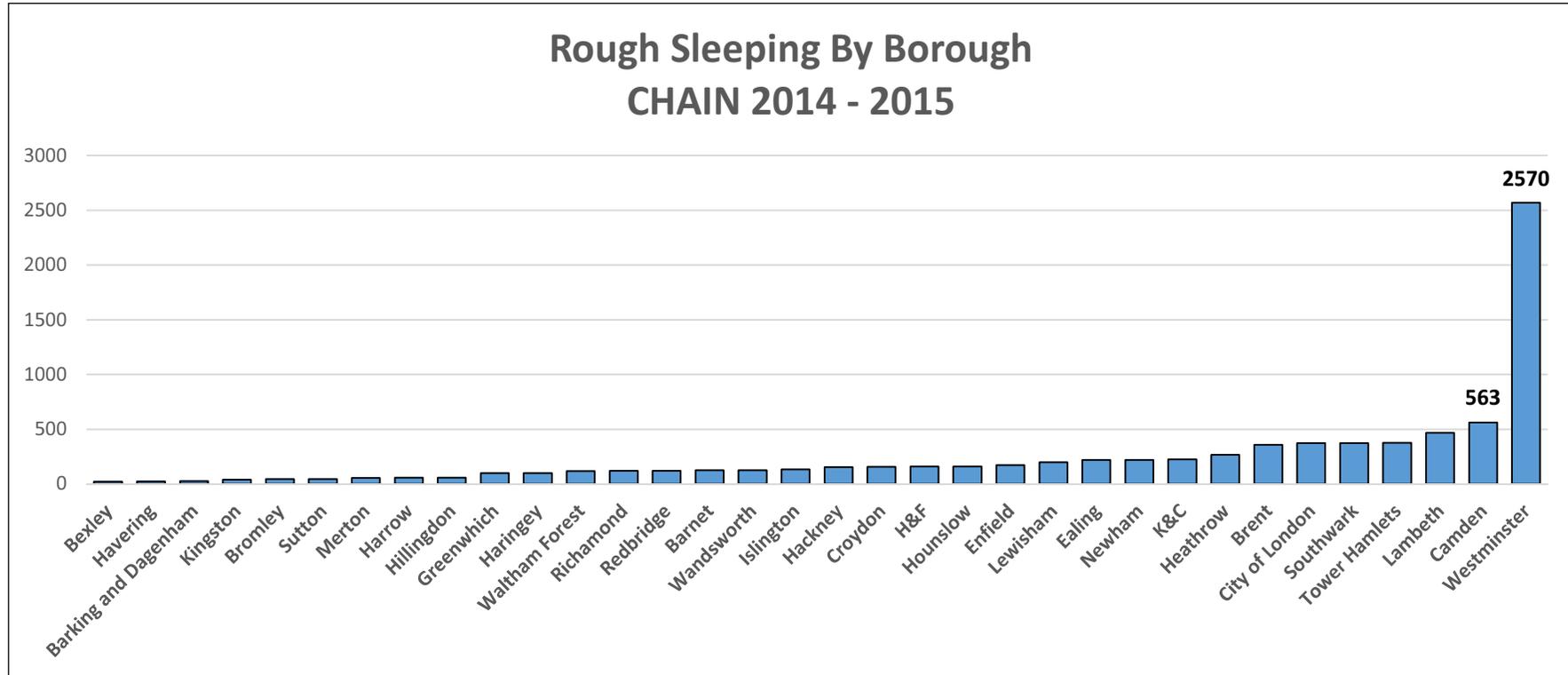
**ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY GENDER - CHAIN 2014 - 2015**



**ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY NATIONALITY - CHAIN 2014 - 2015**



# Westminster has more than 4x the number of rough sleepers than Camden

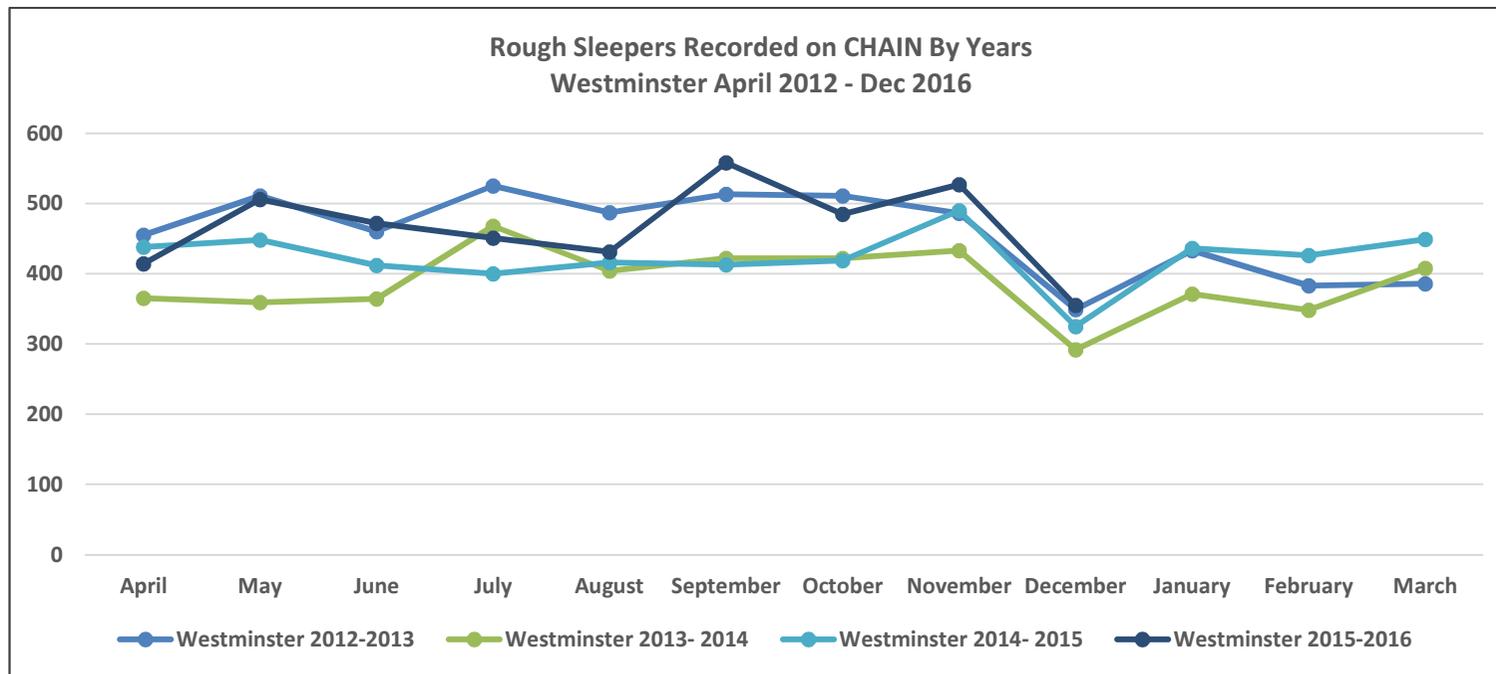


Westminster has more rough sleepers than any other London Borough; 31% of London’s rough sleepers were seen in Westminster and there were more than four times the number of rough sleepers in Westminster than in Camden.

