

REPORT TITLE

Ethnic Disproportionality and Homelessness – Initial Camden Scoping

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Following a themed discussion on the Homelessness System Transformation at the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2023, an initial analysis of ethnic disproportionality and homelessness in Camden was requested.

This report contains that initial analysis, using data from statutory homelessness applicants and service data from three commissioned service areas for single adults experiencing homelessness. All data covers the same 2022/23 period.

Initial findings show that some ethnic groups are disproportionately over and under-represented within homelessness services. The most notable over-representation was for the 'Black, Black British, British Welsh, Caribbean or African' category, especially within that for Black Caribbean residents.

Findings also demonstrate the importance of intersectionality with gender and household composition (i.e., whether families or single adults) and details three actions for the Homelessness System Transformation to continue its insight work in this area.

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1. Introduction

The Homelessness System Transformation has a workstream that is seeking to increase understanding of how different groups experience homelessness in Camden. As part of this priority area, inequalities around ethnicity and race have been highlighted as requiring further attention. This was in part due to a request by the Health and Wellbeing Board for an initial analysis of ethnic disproportionality and homelessness in Camden, following a themed discussion on the transformation in July 2023.

The initial analysis draws on a 2022 policy paper from the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI), which summarised evidence on inequalities in the rates of homelessness across different ethnic groups, and what further interventions and research should be considered¹. The paper found minority ethnic groups were over- or under-represented in homelessness services across UK regions, using statutory homeless and rough sleeping reports from Local Authorities and 2021 Census data. The paper called on central and local government, and other actors, to consider a range of recommendations to better understand and respond to these inequalities (presented in Appendix B of this report).

2. Aims and initial data

This paper sets out an initial analysis of ethnic disproportionality across a range of homelessness datasets in Camden, drawing on the approach from the CHI report.

The aims of the Camden-specific analysis are to:

- Begin to understand levels of ethnic disproportionality in homelessness services in Camden.
- Test the methodology and determine what other data can be used to provide a wider system view.
- Prompt a discussion on how to further our understanding and responses to disproportionality where it is found.

The datasets used initially include:

- a) Statutory homelessness applicants owed a duty by Camden Council (2022/23) – this data includes all households in Camden, including single people and families, who applied and were eligible for support to either prevent or relieve their homelessness² within the 2022/23 financial year. Where households include more than one person, only the ethnicity of the main applicant is captured.
- b) Commissioned and council-run services that provide accommodation and support for single adults experiencing homelessness in Camden, including:
 - Snapshot of all residents of the Adult Pathway, Camden's commissioned supported accommodation for people experiencing homelessness (taken on 31 March 2023).
 - Service data from Routes off The Street hub and outreach, which supports people rough sleeping in Camden (2022/23) – only those with a local

¹Finney, 2022. Ethnic inequalities and homelessness in the UK. Centre for Homelessness Impact. Available [here](#).

² Statutory homelessness (England). House of Commons Library, 2022. Available [here](#)

connection to Camden were used in the analysis, as this has most relevance to local prevention and early intervention. This figure represents only 19% of the total of people supported, with 81% of people arriving in Camden from other parts of the country or abroad.

- Service data from Women’s Respite Service, which supports women experiencing domestic abuse and other gender-based violence, and at risk of rough sleeping (2022/23).

3. Initial findings

3.1. National context

It is important to note that these findings exist within the context of:

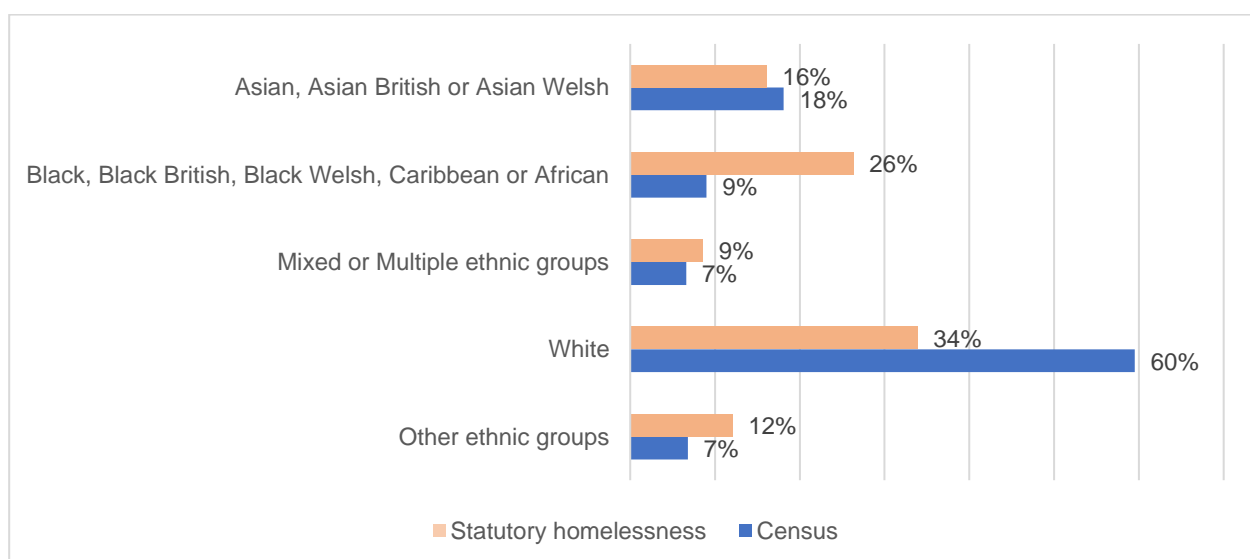
- Stark and persistent inequalities between ethnic groups in the UK in many areas
- Inequalities across life domains where there is a proven correlation with homelessness, such as quality and security of housing, health and employment.

For example, Trust for London’s Poverty Profile (2023) demonstrates how across London, non-white households are more likely to experience poverty across a range of indicators. It found that 33% of non-white households were living in poverty after housing costs, compared to 25% of all households³. This, as well as other structural inequalities around race and ethnicity, increases the risk of homelessness for ethnic minorities.

3.2. Comparison of Census 2021 and homelessness datasets, by ethnic groups

Statutory homelessness

Table 1: Proportion of homeless applicants owed support from the Council in 2022/23 by ethnic group, compared to Camden’s recorded Census population in 2021



³ <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/>

Across households owed a statutory duty of support in 2022/23, the White ethnic group was significantly under-represented compared to the Census 2021 population. The Black ethnic group was significantly over-represented with 26% of applications, despite being only 9% of the recorded population. 'Other ethnic groups' (comprised of 'Arab' and 'Other' ethnicities) were also significantly over-represented.

It is also worth noting that Bangladeshi applicants were a significant proportion of the 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh' category and were over-represented in the data, and therefore were separated when considering other intersectionality, such as gender.

Within this dataset, ethnic disproportionality intersected with gender, age and household composition (i.e., whether an applicant is a family or single). The statistical analysis of the statutory homelessness dataset allowed for a further exploration of these intersections.

Key findings were that:

- Black applicants were more likely to be female (58%) than all ethnic groups (52%), and were disproportionately younger, between the ages of 18-29.
- Bangladeshi and Arab ethnic groups were more likely to be applying for support as a family (a probability of 50% and 57% respectively, compared to only 21% for White applicants).
- Women were more likely than men to be the lead applicant when with children (a 48% chance compared to a 17% chance for men). Within this, there were noticeable differences between ethnicities. For example, White women had a 40% chance of family homelessness compared to only 7% for White men. In comparison, the probability of Arab men and Bangladeshi men applying as a family were 38% and 30% respectively (and as high as 73% and 68% respectively for women).

