



Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation in Wales: Recent Trends and System Pressures,¹

January 21, 2026

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¹ The document uses official statistics throughout the text unless otherwise noted. The statistics are drawn from <https://stats.gov.wales/en-GB>, last accessed on January 20, 2026.

1. Introduction and summary

The latest statistics show that the number of people living in temporary accommodation is gradually declining from its peak in August 2023. Alongside this, a record-breaking number of affordable homes were built in 2024-25, the highest total since data recording began in 2007-08. This is important given that supply of additional affordable homes is a key structural factor in the longer-term context of homelessness and housing stability.

Despite this progress, the number of people, including children, living in temporary accommodation remains persistently high, and reductions have occurred gradually rather than rapidly.

Devastatingly, children experience temporary accommodation at a higher per capita rate than adults.

We know that this can have significant short-term and life-long impacts on health, well-being, and education.²

This report analyses temporary accommodation data from recent years to ascertain trends. The key findings are:

- Individuals in TA declined by 4% in October 2025, year over year; however, the monthly average reductions are sluggish, with an average of 0.38% over the first ten months of 2025.
- One in every 216 children was living in temporary accommodation in October 2025, compared to one in every 360 adults.
- New people are continuing to enter TA at a significant rate - on average, nearly 12% of the total number of individuals in TA have been new entrants over the last 22 months.
- 15% of people entering temporary accommodation in October 2025 had already been in TA before within the last 12 months- compared to 14% in October 2024.

The compiled data demonstrates that there are various potential reasons that temporary accommodation numbers have remained so stubborn in recent years:

- **Social housing supply has increased but is being outstripped by demand:** delivery of new homes has been impeded by challenges such as delays in planning and consenting, cost inflation in materials, and a declining contractor market. Currently, supply only sustains the current system pressure rather than alleviating it. Sustained reductions in temporary accommodation depend on continued affordable housing delivery.

² <https://www.bevanfoundation.org/resources/temporary-accommodation-children/>

- **Housing and support providers have seen a rise in complex cases and households with support needs, but budgets have not kept pace:** analysis by CHC and Cymorth Cymru found that a 12% increase to housing support and prevention was needed in the 2026/27 budget to continue delivering services and paying staff appropriately³. However, the final budget allocates an incremental increase of just over 3%, further straining available resources. This provision is vital in preventing people from becoming homeless and sustaining tenancies in the longer term.
- **Repeat homelessness is still too high:** the latest monthly data showed 15% (193) of 1,287 of those in TA were returning individuals. This may reflect challenges in accessing specialised services to help people retain their accommodation, whether that is mental health, substance use disorder or other services. Approaches such as Housing First can play a vital role in ensuring no one experiences repeat homelessness.
- **Cost of living pressures:** in particular, food inflation, which is running at 3.5%, and private rents, which have increased by 5.7% in December 2025⁴, are putting financial stress on households.

The data paints a challenging picture, but there are green shoots of hope that we can and must build on.

As we look ahead to the election, Community Housing Cymru is looking to all political parties to make children living in temporary accommodation, particularly in bed and breakfasts, a thing of the past.

This is a call to action: we need a bold, deliverable plan to end Wales' housing emergency.

The next Welsh Government should set out a roadmap for delivering an additional 60,000 affordable homes over 10 years, so that 20% of all homes in Wales are affordable. The roadmap must set out actions to increase capacity to deliver year on year, so we can meet current and future housing needs in every community.

This must be underpinned by a clear understanding of housing and support needs, which will build on and catalyse the clear progress made to date. This is vital to ensure we tackle both the number of people entering TA, including repeat occurrences, and the rate of placements in suitable long-term accommodation. By building more affordable homes, we can change lives.

By investing in our current housing, we keep tenants safe and warm. By prioritising support, we keep people in their homes and help end homelessness in Wales.

³ <https://www.cymorthcymru.org.uk/home-matters-report-calls-for-increase-in-homelessness-and-housing-support-funding/>

⁴ Inflation and Price Indices, Office for National Statistics, last accessed on January 2020, 2026.

If we catalyse the momentum built up and give social landlords the confidence and certainty to deliver, we can end the overreliance on poor quality, insecure temporary accommodation. We can return hope and rebuild futures for the next generation.