**Note:**

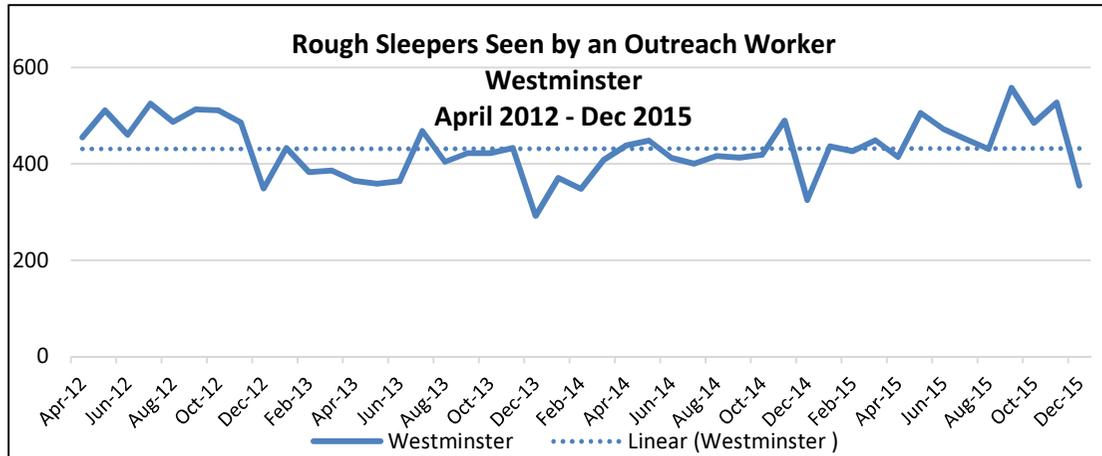
Some rough sleepers may have been double counted due to movement across boroughs.

# Rough sleeping follows a similar trend every year in Westminster



The winter months have lower rough sleeper numbers than any other time of the year. This reduction is likely to be linked to the additional rough sleeping provision in December in the form of winter shelters resulting in fewer rough sleepers on the streets.

# Westminster rough sleeper counts show a rise but CHAIN shows static numbers



This chart shows the number of unique individuals recorded by the outreach workers in the CHAIN database and acts as an initial gauge of the caseloads of outreach teams. In isolation, the CHAIN line chart only illustrates part of the picture as it suggests that rough sleeping has remained relatively stable over the years.

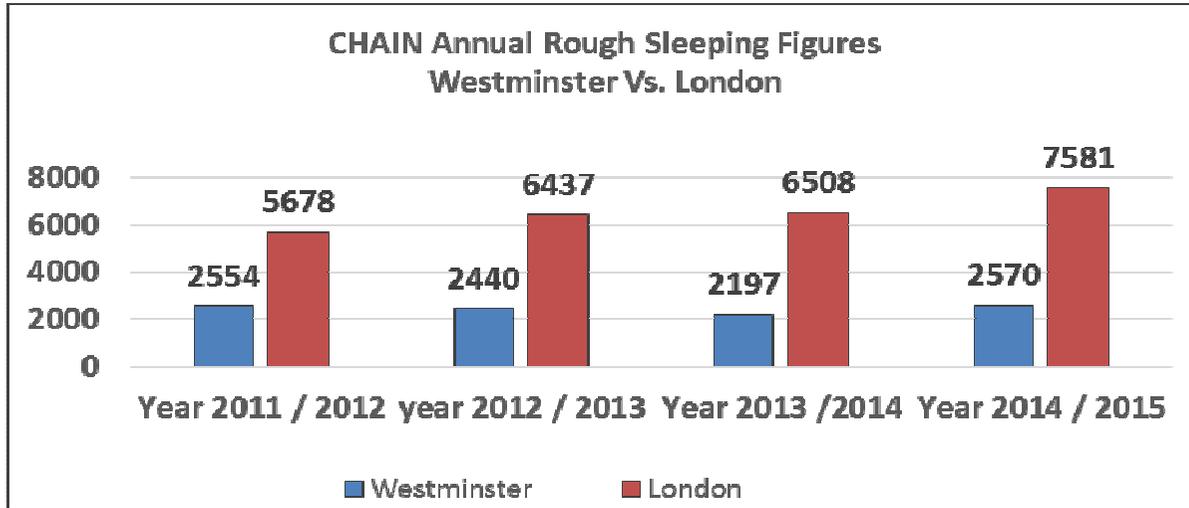
Month and Year	Foreign Nationals Count	UK & Ireland	Total Rough Sleeping Count
21 <sup>st</sup> Mar-12	29	83	112
26 <sup>th</sup> Sep-12	23	78	101
29 <sup>th</sup> Nov-12	34	97	131
28 <sup>th</sup> Mar-13	37	89	126
20 <sup>th</sup> Nov-13	52	94	146
9 <sup>th</sup> Apr-14	75	82	157
<b>26<sup>th</sup> Nov-14</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>265</b>
18 <sup>th</sup> Feb-15	101	67	168
28 <sup>th</sup> May-15	150	77	266
24 <sup>th</sup> Sep-15	181	85	294
26 <sup>th</sup> Nov-15	151	95	265
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb-16	214	86	328

Westminster counts data (the number of individuals counted on one night within a month) shows that rough sleeping has increased by 136% (when March 2012 counts are compared to November 2015 counts). Further investigation of the counts data shows that the UK & Irish nationals counts have remained fairly consistent, but the foreign national numbers have increased by as much as 420% (when March 2012 count is compared to November 2015).

**Tipping Point**

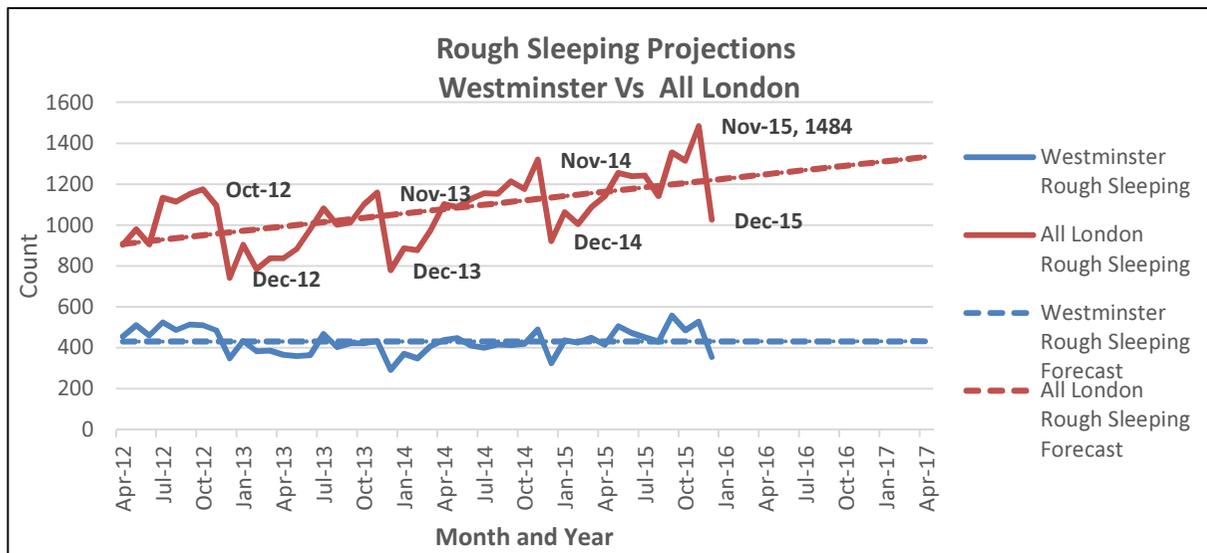
The difference in the CHAIN totals and the counts totals is likely to be linked to the methods in which each data set is collected. CHAIN shows a higher caseload (between 300-500 people per month) and the counts data shows a lower count total (between 100-300 per count) because the counts data is taken from a few hours over the course of one evening per month, whereas CHAIN data includes all people seen in the borough over the course of the month. Furthermore, foreign nationals, who seem to have had the largest impact on the count data, are not easily being recorded on the CHAIN database.