Commissioned services

The Black ethnic group were significantly over-represented in the commissioned homelessness services included in this initial analysis. For example, whilst only 9% of Camden's census population were recorded as Black, 32% of emergency places at the Women's Respite Service were Black Women. This is another notable intersection with gender and poses a question as to why Black Women were more likely to present in an acute crisis due to domestic abuse (i.e., they were at imminent risk of, or currently, rough sleeping, rather than successfully receiving more preventative support).

Overall, 'Asian, Asian British and Asian Welsh' were under-represented in the service data. Compared to 18% of the population, a much smaller proportion accessed commissioned support services for single homeless and rough sleeping services (between 7% and 9%). However, Asian women were significantly over-represented within one of the three women-only Adult Pathway services (the refuge for women fleeing domestic abuse).

The findings show the importance of including the intersectionality with gender. Table 2 shows data for all ethnic groups across the three women-only services in the Adult Pathway, as well as the Women’s Respite Rooms. Asian women made up 27% of places in women-only Adult Pathway services, and all of these were in the refuge for women fleeing domestic abuse. This is a notable over-representation and against the trend of the Asian ethnic group being under-represented more generally.

Table 2: Proportion of people in women-only provision, compared to Camden’s recorded Census population

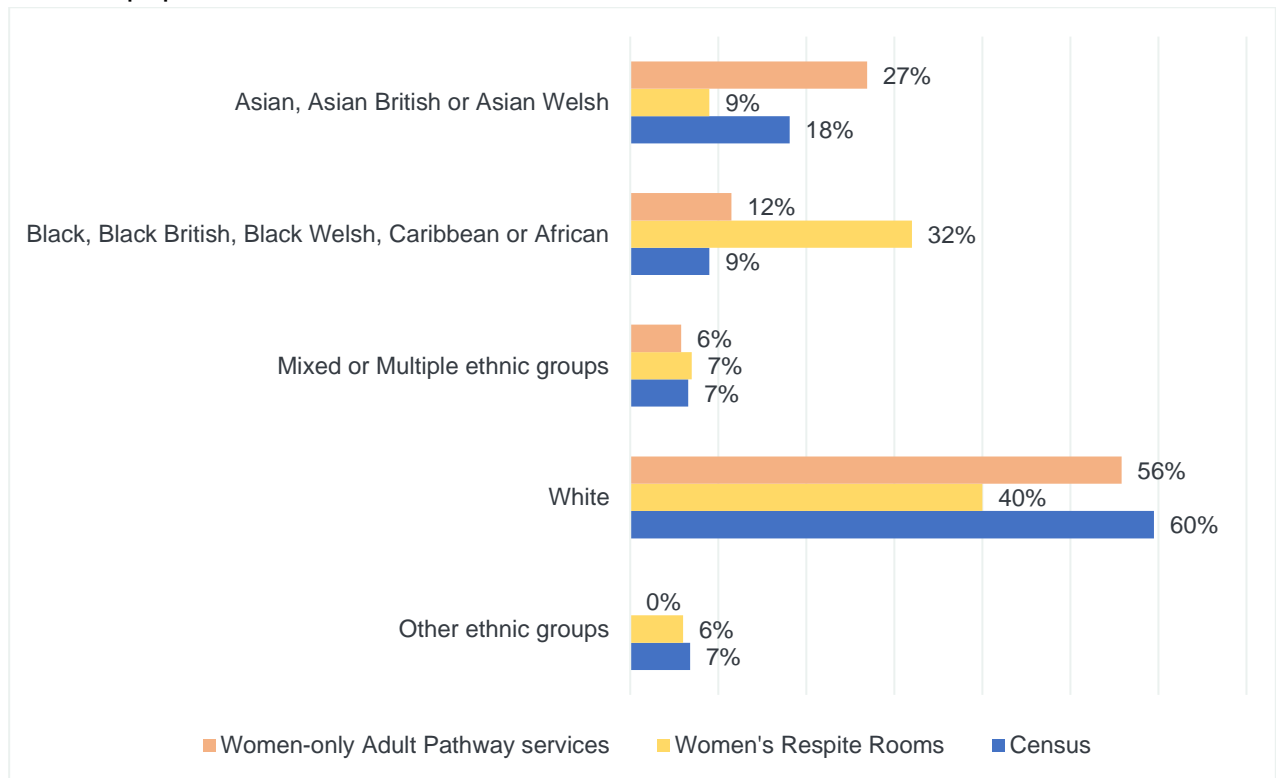


Table 3 to 7 demonstrates the under- or over- representation of all service users of commissioned and council-delivered supported accommodation (the Adult Pathway) and Routes off The Street (RTS). This includes all service users irrespective of gender. For RTS, this includes only people with a local connection to Camden.

