[Get involved in making this service better](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=yXfS-grGoU2187O4s0qC-XMiKzsnr8xJoWM_DeGwIu9UQVNYVkxZSEJVVjhPOURXSjJVMjhZRTdYMi4u)

Clos

**How are things**

**for others?**

**Key stage 2 attainment**

**THIS IS THE LATEST DATA**



**Published**

12 September 2023

## **Introduction**

This publication provides provisional statistics on attainment in key stage 2 national curriculum assessments in England. These statistics cover attainment in assessments taken by pupils at the end of year 6, when most are age 11.

This data extends the interim publication published on 11 July 2023. It includes results for pupils in schools in England:

* at national, regional, local authority level, local authority district and constituency level
* by pupil characteristics such as gender, disadvantage and special educational needs
* by school characteristics such as school type, phase and religious character

## **Headline facts and figures - 2022/23centage of pupils meeting the**These statistics cover the attainment of year 6 pupils who took assessments in summer 2023. These pupils experienced disruption to their learning during the pandemic, particularly at the end of year 3 and in year 4.

In **reading**, 73% of pupils met the expected standard, down from 75% in 2022.

In **maths**,73% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 71% in 2022.

In **writing teacher assessment**,71% of pupils met the expected standard,up from 69% in 2022.

In **grammar, punctuation and spelling**,72% of pupils met the expected standard,unchanged from 2022.

In **science teacher assessment**, 80% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 79% in 2022.

In all of **reading, writing and maths**, 59% of pupils met the expected standard, unchanged from 2022. At the higher standard, 8% of pupils met the standard, up from 7% in 2022.

The disadvantaged gap index is down from 3.23 in 2022 to 3.20 in 2023. [**Culture**](https://www.theguardian.com/culture)

# **Number of children in mental health crisis at record high in England**

**NHS data reveals more than 3,500 urgent referrals of under-18s in May, three times higher than same month in 2019**

 15 Aug 2023 The Guardian

The number of children in mental health crisis has reached record levels in England, analysis of [NHS data](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-services-monthly-statistics) by the mental health charity YoungMinds shows.

For the first time, urgent referrals of under-18s to mental health crisis teams reached more than 3,500 in May, three times higher than in May 2019. And in the year to March 2023 there were 21,555 urgent referrals to mental health crisis teams, up 46% on 2022, the charity found.

These are children with the most acute mental health symptoms, who might otherwise need to go to hospital for psychosis, severe self-harm or suicide attempts.

In addition to the 3,732 urgent referrals, the NHS monthly data reveals that the number of children and young people undergoing treatment or waiting to start care also reached new records, with 466,250 open referrals to children and young people’s mental health services (CAMHS) in May.

Laura Bunt, the chief executive of YoungMinds, said the figures were “indicative of a system that is broken and a government that has refused to listen to young people demanding change”.

“We are now in a mental health emergency and the government must get a grip on the scale of this crisis. Many young people are having to wait months and years to access help, while many others are told they don’t meet the threshold for a referral to mental health services. No young person should be left waiting for help while their mental health worsens.”

The new data coincides with the publication of an interim report on the government’s promised [major conditions strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/major-conditions-strategy-case-for-change-and-our-strategic-framework), which aims to manage cancer, musculoskeletal conditions, chronic respiratory diseases, mental ill health and dementia more effectively. This strategy will replace the long-term mental health plan, which was due to be published earlier this year. But YoungMinds said abandoning the 10-year mental health plan had “further delayed government action for young people’s mental health” and that the new strategy “falls far short of what’s needed”.

“The interim report on the major conditions strategy fails to provide any clarity on how the government plans to tackle the growing emergency in young people’s mental health,” said Bunt. “It does not cite mental health as a main concern for young people’s health, nor does it provide any confidence that this strategy will improve mental health services for young people.

“Young people’s mental health needs to be at the heart of this strategy and we need to see a clear plan on how they are going to drive down prevalence.”

Responding to the findings, the Liberal Democrat education spokesperson, Munira Wilson, called for urgent action. “It is shameful that thousands of children in dire need of help are struggling to access mental health services. This cannot go on,” she said.