# CHAIN reports an increase in Greater London's rough sleepers



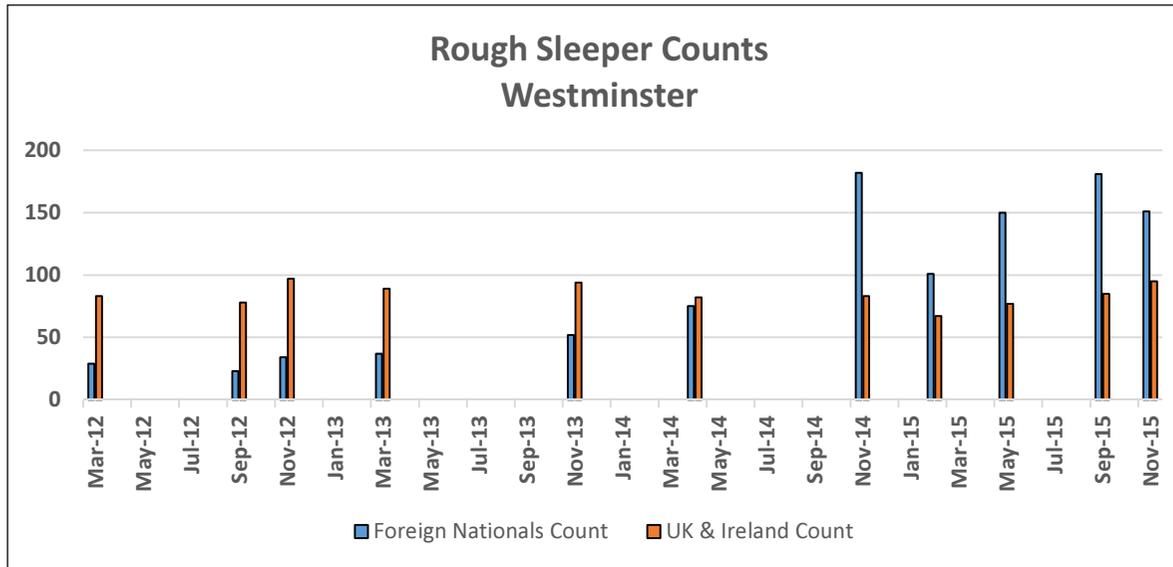
According to CHAIN, Westminster's rough sleeping totals have remained stable whilst Greater London has seen a steady increase of rough sleepers.

The Greater London rough sleeping numbers have increased by 33% when the 2011/2012 figures are compared to 2014/2015. In contrast, Westminster's experienced a smaller change, with numbers increasing by just 1% over the same period.

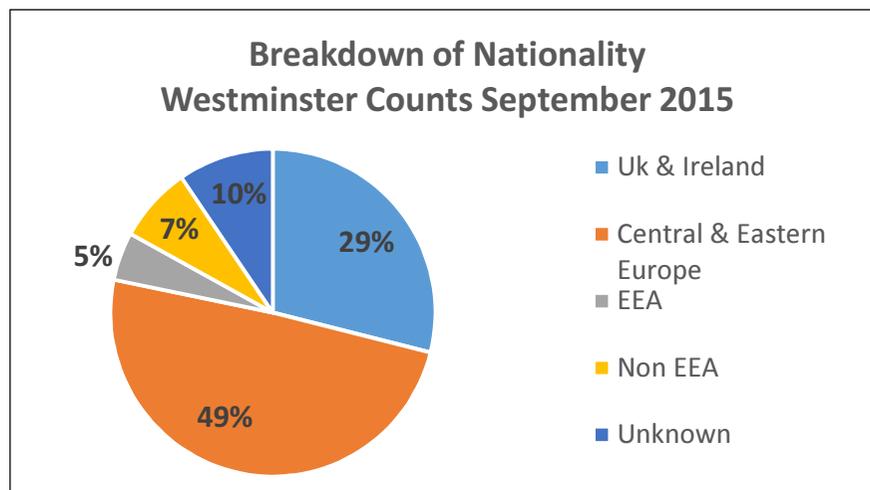


Using the historical CHAIN data, it was possible to make a projection of what the rough sleeping picture may look like next year. London's rough sleeping figures are expected to increase over the next year whilst Westminster's figures are expected to remain stable. As with all projections, this does not take into account changes in other external factors.

# Street counts show that foreign national rough sleepers have increased



The change in the rough sleeping count population is more clearly demonstrated in the bar graph. It can be seen that until March 2014, UK and Irish nationals were the largest group of rough sleepers in the borough. However, in November 2014, the foreign national population surpassed that of UK and Irish nationals and in November 2015, non-UK nationals represented 61% of the total number of rough sleepers seen in the counts.



Around 1/3 of rough sleepers in the September 2015 counts are UK and Irish nationals, half are from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (of which 79% are Romanian).