Table 3: Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh

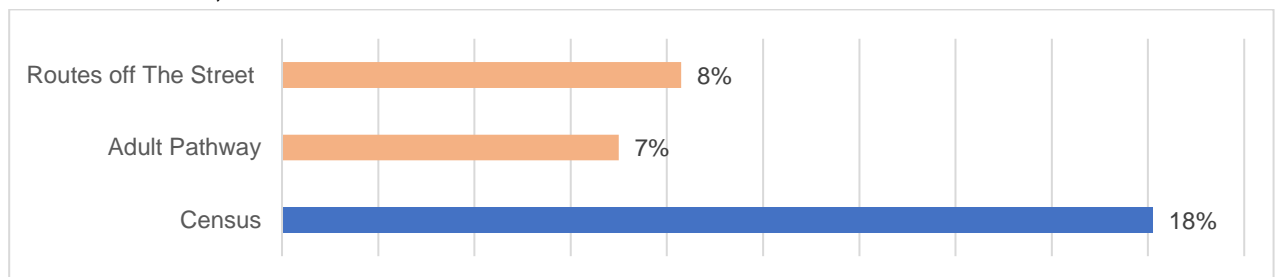


Table 4: Black, Black British, British Welsh, Caribbean or African

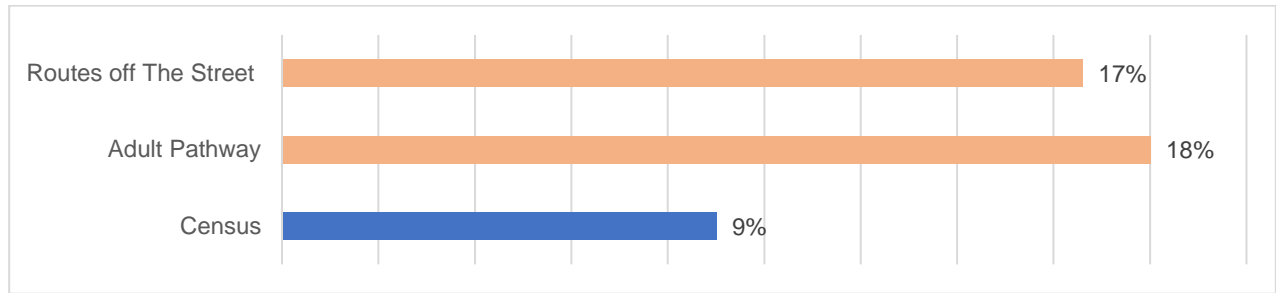


Table 5: Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

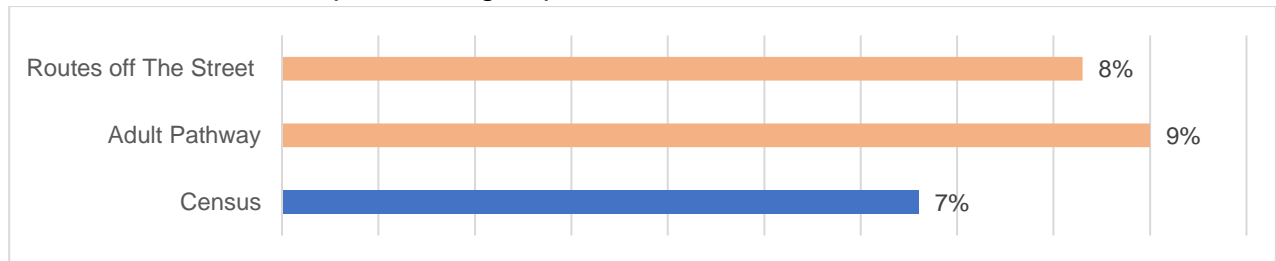


Table 6: White

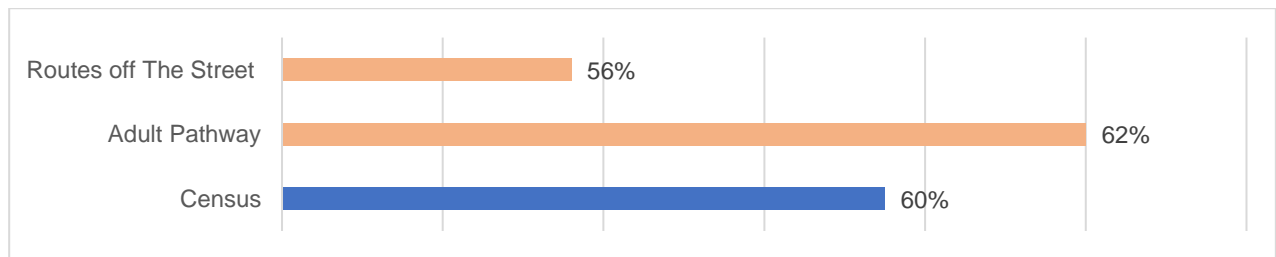
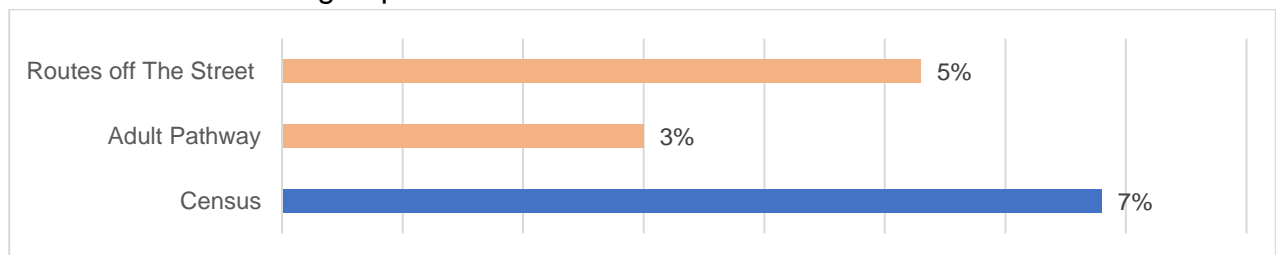


Table 7: Other ethnic groups



3.3. Specific ethnic groups

Within the overarching census categories, there were ethnicities that had more pronounced levels of disproportionality. When analysing this more specific set of ethnic groups it is helpful to display disproportionality as a ratio, in line with the Centre for Homelessness Impact's methodology.

This ratio is derived from dividing the percentage in each ethnic group in homelessness services by the percentage of the same ethnic group in the overall census population. Ratios below 1 indicate an underrepresentation and over 1 indicate an overrepresentation, when compared to census data. A score of 1 would mean that the

proportion of people accessing the service from that ethnic group was equal to that ethnicity's proportion of the entire Camden population.

The five ethnic groups with the highest combined ratios across the datasets were:

1. White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller **(1:6)**
2. Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean **(1:4)**
3. Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African **(1:2)**
4. Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean **(1:2)**
5. Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black **(1:2)**

This means, for example, that White Gypsy or Irish Traveller residents were 6 times more prevalent in homelessness services than to be expected based on their Census population size.

What is also notable is that 3 out of 5 of these are included under the 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African' category, demonstrating that the over-representation is consistent across Black ethnic groups (albeit most pronounced for the Black Caribbean group). For a full breakdown of the ratios for each ethnic group, see Appendix A.