“This Conservative government has run our NHS into the ground and it is children in need who are paying the price.”

Dr Elaine Lockhart, the chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists’ faculty of child and adolescent psychiatry, said the mental health crisis was having **“**a devastating impact on the wellbeing of our children and young people”.

“Services are doing their best to meet this rise in demand for treatment but a lack of staff and resources is making it difficult for them to see patients quickly. This is contributing to a harmful spiral in which many young people are being placed on long waiting lists, which can lead to their symptoms becoming more serious over time and them eventually presenting to services in crisis.”

The children’s commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, said: “I am really concerned about these latest figures. We must make sure that support is available to children early, that there is a focus on support before issues escalate, and that care is available to all children who need it and in a timely manner. I want to see mental health support teams delivered in every school by the end of 2025 and a clear-eyed focus on the specific needs of children in government mental health investment.”

## **Suicide statistics**

Champion Health November 2023

Below, we’ve summarised the most up-to-date data available around suicidal thoughts statistics – as well as statistics around instances of suicide and thoughts of self-harm. This data will be regularly amended to reflect the latest research.

Here are the latest suicide statistics, including suicide and self-harm:

* Over 700,000 people take their own life each year – that’s one person every 40 seconds ([World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide))
* 115 people die by suicide in the UK every week – with 75% of those deaths being male ([ONS](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/suicidesintheunitedkingdom/previousReleases))
* 1 in 5 people have suicidal thoughts ([NHS Digital](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20180328140249/http%3A//digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB21748))
* 1 in 14 people self-harm (NHS Digital)
* 1 in 15 people attempt suicide (NHS Digital)
* Males aged 45-49 have the highest suicide rate ([Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/about-samaritans/research-policy/suicide-facts-and-figures/))
* 10% of young people self-harm ([Mental Health Foundation](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/MHF-The-truth-about-self-harm-guide.pdf))

The experts at Champion Health have also analysed data that looks at the prevalence of thoughts of suicide and self-harm within the workplace.

# **125,500 Universal Credit sanctions imposed in one month for claimants missing appointments**

### More than six percent of Universal Credit claimants were affected by a sanction in August. Nov 19, 2023 Express

More than 125,500 [Universal Credit sanctions](https://www.express.co.uk/latest/universal-credit) in August 2023 were for failing to attend a previously agreed Jobcentre appointment or interview.

A total of 131,720 were handed out and 95.3 percent of these were for missing a previously arrange appointement - which amounts to just over 125,500.

Work and Pensions Secretary, Mel Stride, said: “Fairness is at the heart of our welfare system. But thousands of people are undermining it, failing to look for work and not turning up to work appointments.

“We are cracking down on those who don’t make any effort to find work, as we use every tool at our disposal to tackle long-term unemployment.”

A total of 6.48 percent of Universal Credit claimants faced a sanction on their payment in August this year.

When a person receives a sanction, they will be told the reason why and how long the sanction will last.

The sanction is usually imposed from the next payment and may affect a series of future payments that a person receives.

If a claimant thinks they have been unfairly sanctioned, they can challenge the decision through a process known as manditory reconsideration.

An individual may also be able to resolve a sanction by re-engage with the Jobcentre and attending their next appointment.

A claimant can get a sanction where they fail to comply with their duties as set out in their claimant commitment, such as searching for work or attending appointments with their work coach.

Universal Credit is gradually replacing several legacy benefits, with the new benefit being rolled out in different parts of the country.

**Autism Statistics, July 2022 to June 2023 NHS Digital**

14 Sep 2023

## **Key Facts**

**In June 2023 there were 143,119 patients with an open referral for suspected autism. Of these, 118,223 (83%) had a referral that had been open at least 13 weeks.**

**In June, 6.3% (7,487) of the patients with an open referral that had been open more than 13 weeks had had a first appointment within the recommended 13 weeks.**

**There were 10,910 new referrals and 7,194 closed referrals in June 2023. This is an increase of 27% for new referrals and 46% for closed referrals compared to June 2022.**

**June 2023 also saw 645 patients with a referral for suspected autism receive an autism diagnosis in the month, compared with 452 in June 2022.**

# **Household Debt: Key Economic Indicators**

[House of Commons Library](https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/) Research Briefing

Published Wednesday, 08 November, 2023

## **Household debt as a % of disposable income**

## Household debt peaked in Q3 2008 at 156.4% of household disposable income. It then declined to 134.6% by early 2016.

## Growth in household debt levels accelerated from early 2016, so that the debt-to-income ratio rose again to 138.8% by early 2017.