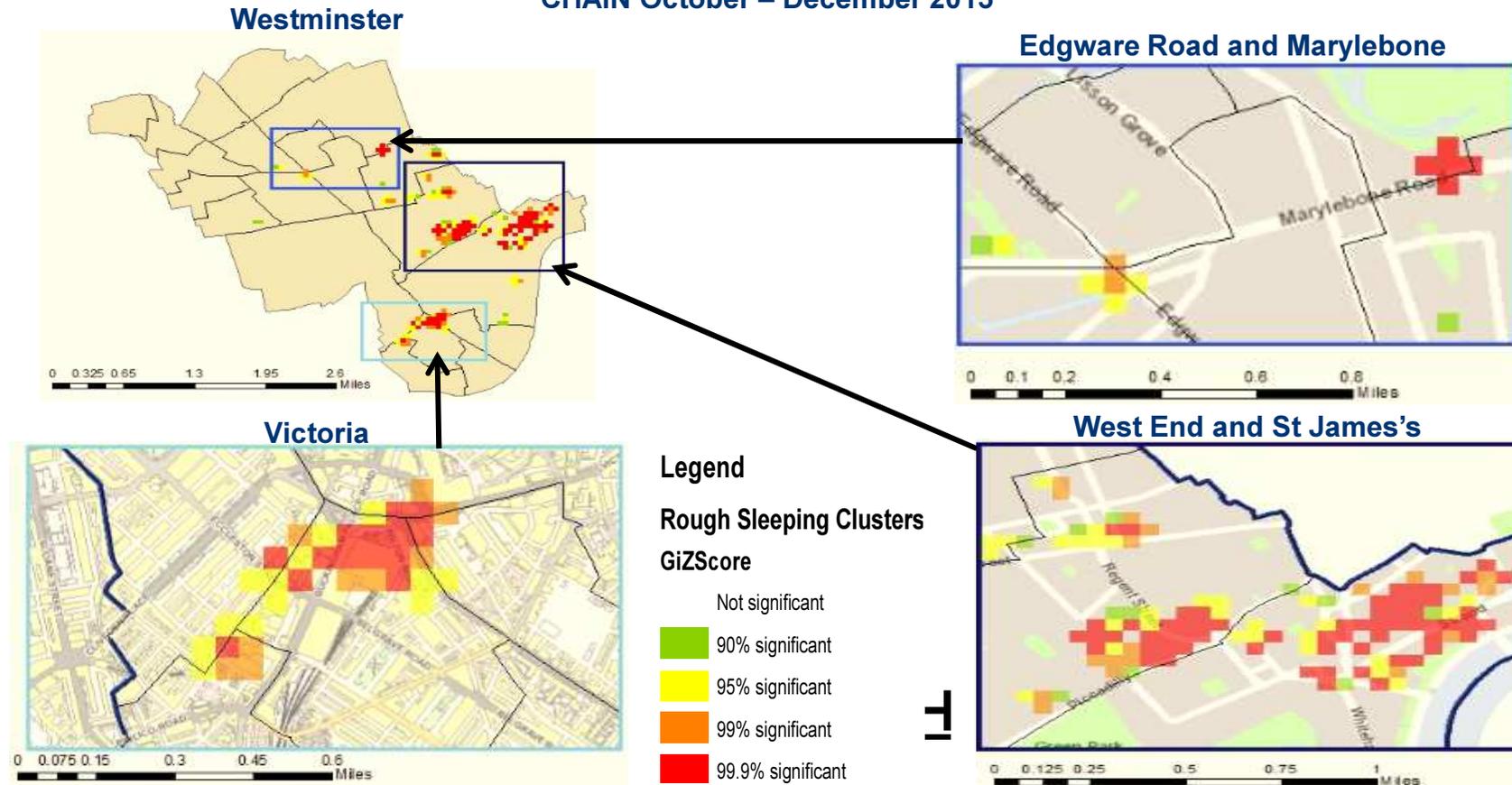
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## Non-UK Nationals

- CHAIN data also show that in 2014/15, 63% of rough sleepers in Westminster were foreign nationals. However, as set out earlier, the methods of collecting data for CHAIN can lead to a under count of people who do not have a social care need – many of whom may be non-UK nationals.
- Westminster count data show a higher proportion of non-UK national rough sleepers –29% of rough sleepers in September 2015 were from the UK & Ireland
- There are limited data available on the support or other needs of non-UK nationals. However, in September 2015, representatives from Westminster, Tower Hamlets and St Mungo's Broadway visited Bucharest, Romania's capital, to look at the most effective ways of reducing the number of Romanian Nationals on the streets of London and the UK. The report from this visit broke Romanian Nationals into two main groups:
  1. **'Economic migrants'** – Almost all are roughly 20 - 40 years old, males with limited (or no) support needs. They maintain that they are in the UK to find work and provide a wage for their families in Romania. It is important to remember these people are not homeless but are prepared to sleep on the streets in an absence of free accommodation.
  2. **'Begging gangs'** – this includes both the people who organise criminal begging gangs but also more vulnerable people, including Romani people, who may be manipulated into travelling to a location to beg.

# Where are the Rough Sleeping Clusters in Westminster?

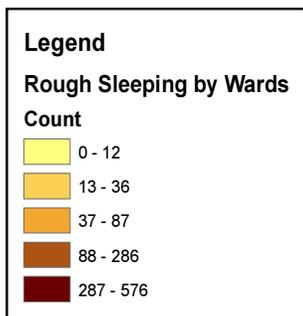
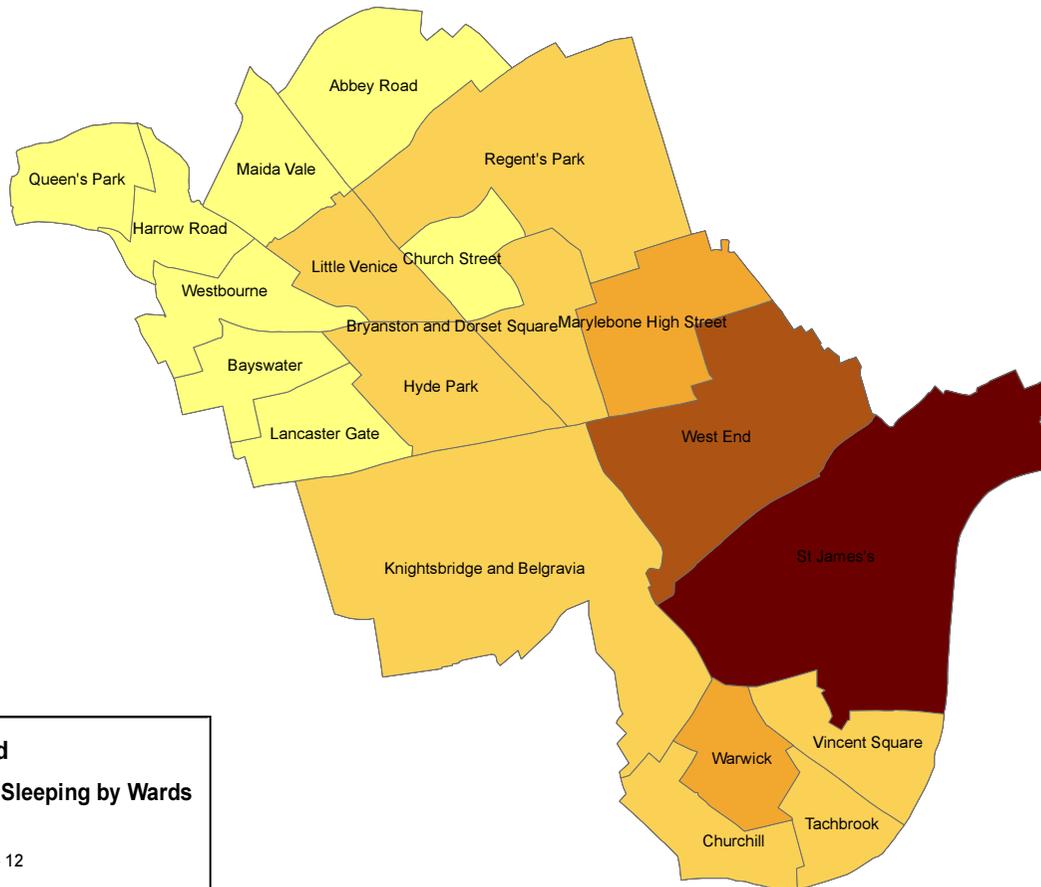
Rough Sleeping Clusters in Westminster  
CHAIN October – December 2015



