

Letter to Deputy Mayor for Housing on escalating youth homelessness in London

Key information

Publication type: General

Publication date: Wednesday 22 November 2023

1. Letter to Deputy Mayor for Housing on escalating youth homelessness in London

Escalating youth homelessness in London

Dear Tom,

I recently met with Phil Kerry, Chief Executive of New Horizons Youth Centre (NHYC), who you know well, to discuss the mounting issue of homelessness in young people in London.

Centrepont estimates that in 2022-23 there were 135,800 16-24-year-olds who were homeless or at risk of homelessness in the UK, with 20,200 in London alone. That's an [increase in London of ten per cent on 2020-21](#).

I can testify that in my nine years as a Councillor in Camden, youth homelessness has risen over this time, and this year I have personally been contacted by increasing numbers of young people in need of emergency housing.

There is a very real danger that a proportion of these 16-24-year-olds will become long-term homeless, with the associated threats to their physical and mental health, negative impacts on access to education and ability to work, and vulnerability to violence and abuse.

More widely, costs to all levels of government and society associated with homeless young people, are soaring. [Analysis by Centrepont estimated that the total annual cost of homeless young people amounts to more than £8.5 billion](#), and I believe that in London the rising tide of youth homelessness now costs over £550 million.

Given all this, could you tell me what you and the GLA Housing and Land team are doing to counteract this worrying upward trend in youth homelessness, and what support schemes the Mayor is providing, including specifically for initiatives from NHYC?

This spiralling problem will require more investment in the coming years, so can you also assure me there will be dedicated funding for youth homelessness in the Mayor's budget for 2023-24?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Sian Berry