## In Q2 2023 it was 126.8%.



## **Current average mortgage interest rates**

The average Standard Variable Rate (SVR) was 8.01% in October 2023, up 2.59 percentage points on a year ago.

The average 2-year fixed mortgage rate was 5.63% in October 2023, down 0.36 percentage points on a year ago.



## **Individual insolvencies, England and Wales**

There were 24,418 individual insolvencies in England and Wales in Q3

 2023, 1,539 fewer than in the previous quarter. T

The largest increase since the current series began in 2010 was seen between Q2 2020 and Q3 2020.

The Q3 2023 level is 15.4% lower than the level in Q3 2022.



## **How many people are homeless? The Big Issue**

* [New government data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-people-sleeping-rough-in-england-june-2023/support-for-people-sleeping-rough-in-england-june-2023#:~:text=Between%20April%20and%20June%202023,move%20on%20from%20rough%20sleeping.) estimates 2,893 people were sleeping rough on a single night in England in June 2023. That most recent count down on the official snapshot which estimated 3,069 people were sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2022. However, the June 2023 count still represents a rise of 446 people since March 2023, and an increase of 445 people since the same time in 2022.
* The majority of people sleeping rough in England are male, aged over 26 years old and from the UK. Meanwhile the [Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/roughsleepingintheuk/2002to2021#people-who-sleep-rough-in-statutory-homelessness-statistics) found men who are living on the street outnumber women at a ratio of six to one.
* The London-only Combined Homelessness and Information Network (Chain) figures are considered to be more accurate than the official one-night count. [The most recent annual count](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/the-number-of-people-sleeping-rough-in-london-has-surged-20-in-just-a-year/) showed 10,053 rough sleepers spotted on London’s streets between April 2022 and March 2023. A total of 4,068 people were [counted between July and September 2023](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/rough-sleeping-london-homelessness-chain/) for the most recent quarterly update with half of those new to the streets.
* In Wales, the official rough sleeping count was [suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic](https://gov.wales/national-rough-sleeper-count#DataforNovember2020). Since then, [official monthly management statistics](https://www.gov.wales/homelessness-accommodation-provision-and-rough-sleeping-august-2023) have taken its place. The most recent count showed an estimated 167 people were sleeping rough across the country as of August 2023.
* Scotland doesn’t use the same method as England and Wales. The [most recent statistics](https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-in-scotland-2022-23/) showed 2,438 households who applied for council homelessness support between April 2022 and March 2023 reported sleeping rough during the previous three months. Meanwhile, 1,500 households reported being street homeless the night before they applied
* Women are often missing from rough sleeping counts because they tend to be less visible than male rough sleepers due to the risk of violence on the streets. That means women are more likely to seek shelter in cafes, transport hubs or other places rather than bedding down outside.
* A coalition of homelessness and women’s organisations in London joined forces to tackle the issue in October 2022. The resulting [women’s rough sleeping census](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/the-number-of-women-sleeping-rough-could-be-as-much-as-seven-times-higher-than-the-official-count/) found 154 women, including trans and non-binary women, sleeping rough in London in a week.
* That number was higher than previously thought with an extra 71 women found across 13 London boroughs when the data was compared to the latest official rough sleeping count. Organisers believed the number could be even higher and [the count has expanded in 2023](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/single-homeless-project-women-rough-sleeping-census/).
* As for wider homelessness in England, [English councils](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/homeless-families-temporary-acommodation-crisis-england/) supported 298,430 households to prevent or relieve homelessness between April 2022 and March 2023. That’s 6.8% higher than the previous year and 3% above pre-Covid levels in 2019-20.
* The number of households living in temporary accommodation in England are at an all-time high. As of March 2023, 104,510 households were living in temporary accommodation, including 65,000 households with children.
* For Wales, the latest statutory homelessness figures showed [12,537 households households](https://www.gov.wales/homelessness-april-2022-march-2023) were assessed as homeless or owed a duty by local councils to help them secure accommodation between April 2022 and March 2023. That a 7% increase on the number of households who needed support in 2021-22. A total of [11,185 individuals](https://www.gov.wales/homelessness-accommodation-provision-and-rough-sleeping-august-2023) were also reported to be in temporary accommodation in Wales as of August 2023.
* [Scotland’s latest official statistics](https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-in-scotland-2022-23/) revealed that 32,242 households were assessed as homeless between April 2022 and March 2023, comprising of 36,848 adults and 16,263 children. Those figures have now eclipsed the numbers seen before the pandemic. Overall, there are 39,006 households with open applications for support with homelessness – 9% higher than the same period in 2021-22 and the highest number on record.