Coordinates of rough sleeper locations taken from the CHAIN indicate that in the borough of Westminster, there are several rough sleeping clusters. The largest and most extensive of these clusters are within St. James's Ward (spanning from Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden, the Strand and ending in Aldwych), and in the West End (mainly along Oxford and Regent streets). Clusters also appear in Victoria around the Train Station and Coach Station (note this was the only large cluster directly next to a mainline train station) and along Marylebone Road on the southern outskirts of Regent's Park and where Edgware Road meets Marylebone flyover. All of these clusters are within 90 and 99.9% significance, meaning that the spatial pattern did not occur by chance.

# St. James's and the West End are the wards most affected by rough sleepers

Rough Sleeping Ward Map  
October – December 2015



The rough sleeping clusters suggest that there is a high concentration of rough sleepers in locations which are business areas, tourist hot spots and stress areas rather than in residential locations.

- **Edgware and Marylebone** are Westminster stress areas
- **Regent Street and Oxford Street** in the West End
- Along the **Strand** in St. James's
- In and around **Victoria** (Victoria train station and transport hubs such as the coach station).

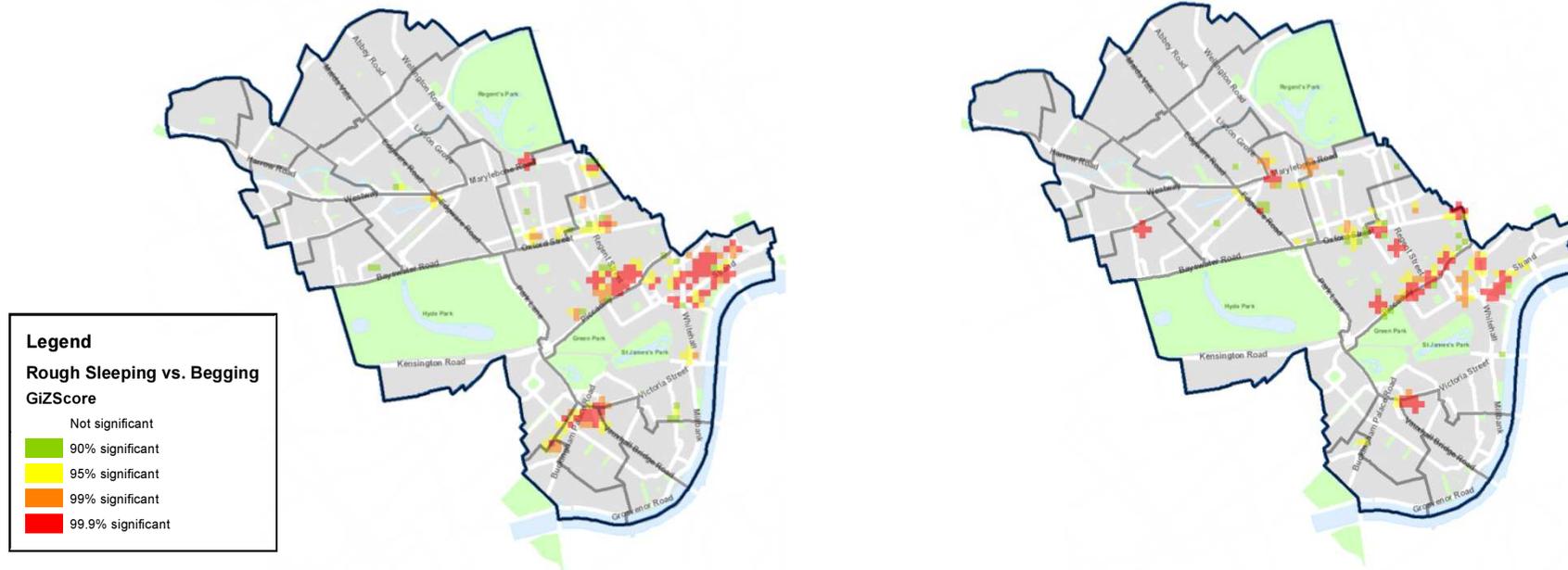
As a result, the wards which the clusters fall within also appear in the ward maps to have the highest distribution of rough sleeping. These wards are:

- St James's
- The West End
- Marylebone High Street
- Warwick

# Rough sleeping is more spatially dispersed than begging

**Rough Sleeping Clusters**  
**CHAIN**  
October – December 2015

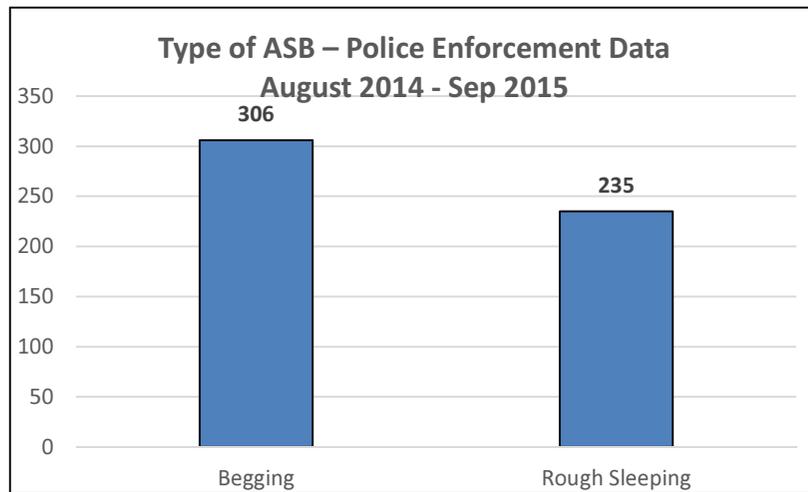
**Begging Clusters**  
**CAD Calls** October – December 2015



The rough sleeping and the begging clusters show that there are some areas where there is overlap, especially in the West End and along the Strand. Rough sleeping however is slightly more dispersed than the begging.

Although the maps show that begging and rough sleeping take place in many of the same locations, it is not possible to identify a statistically significant link between them.