2. Population in Temporary Accommodation

There were 10,818 individuals in temporary accommodation (TA) in October 2025, down from 11,319 in October 2024 (Figure 1), a 4% decline. Of these, 2,503 children aged below 16 were recorded in October 2025, compared to 2,862 in October 2024, a 12 per cent decrease. The average length of stay in temporary accommodation is 183 days, based on a 2024 report by Shelter Cymru.⁵ While children account for a smaller absolute number than adults, they experience temporary accommodation at a higher per capita rate than adults.

Expressed as a proportion of the population, 0.28 per cent of adults, or approximately one in every 360 adults, were living in temporary accommodation in October 2025. Among dependent children aged under 16, 0.36 per cent, or approximately one in every 216 children, were living in temporary accommodation. These figures highlight the scale of temporary accommodation use across Wales and the continued reliance on it for housing families with children.

3. Trend in Temporary Accommodation

Overall, the number of individuals living in temporary accommodation has been declining gradually, although levels remain persistently high. In October 2025, there were 3.1 individuals in temporary accommodation per 1,000 people of all ages, compared with 3.5 per 1,000 in October 2024 (Figure 2). Among children aged under 16, 4.6 per 1,000 were living in temporary accommodation in October 2025, down from 5.2 a year earlier.

Despite the year-on-year reduction, the pace of decline has been modest. Over the first ten months of 2025, the average monthly reduction in the number of individuals living in temporary accommodation was 0.38 per cent. This represents an improvement on the equivalent period in 2024, when the average monthly decline was 0.17 per cent, but remains indicative of a slow adjustment rather than a rapid easing of system pressure.

The persistence of elevated temporary accommodation numbers suggests that, while the number of people entering temporary accommodation may be stabilising, the system continues to face housing supply constraints that limit the pace at which households can exit temporary accommodation. As a result, temporary accommodation continues to accommodate a large number of individuals at any given point in time, even as the headline trend shows gradual improvement.

⁵ The Cost of Crisis, The Impact of Wales' Reliance on Temporary Accommodation, Shelter Cymru, 2024.

4. Movement into Long-Term Accommodation

Movements from temporary accommodation into long-term accommodation⁶ have fluctuated over time, with no clear upward trend. Long-term accommodation includes social homes (owned by local authorities or Registered Social Landlords) and private rented sector accommodation. Between January 2024 and October 2025, the number of individuals placed into long-term accommodation ranged from 631 to 884 per month, suggesting variability rather than sustained growth in move-on capacity (Figure 3).

In October 2025, 773 individuals were placed into long-term accommodation, of whom 223 were children aged under 16. When measured relative to the size of the temporary accommodation population, this equates to approximately 7 individuals moving into long-term accommodation per 100 people living in temporary accommodation, and 8.9 children per 100 children living in temporary accommodation (Figure 4).

These ratios indicate a persistent challenge. While individuals continue to move into long-term accommodation each month, the absence of a consistent upward trend suggests that long-term accommodation supply is not expanding fast enough to significantly reduce reliance on temporary accommodation. As a result, reductions in the temporary accommodation population are gradual and sensitive to short-term fluctuations (Figures 3 & 4).

Figure 1: Homeless Individuals in Temporary Accommodation (in 000s)