# **‘There’s nowhere to go’: a family made homeless in the UK housing crisis** The Guardian

Colin and Gemma Booth and their children are among more than 100,000 families in temporary accommodation in England

When Colin and Gemma Booth were told a little over a year ago they would have to find somewhere else to live after the owner of the flat they rented in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight died, they didn’t panic.

“We thought it was a push to find a bigger place,” says Gemma, as Quinton, eight, Phoenix, seven, Amity, three, and Oberon, 22 months, vie for attention around her. “We had no idea what was coming.”

Fourteen months later, they have lived in two holiday chalets, a single room and now a small two-bedroom flat with no oven. Most of their stuff is still in storage.

Sitting in their spotless, if crowded, living room, they still look shellshocked at joining the more than 100,000 families in England, including more than 125,000 children, living in [temporary accommodation](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/the-number-of-households-living-in-temporary-accommodation-in-england-is-now-at-the-highest-point-on-record/), the highest figure in 20 years.

“I never thought this could happen to us,” says Colin, 46. “I knew we wouldn’t be able to afford our own home, but I just thought we’d be renting privately for ever.”

But after being forced to look for a new home, they found rents had shot up in the four and a half years since they had last looked – from under £500 to almost £1,000 a month.

They told the council about their situation and were put on the social housing waiting list. In May last year, with 24 hours to go before having to vacate their flat, they were finally housed in a small holiday chalet for a few days and then moved on to a single room apartment.

Their eldest child was then seven, the youngest six months, and the room – no more than 20 sq metres – had bunk beds, two cots and a single bed. Colin slept on the floor. As a heatwave hit the UK, the temperature in the flat soared. Then their baby got chicken pox, while Colin and two of the other children came down with Covid. “Oh my God,” says Gemma, 33, recoiling at the memory. “It was …” her voice tails off.

After eight weeks, again with a day’s notice, they were moved to a caravan with a leaking roof for three months, before finally being temporarily housed in a small two-bedroom flat in Newport in October, where they have been ever since.

The pair cheerfully deal with the children’s requests and dole out cuddles, but the mental strain is clear.

“I’ve cried because it’s just overwhelming,” says Colin, who works as a re-enablement carer, helping people who are unwell live in their own homes. “Gemma really struggles with anxiety now. At times, you just feel like there’s just no answer. There’s nowhere to go.”

The Booths are at the hard end of a [UK housing crisis](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/08/tuesday-briefing-first-edition-housing-crisis-hidding-tenants-renters-hardest-england-uk) that shows no sign of abating. While [homeowners are being hit with sharp increases in interest rates](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2023/aug/03/its-a-bloodbath-the-uk-homeowners-on-variable-mortgages-fearing-another-rate-rise), the demand for rental properties has rocketed, and rents have increased [by almost 10%](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/indexofprivatehousingrentalprices/may2023) since April 2020.

On the Isle of Wight the crisis is exacerbated by the number of incoming retirees and the seasonal nature of many jobs, as well as the large number of second homes and holiday lets. More than 2,500 people are on the council’s housing register, and more than [£2m was spent on temporary accommodation](https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/20277255.isle-wight-air-bnbs-second-homes-property-problems/) in 2022. The council [no longer owns any housing](https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/17500662.isle-wight-tenants-re-selling-council-homes-make-2-6-million-profit/), as all stock was transferred to housing associations in the 1990s.