## Enforcement Action

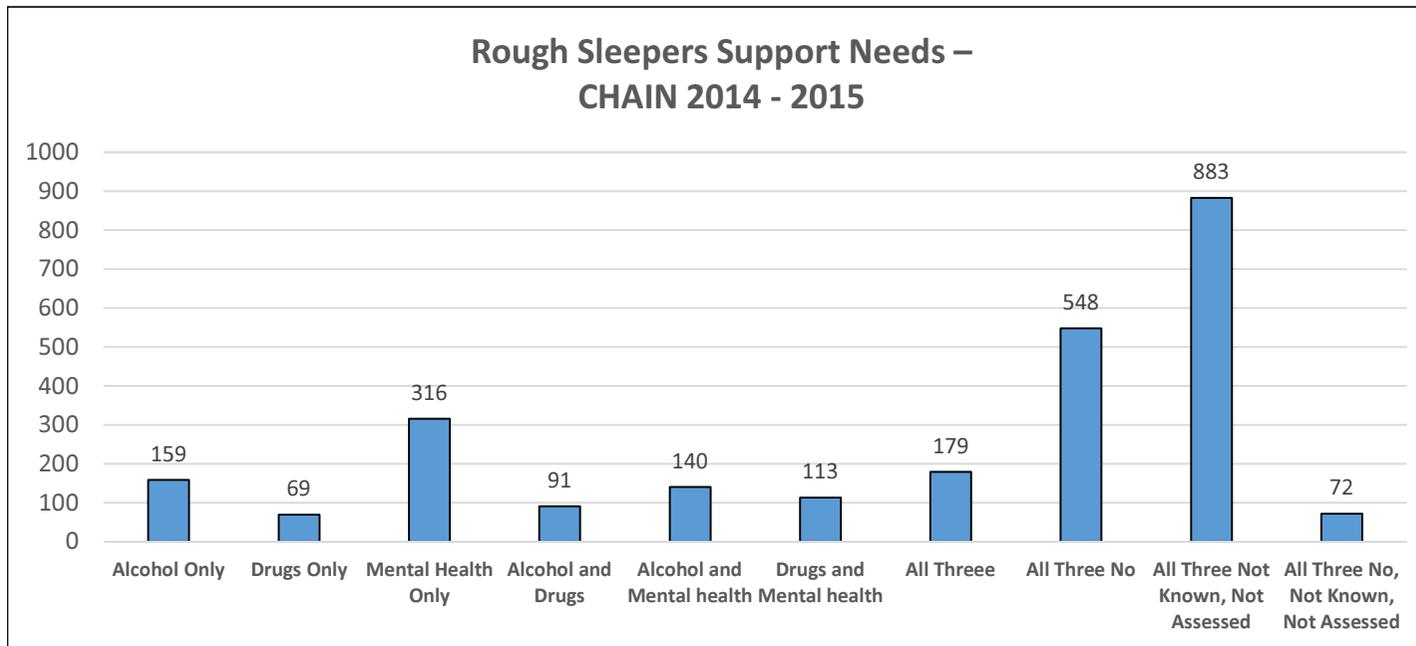


There were 235 individuals recorded as rough sleeping and 306 begging in the police records from August 2014 – September 2015. None of the individuals who were issued with enforcement action for rough sleeping were subject to any enforcement for begging.

It must be considered that rough sleeping on its own is not an ASB or a criminal offence, it is the behaviour associated (e.g. littering of sleeping equipment) which results in enforcement. On the occasions where a rough sleeper is also seen begging, they are likely to be issued with an enforcement action to address the begging. As such, the data may not accurately reflect the numbers of those involved in both.

Begging and vagrancy is the highest in the Strand and Mayfair. West End and China Town had the highest increase in begging and vagrancy from Nov 2015 –Jan 2016.

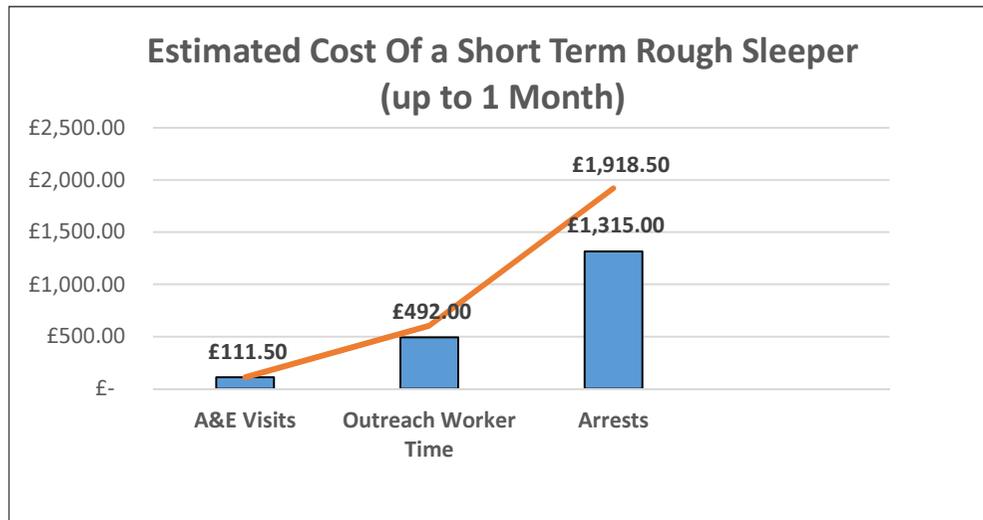
# Many rough sleepers have complex support needs



42% of those assessed who are recorded on CHAIN have one or more support needs, though those with mental health need is the largest of the three. It is important to stress that this only reflects the rough sleepers recorded on CHAIN.

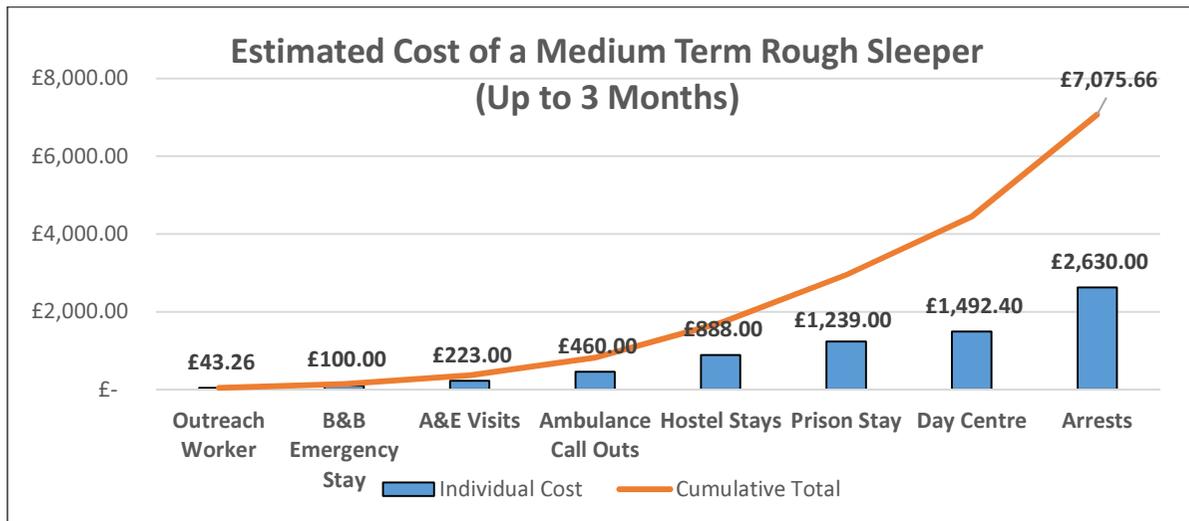
Many of the rough sleepers lead chaotic lives and refuse assessment – that is why for 34% of the rough sleepers ('All three not known, Not Assessed'), it is unclear what their support needs are.