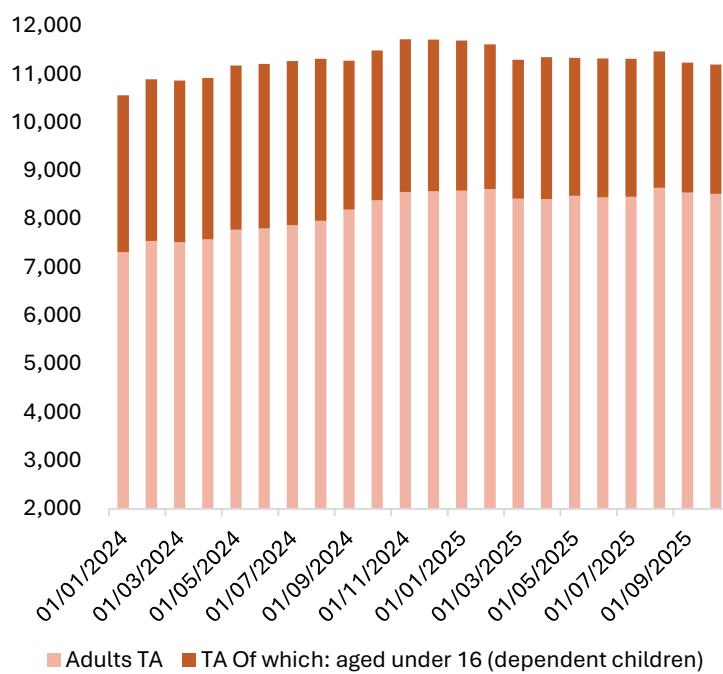
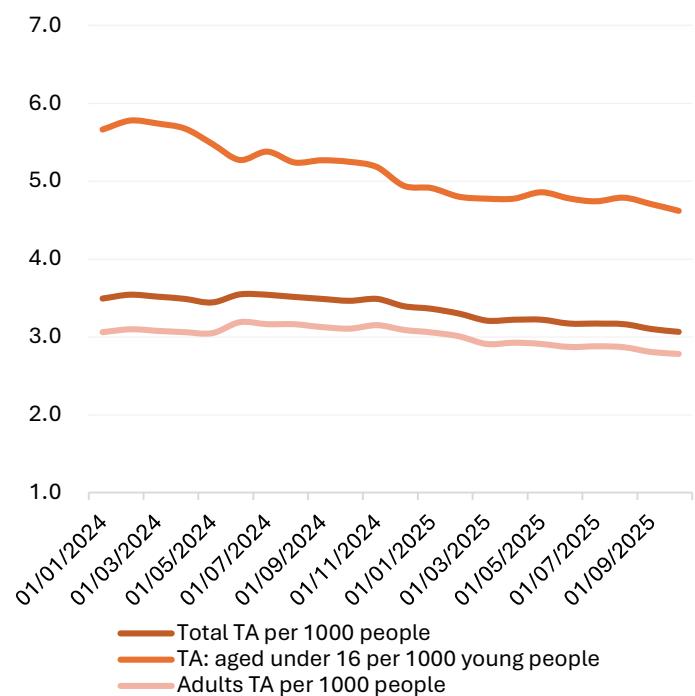


Figure 2: Individuals in Temporary Accommodation Per 000 People



⁶ Long-term accommodation is defined as suitable accommodation that is likely to last for 6 months or more. However, it excludes any interim accommodation used only to meet an immediate homelessness duty.

Figure 3: Individuals Placed in Long-Term Accommodation (LTA)

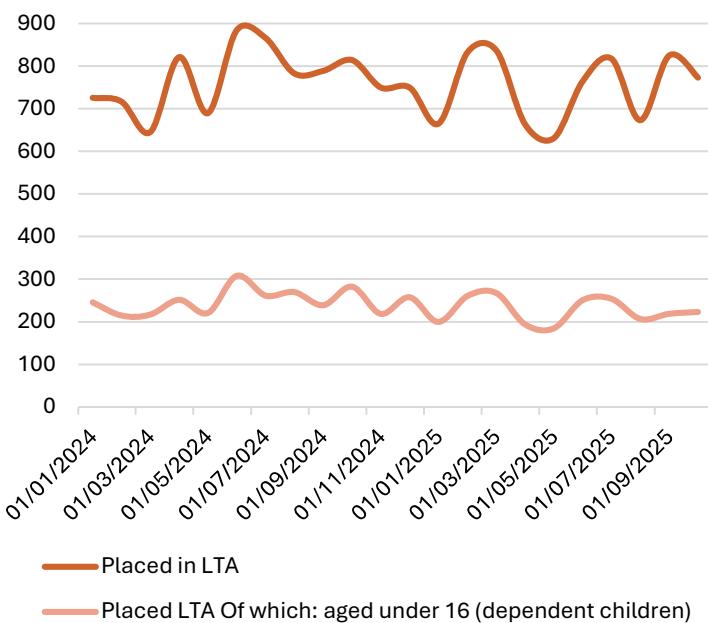
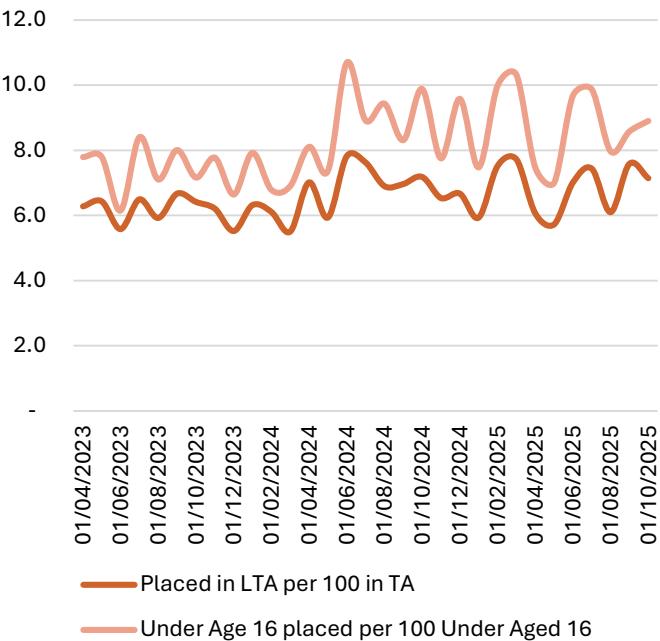