The council has promised [to tackle the crisis](https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/20225947.isle-wight-council-plans-tackle-housing-crisis/) and to [crack down on empty properties](https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/23660833.isle-wight-housing-crisis-prompts-crackdown-empty-properties/), but more “creative” measures are needed, says David Pugh, the leader of the council from 2007 to 2013.

In [Wales](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/wales), radical measures are giving councils extra powers to increase the amount of council tax that second-home owners have to pay and to change planning rules to make it harder for homes to become holiday boltholes. Brighton has voted to [ban new buildings for non-primary residents](https://www.itv.com/news/2022-06-22/brighton-moves-to-become-first-uk-city-restricting-second-home-ownership), as have St Ives and Whitby.

More widely, the government’s [levelling up bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-20/debates/F4A68C57-13FB-484D-A3DC-2D8F93D1B293/Levelling-UpAndRegenerationBill), currently going through parliament, will give councils the freedom to double council tax on second homes in England for any property left empty for more than 72 days a year. But many locals on the Isle of Wight argue that so-called DFLs (Down from London) avoid paying council tax at all, by renting out their property for at least 70 days a year.

“They should pay council tax, or go home,” grumbles one disgruntled resident.

There are also simply not enough homes being built, says Pugh, the outgoing chair of the local Conservative association. He says the government’s decision to [scrap housing targets](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/dec/05/sunak-backs-down-on-housebuilding-targets-after-pressure-from-tory-mps) has “given a green light to those councillors who want to take a nimbyism approach to housing”.

Gemma and Colin doubt that new housing would help them much. For them, buying a house is an unattainable dream. The couple have a debt management plan put in place after they used credit cards to survive when Colin lost his job during the pandemic. And even if they had spare money to save up for a deposit, their [universal credit and housing benefit would be cut if they saved more than £6,000](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/on-universal-credit/check-how-much-universal-credit-youll-get/#:~:text=Check%20if%20your%20income%20or,will%20also%20affect%20your%20payments.), which would then soon be swallowed by the cost of a private rental. “It’s a rock and a hard place,” says Colin.

If they move back into private rented accommodation, they fear ending up without a roof over their heads. “If the rent goes up again and you go into arrears, the council have no duty to house you,” says Gemma. The cost and availability of childcare makes work currently unviable for her, she says. “We would end up homeless again, but with no help at all. We just can’t risk it.” So, for now, they are stuck.

Gemma struggles to get all four children down the outdoor stairs to the flat and the couple worry that their eight-year-old, who is autistic and has suspected dyspraxia, might fall. They apply for every ground floor social housing property that becomes available, but often find they are number 40 or 50 in the queue.

They know they are not alone, but that provides scant comfort. “So many more people are going to get caught up in our type of homelessness, through no fault of their own,” says Colin. “It feels like the water is rising, but all the lifeboats are full.”

**Homelessness, Destitution, and Hunger Soar in the UK** Human Rights Watch November 13, 2023

Newly released information paints a grim picture of life for many in the United Kingdom: food bank use, homelessness, and destitution are on the rise, putting people’s rights at risk.

The Trussell Trust, the largest UK-wide food bank network, [reported](https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/11/MYS-UK-Factsheet-2023.pdf) it is giving out 16 percent more emergency food parcels than last year, and 116 percent more than it was five years ago. The reason? People on low incomes often have [no alternative but to turn to food banks](https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/05/20/nothing-left-cupboards/austerity-welfare-cuts-and-right-food-uk).

Government [data released](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2022-23/statutory-homelessness-in-england-2022-23-infographic#main-duty) last week showed that the number of households in England facing homelessness and placed in “temporary accommodation” was [up 10 percent](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2022-23/statutory-homelessness-in-england-2022-23-infographic#temporary-accommodation) from the previous year. Families often face years in “temporary accommodation”; a [quarter of households with children](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2022-23/statutory-homelessness-in-england-2022-23-infographic#temporary-accommodation) spend two to five years, sometimes in [rights-violating conditions](https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/01/17/i-want-us-live-humans-again/families-temporary-accommodation-london-uk). Meanwhile, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation recently [published estimates](https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2023) that 3.8 million people experienced destitution in the UK in 2022.