# Long term rough sleepers cost more due to repetitive service contact



The case studies of four rough sleepers with varying degrees of needs were provided by the rough sleeping team. The incident numbers for each of the areas such as crime, health, accommodation, and other services were identified and the average costs from national research, estimates from Westminster data, and local knowledge were applied. NB: these case studies are based on core UK & Irish rough sleepers who are entitled to support in Westminster, rather than the foreign national population.

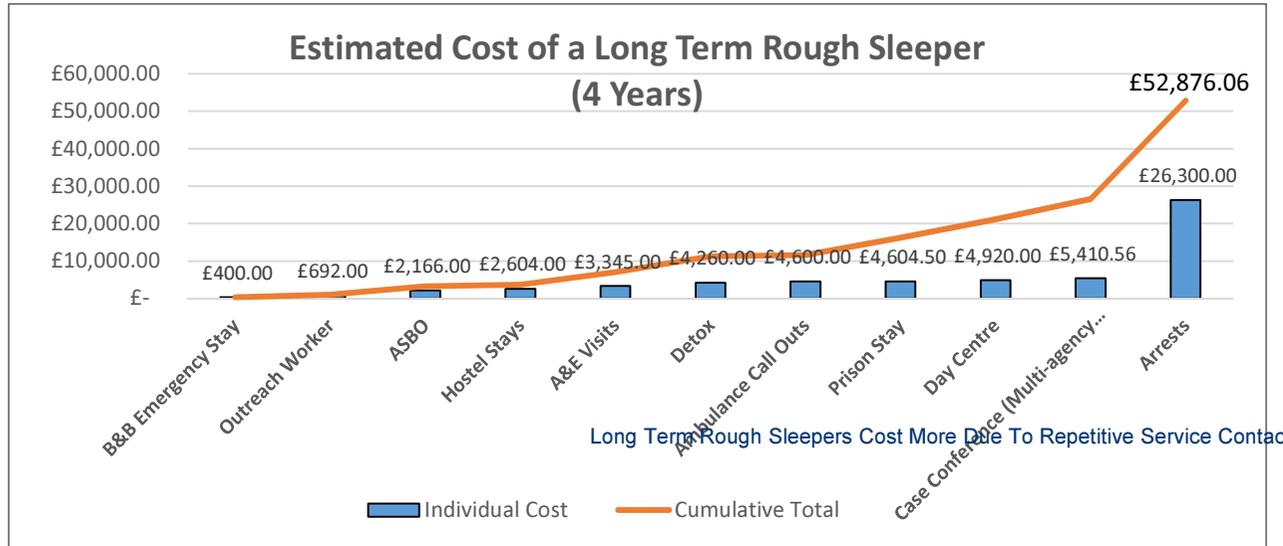
Note: All costs, including national figures, will have some level of assumption, and therefore are only to be used as a guide.



The short term rough sleeper has only used 3 services, compared to the medium term rough sleeper who has used 8 services.

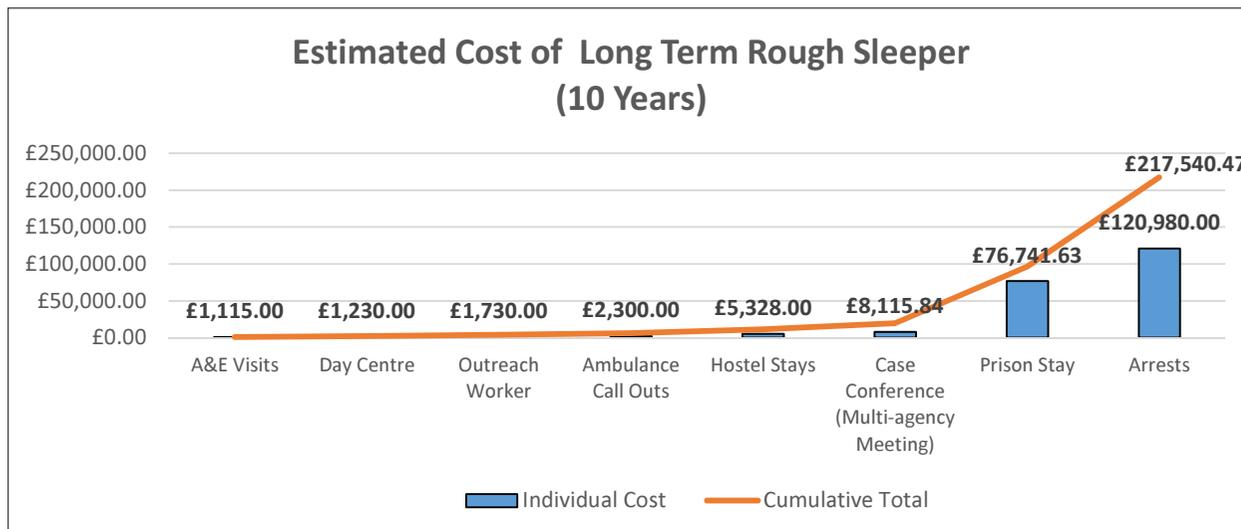
The bar graph shows that just two extra months on the streets for the medium term rough sleeper, can result in an additional £5187.16 spread across services.

# Long term rough sleepers cost more due to repetitive service contact (2)



It is estimated that the rough sleeper of four years costs services an additional £45,800 in comparison to the medium term rough sleeper.

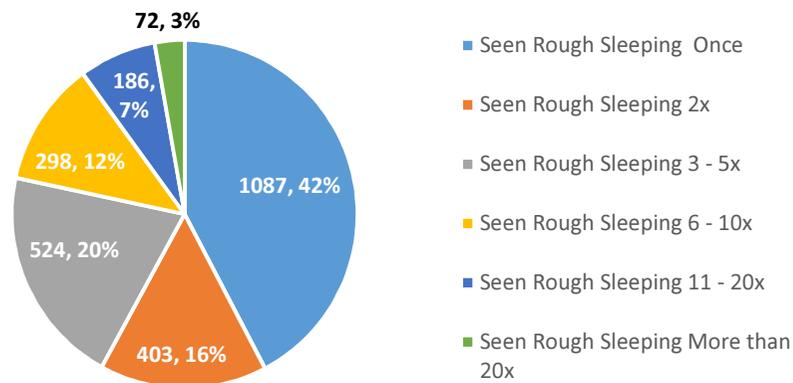
Although just three more services were used by the long term rough sleeper (4 years), the services had to respond to the needs of this individual on multiple occasions. In short, the longer the duration of rough sleeping, the more costs incurred to services through the repetition of care / enforcement action.



The estimated cost of a rough sleeper of 10 years is an additional £164,664.41 to services in comparison to the long term rough sleeper of four years. In the case of the rough sleeper of 10 years, eight services used and an average outlay of £22,000 per year could be incurred by services.