Figure 4: Individuals Placed in Long-Term Accommodation (LTA) per 100 people in TA



5. Occurrence of Homelessness Placements into Temporary Accommodation

There were 1,287 occurrences of people placed into temporary accommodation during October 2025, down 12 per cent from October 2024.⁷ Around 15 per cent of temporary accommodation placements in October 2025 involved individuals with a previous placement within the past 12 months, indicating repeat entry into the system. The measure provides a short-term view of the flow of households into the temporary accommodation system, distinct from the overall number of individuals housed at a point in time. After peaking in mid-2023, occurrences fell toward the end of that year and have since fluctuated below 1,500 per month. There was a sharp drop in occurrences to 1,002 in December 2024, before they quickly rose to 1,332 in January 2025. The recent October 2025 reduction suggests sustained downward pressure on new placements, though monthly variability remains notable (Figure 5).

Expressing occurrences relative to the temporary accommodation population highlights that new placements (including repeated) continue to represent a material proportion of total TA numbers (Figure 7). In October 2025, total occurrences were 11.9% of total individuals in TA and over the last 22 months, occurrences have averaged almost 11.9% of individuals in TA. Even as the headline TA population has declined modestly, additional

⁷ The term occurrence here refers to the number of placements made in the month and will generally exceed the number of unique individuals placed, since some people can be placed more than once within a 12-month period.

people entering sustains system pressure, requiring consistent throughput if the TA population is to fall further.

Figure 5: Total Individuals Monthly Occurrences of Homelessness Placements into TA (Indexed, January 2024 = 100)

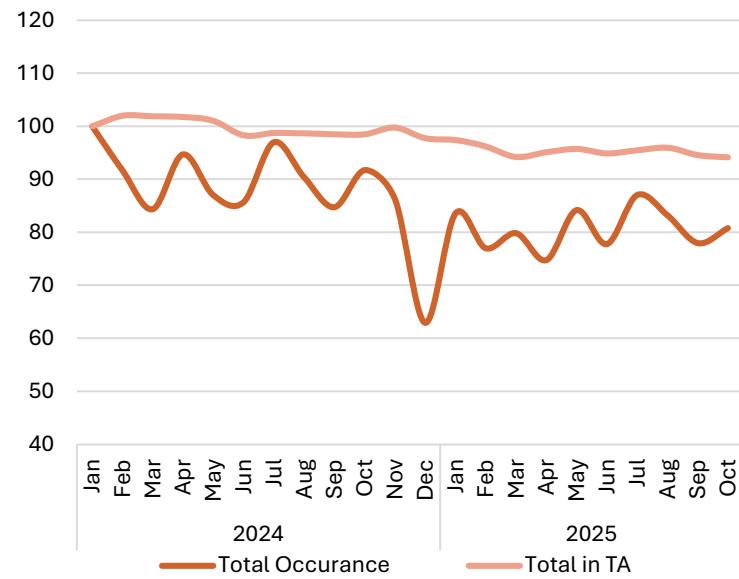


Figure 6: Dependent Children Monthly Occurrences of Homelessness Placements into TA (Indexed, January 2024 = 100)