**Homeless families stuck in a debt trap, says report** 17 October 2023 Kings College London

Launched in UK Parliament, report shows how debt both causes, and prolongs, homelessness for many families

Families made homeless, often as a result of domestic violence, are stuck in a ‘debt trap’, says a new report being launched today at the [All-Party Parliamentary Group](https://householdsintemporaryaccommodation.co.uk/) on Households in Temporary Accommodation.

The research report by King’s College London and Oxford Brookes University, in partnership with [Shared Health](https://sharedhealthfoundation.org.uk/), reveals how debt is a major factor in why families become homelessness, how it worsens during their time living in temporary accommodation, and then continues to impact on families even when their homelessness ends.

[The report](https://sharedhealthfoundation.org.uk/publications/%20) aims to amplify the stories of women with dependent children who have experienced homelessness, living in temporary accommodation, and dealing with rent-arrears and other forms of debt. The report’s recommendations highlight an urgent need for systematic change across housing, domestic violence, welfare, transport, education, and childcare.

Key stats in England:

* Nearly 100,000 households, including over 125,000 children are living in temporary accommodation ([Shelter](https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/still_living_in_limbo) 2023).
* As of May 2023, 5.7 million low-income families had unsecured debt (personal loans from banks and credit unions, credit cards, overdraft facilities, payday lenders and licensed doorstep loans) ([Joseph Rowntree Foundation](https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/fact-sheet-dangerous-new-phase-families-debt-uks-economic-insecurity-numbers) 2023)

Key findings include:

* Rent arrears is a leading cause of family homelessness. It is also a double-edged form of debt – it is both pushing women into homelessness and can act as a barrier to bidding for permanent social housing. This leaves many families trapped in poor quality temporary accommodation.
* Women and children’s entry into homelessness is often the result of domestic violence. Women in the study variously experienced being financially controlled, forced to rely on credit for everyday necessities, and enrolled in coerced debt.
* Debt typically increases during stays in temporary accommodation because of the high costs of transport to take children to existing schools now often long distances away, reliance on eating out given the lack of cooking facilities (even a microwave) in hotels, credit used to pay for the removal, storing, and re-buying of furniture and household items upon each move, and repeated errors in Universal Credit and council tax calculations made as families transition between tenure types. In the most severe case, a family was moved eight times in one year.
* Even when permanent housing is provided, its often poor and substandard quality means that debts accrue still further to make the space liveable. As Jade explained, *“I had no bedding, no pillows. I didn’t have a cup, a plate, a knife, or a fork. There was absolutely nothing in it at all. And not a penny. I was just literally given keys.”* The standard lack of carpet, poor insulation, cracks, and sometimes vermin, can require borrowing to make possible the so longed for home. Debt is also needed just to ‘get by’ in daily life given the rising costs of food and other basics, the habitual non-payment of child maintenance by ex-partners, the need to service existing loans, the high costs and inflexibility of childcare provision which precludes paid work, and insufficient Universal Credit.

*The research clearly shows how debt is not only causing, lengthening, but also outliving family homelessness. More action is needed on the punitive impacts of debt on women’s and children’s lives. For England’s lowest-income and most financially vulnerable, debt has become a necessity of survival, rather than choice.*

Professor Katherine Brickell, lead researcher on ‘The Debt Trap’ from the Department of Geography at King’s College London

[Dr Mel Nowicki](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/profiles/staff/melanie-nowicki), researcher on the study, notes: “While private debts are generally small and negligible in pure financial terms, our research shows the huge and disproportionate negative impact they are having on families’ lives and futures.”

Sam Pratt from Shared Health, partner on the research study, said: “As co-secretariats of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Households in Temporary Accommodation, we are working hard at a national level to ensure that the homeless journey is as short, safe and healthy as possible”.