# Prevention is better than cure

**Number of Times Seen Rough Sleeping  
CHAIN 2014 / 2015**

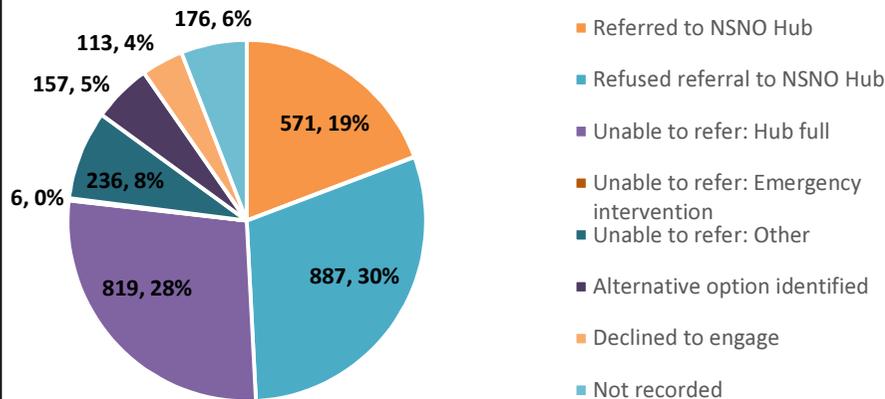


42% of the total rough sleepers observed only stayed out for one night, whilst 3% were seen bedded down 20 times or more.

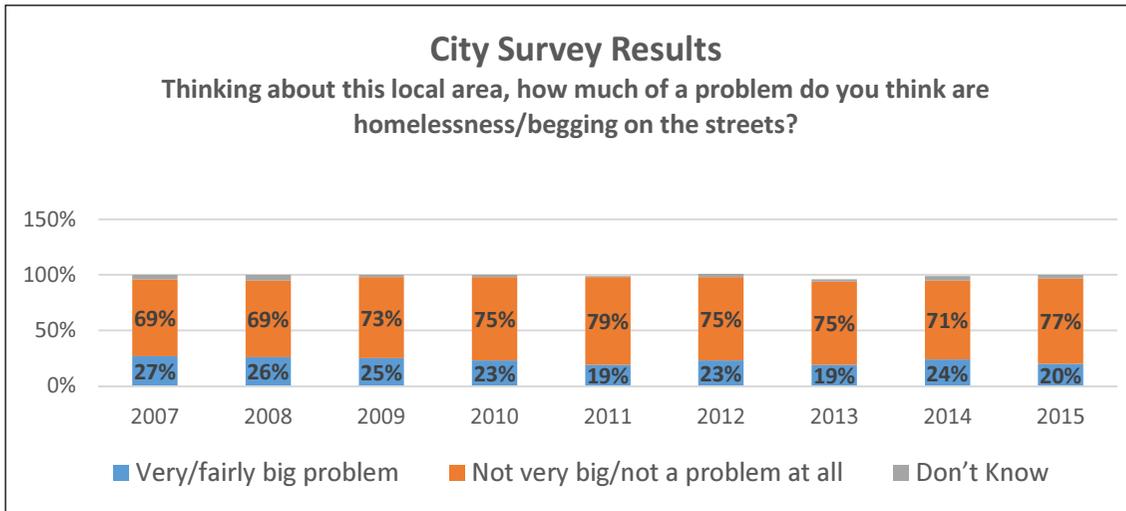
At a workshop held with rough sleeping experts in January 2016, it was clear that that preventing people from becoming regular rough sleepers, minimises the risk of being trapped in an endless cycle of service interventions, and not able to re-integrate with society.

No Second Night Out (NSNO) focuses on helping those who find themselves rough sleeping on the streets of London for the first time. Data from NSNO shows the how high the demand is for early intervention. Even though 30% of rough sleepers offered referral at a NSNO hub refused, for 28% of those seen for the first time, the hubs were full.

**NSNO- Actions Following Verification  
January 2014 - December 2015**

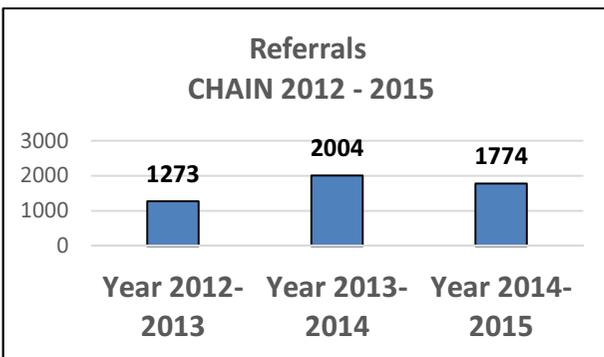


# 20% of residents think homelessness/begging on the streets is a problem



The City Survey results show that 20% of residents considered homelessness/begging a problem in 2015. This has remained fairly consistent since 2007. However, as the previous slide shows, rough sleepers are primarily located in areas which are business areas, tourist hot spots and stress areas rather than in residential locations.

The information about people referring rough sleepers to CHAIN shows that members of the public are the most frequent reporters of rough sleeping. Businesses are the 8<sup>th</sup> largest group to refer rough sleepers.



	Top 5 Referrals CHAIN 2012- 2015	
1	Member of the Public	1059
2	Homelessness Agencies	996
3	Day Centre	950
4	Self	654
5	WCC Rough Sleeping Hotline	496

Notably, churches, some of which are known to have rough sleepers congregate around them, have reported very few rough sleepers – with just 11 reports since 2012.

**Note:**

- These referrals are not all verified ( sometimes the rough sleeper moves on / Sometimes individual is not a rough sleeper but is a beggar).
- Members of the public could be an individual who works within the rough sleepers service, reporting an incident outside of work time.

# Overview of Impacts

## Individuals

- Life expectancy of **42 years** (compared to national average of 74 for men, and 79 for women)
- **9 times** more likely to kill themselves
- **4 times** more likely to die from unnatural causes, such as accidents, assaults, murder, drugs or alcohol poisoning.
- More vulnerable to **assault**, particularly in the West End and from members of the general public.

## Residents

- **20%** of residents think homelessness / begging is a problem
- Complaints and enquiries are received via councillors, the Police and the contact centre **weekly**
- **Regular** complaints about the volume of soup runs in the City, particularly around Strand and previously in Victoria
- Other **anecdotal impacts** include intimidation, 'no go areas', aggressive begging, concerns around drug use.

## Businesses

- Most BIDs treat rough sleeping and begging as a **top priority**
- Damage to customers and reputation and physical damage to buildings
- Impacts from **soup runs**, e.g. Ryman's on the Strand deals with the daily detritus, regular reports of human faeces, vomit and litter as they open the store in the morning
- Mixed messages from businesses regarding **enforcement**

## Visitors

- Many **tourists**, particularly from America and China, give significant sums of money to beggars
- **Complaints** (sometimes via the mayors office) from visitors about rough sleepers in central London
- Begging can be focused on **wealthy individuals**, often exploited during religious holidays such as Ramadan, as people felt compelled to give to individuals begging.