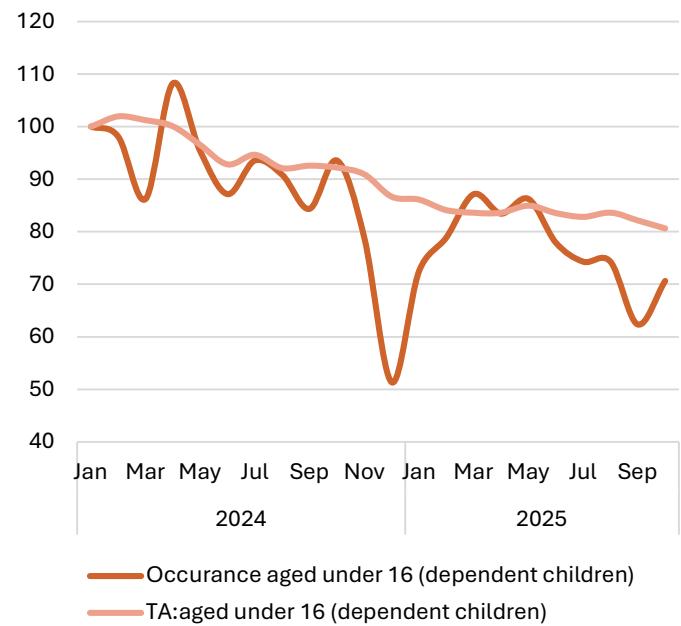
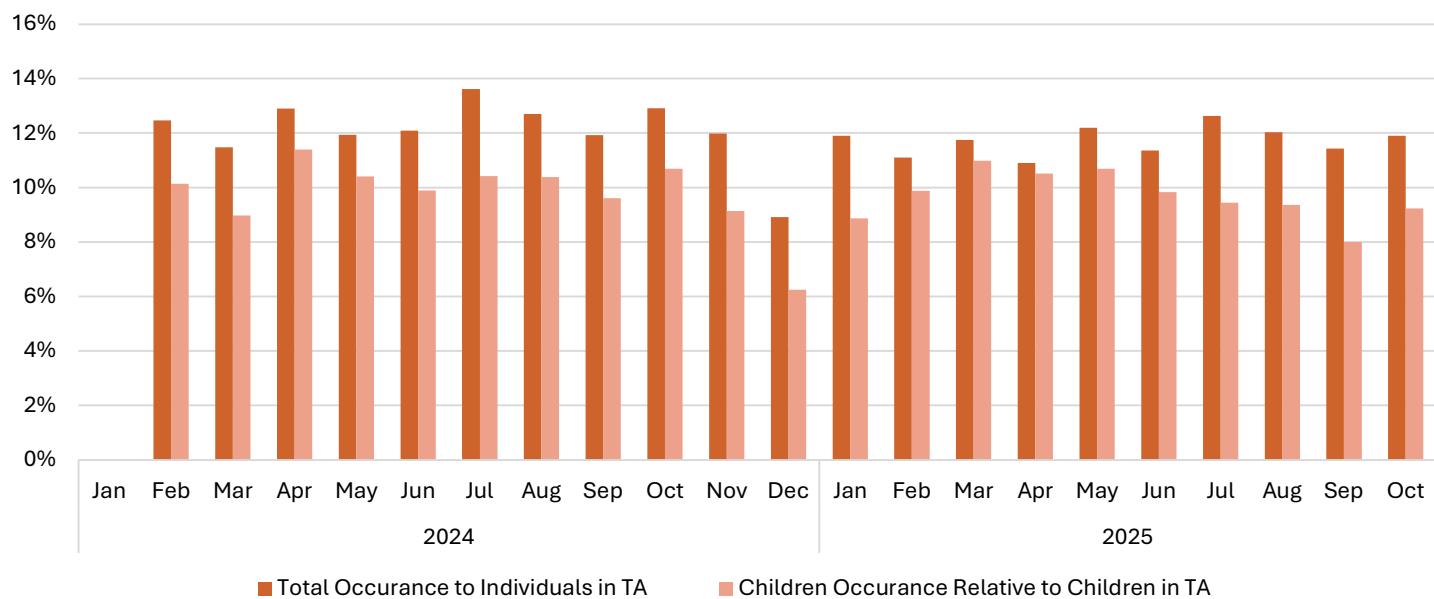


Figure 7: Monthly Occurrences Relative to Individuals in TA



6. Overall Assessment

Taken together, the data indicate that temporary accommodation use in Wales has begun to ease from its peak but remains high. The rate of decline has improved compared with 2024, yet remains slow, reflecting structural constraints within the housing system rather than short-term volatility.

Each number represents a life being lived in limbo, and the human cost of this is far too high. The flow of households into long-term accommodation continues to limit the speed at which temporary accommodation can be reduced. By building more affordable homes, we can change lives.

Without a sustained increase in move-on capacity, temporary accommodation is likely to remain a significant component of the housing system, particularly for families with dependent children. The data, therefore, suggests that recent improvements represent incremental progress rather than a fundamental shift in system capacity.

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