“The case studies in this report give strong evidence of the negative impact of debt and homelessness on the health and wellbeing of the whole family. Many of the APPG recommendations for system change are reflected in this report”.

As a priority, the report pushes for rules on outstanding housing-related debt and property ineligibility to be scrapped.

# **Annual NHS Dental Statistics for England - our response**

 24 August 2023 Healthwatch

**New figures published today in the annual report on NHS Dental Statistics for England in 2022-23, show that NHS dentists still see fewer people than pre-pandemic. Read our response.**

New figures published today in [**the annual report on NHS Dental Statistics for England in 2022-23**](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-dental-statistics/2022-23-annual-report), show that:

* 43% of adults in England as of 30 June 2023, had seen an NHS dentist in the past 24 months, still short of the 52% seen in pre-pandemic times; the latest figures also show people aged 85 and over were the adults seen least (37%)
* 56% of children in England, as of 30 June 2023, were seen by an NHS dentist in the past 12 months, still below pre-pandemic levels of 59%. Children aged 0-4 were seen least (31%)
* Overall, 18.1million adults in England were seen for NHS dental treatment in the 24 months up to June 2023, 17.5% lower than the 22 million seen in the 24 months up to June 2019 and 6.4 million children were seen in the 12 months to June 2023, down 9% on figures for 2019.

The figures do not tell us how many of those patients were usual patients of NHS dentists going for return check-ups, or new patients seeking urgent dental treatment for the first time.

### **Commenting Louise Ansari, our CEO said:**

“The report supports our evidence which shows that people in every corner of England are struggling to get the dental treatment they need when they need it.

“NHS dentistry continues to be the second most common issue people report to Healthwatch, with many living in pain, while some turn to private care.

“But private treatment is not an option for everyone, with reports suggesting people from the most deprived communities struggle the most to access dental care.

“We have repeatedly called for fully resourced dental contract reform to tackle these deep-seated problems, and for the government to publish its dental recovery plan urgently.

“This plan should address recent calls made by MPs on the Health and Social Committee, including our evidence stressing the need for a new national oral health needs assessment to establish which type of people are missing out on any NHS dental care at all. We’re concerned that some children have never been seen by a dentist in their life, storing up oral health and social problems for the future and potential removal of decayed teeth in hospital.”

**More than 4.4 million children not seen by NHS dentist in the past year** 19 September 2023 Dentistry

**New data from the Libral Democrats has shown that more than 4.4 million children in England were not seen by an NHS dentist in the last 12 months.**

The research was commissioned by the House of Commons Library and focused on the 12 months leading up to June 2023. It showed that across the country, 38.7% of children had not received the annual NHS checkup recommended in the health service’s guidelines.

Nearly one million of these children were based in the east of England, accounting for half of all children in the area. Norfolk and Waveney had the worst rate of attendance nationwide, with only 45% of children having seen an NHS dentist in the past year.

British Dental Association chair Eddie Crouch said: ‘Our youngest patients are already paying the price for a crisis made in Westminster.

‘These access problems are the result of political choices. Every political party needs to wake up and offer a plan of action, otherwise this service won’t have a future.’

The data does not account for children who may have received dental care privately.

## **‘Total disregard for every aspect of our health service’**

Daisy Cooper, Liberal Democrat deputy leader and health spokesperson, said: ‘This Conservative government has shown a total disregard for every aspect of our health service. Wherever you look, the NHS is crumbling.

‘Every parent knows how important it is to ensure that their children can see a dentist when they need to. Leaving children in pain can disrupt their eating, sleeping and learning. The fact that ministers are failing to deliver this is completely unacceptable.’

The Liberal Democrats also found that over half of adults (51.2%) in England had not been seen by an NHS in the past two years. This equates to almost 22 million people nationwide.

Norfolk and Waveney had a similarly high rate of non-attendance among adults at 59%. However, Gloucestershire was the highest, with two thirds (66.6%) of adults receiving no NHS care in the pst 24 months.

## **‘Measures to improve access’**

According to [*ITV,*](https://www.itv.com/thismorning/articles/millions-of-children-miss-out-on-dental-check-ups-according-to-new-figures) the following response from a Department of Health and Social Care representative: ‘We are making progress to boost NHS dental services and the number of children seen by NHS dentists rose by 43.6% last year.

‘Compared to the previous year, 1.7 million more adults and 800,000 more children are receiving NHS dental care.

‘We fund more than £3 billion of NHS dentistry a year and are taking preventative measures to improve children’s oral health, such as expanding water fluoridation schemes.

‘We have also announced plans to increase dental training places by 40% and recently launched a consultation to better utilise the skills of dental hygienists and therapists.

‘Further measures to improve access and increase the number of NHS dentists through our dental recovery plan will be set out shortly.’

**National Dental Epidemiology Programme (NDEP) for England: oral health survey of 5 year old children 2022 Office of Health Improvement and Disparities** dated 11 October 2023

## **Executive summary** This report presents the results of the sixth National Dental Epidemiology Programme survey of 5 year old children in England, 2022. The data was collected during the 2021 to 2022 school year. The survey was delayed from 2020 to 2021 by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This data is the source for the dental indicator (percentage of 5 year olds with visually obvious dentinal decay) included in the [Public Health Outcomes Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-health-outcomes-framework).

For the first time in this series of 5 year old surveys, the prevalence of children with enamel decay is presented. This is an important threshold to highlight the proportion of children who are found to have early stage decay who would ordinarily be counted as being free of obvious decay. This is presented at national and regional levels. Estimates at national, regional, upper and lower-tier local authority level are reported for prevalence of experience of dentinal decay (the percentage of children with one or more teeth with visually obvious dentinal decay experience) and severity of experience of dentinal decay (the average number of teeth per child with visually obvious dentinal decay experience).

In this survey of 5 year olds in England, the national prevalence of children with enamel and/or dentinal decay was 29.3%. Regionally, this ranged from 23.3% in the South West to 38.7% in the North West.

Overall, 23.7% of 5 year old children in England in this survey had experience of dentinal decay. This was similar to the finding of the previous survey of 5 year olds in 2019, where 23.4% of the surveyed children had experience of dentinal decay. Among the 23.7% of children with experience of dentinal decay, each child had on average 3.5 (confidence interval 3.50 to 3.59) teeth with experience of dentinal decay (at the age of 5 years children normally have 20 primary teeth).

There was wide variation in both prevalence and severity of experience of dentinal decay by geographical area. At a regional level, 5 year old children living in the north west of England were most likely to have experienced dentinal decay (30.6%). At upper-tier local authority level Brent, in the London region, had the highest prevalence of experience of dentinal decay (46.0%). Children living in the most deprived areas of the country were almost 3 times as likely to have experience of dentinal decay (35.1%) as those living in the least deprived areas (13.5%). There were also disparities in the prevalence of experience of dentinal decay by ethnic group, which was significantly higher in the other ethnic group (44.8%) and the Asian or Asian British ethnic group (37.7%).



**Always follow your heart**

 As a child, Monty Roberts was the son of a horse trainer and moved from stable to stable, from ranch to ranch, training horses. The boy’s schooling was constantly interrupted.

One day, when he was a senior, his teacher asked him to write about what he wanted to be when he grew up. He did not hesitate and wrote a seven page paper about his aim to be an owner of a horse ranch. It was a detailed paper with the location of buildings, stables and even a house plan.

Two days later he received his paper back with an F on the front page.

After class he asked his teacher why he received such a low score. The teacher told him, “This dream is unrealistic for a boy like you, who has no money, no resources and who comes from an itinerant family. There is no possibility that you will reach this goal." Then the teacher offered him the opportunity to rewrite the paper with a more realistic attitude.

The boy went home and asked his father how he should respond. His father told him, “This is a very important decision, so you must come to your own conclusion."

After several days, the boy brought the same paper to his teacher. No changes were made. He told his his teacher, “Keep the F and I will keep my dream."

Monty Roberts went on to own a 4000 square foot house in the middle of 200 acre horse ranch. He framed the paper he wrote and hung it over his fireplace. Always remember to follow your heart and never listen to those who do not believe in your ability to achieve your dreams.