3.4. What does this analysis tell us?

Whilst only an initial analysis and therefore limited in its conclusions, there is notable under- and over-representation in statutory homelessness and commissioned support services in Camden, particularly over-representation of ethnicities within the 'Black, Black British, British Welsh, Caribbean or African' category.

When considering ethnicity, it is important to consider the intersection with gender and household composition. For example, Bangladeshi and Arab applicants had a greater chance of applying as a family than other ethnic groups. Women were far more likely to be the lead applicant for a family and in the most over-represented ethnic category, 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African', women made up a larger proportion of applicants than in other ethnic groups.

As mentioned in section 3.1., these findings are linked to complex issues around structural inequalities in life domains that directly correlate with increased risk of homelessness. It is therefore important to address these inequalities further upstream from someone's homelessness, to reduce the likelihood of it occurring at all (for example, through tailored, culturally appropriate interventions within communities).

3.5. Further analysis

It would be useful to expand the scope of the analysis, to look more broadly at the homelessness system, including:

- Temporary accommodation
- Mental and physical health services

- Drug and alcohol services
- Transitions from institutions (such as prison) or places of care (such as hospitals)
- Services that support families, such as the Integrated Early Years service

It would also be useful to deepen the analysis and look at outcomes from support, as well as presentations to services. This would give a much richer picture and answer questions around whether different ethnic groups are achieving equitable outcomes from the support they receive. There also remains a question about who is missing out on services, and what data we hold for people rejected from, or unable to access support.

4. Next steps

It is proposed that the Homelessness System Transformation programme supports the following action:

1. Conduct a further analysis to deepen understanding and build on initial findings.
2. Convene partners in the homelessness system to review good practice and recommendations nationally and locally (such as considering ethnic-specific interventions recommended in Appendix B). This includes connecting with other programmes of work that may find the data useful, such as Family Hubs.
3. Establish what preventative work is underway in communities that could further our insight and provide more tailored support around homelessness, for example linking in with community centres and Voluntary Action Camden networks.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – ratios of disproportionality across ethnicities

Darker red denotes a higher ratio, and therefore higher rate of overrepresentation.

Area name	Statutory homelessness	Adult Pathway	Routes off the Street	Women's Respite Service
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	1.36	0.44	0.66	-
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	0.17	-	-	0.31
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	0.35	0.30	0.45	0.30
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	0.85	1.25	-	-
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	1.12	0.50	0.58	1.75
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	2.67	1.47	1.66	3.82
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	3.92	4.62	2.31	3.85
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	3.10	2.00	2.30	1.00
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	0.29	-	0.75	-
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	1.37	2.00	1.50	1.00
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	2.33	4.17	1.25	0.83
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	1.60	0.83	1.58	2.08
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	0.59	1.21	1.23	0.68
White: Irish	0.61	2.40	1.80	0.40
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2.60	-	-	20.00
White: Roma	-	-	-	-
White: Other White	0.53	0.62	0.36	0.62
Other ethnic group: Arab	2.63	-	-	2.86
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	1.39	0.64	1.13	-

Appendix B – recommendations from the Centre for Homelessness Impact report

1. Governments to bring race equalities approaches into homelessness programmes.
2. UK constituent country governments and local authorities to routinely assess homelessness by ethnic group and build this monitoring into homelessness plans.
3. Research funding to enable inclusion of homelessness in large-scale national surveys together with mixed methods studies, including to provide understanding of experiences of racism.
4. UK Government's Better Outcomes through Linked Data (BOLD) programme to pay attention to ethnic differentiation in data linkage and provision, and the Race Disparity Unit to pay attention to homelessness.
5. Consideration to be given to ethnic-specific interventions such as:
 - a. Co-Production approaches (e.g., Community Coalitions) to the development of culturally relevant and appropriate local strategies;
 - b. delivery of services in-place in diverse communities;
 - c. nurturing of informal support within diverse communities;
 - d. provision of services in multiple languages other than English;
 - e. availability of alternative approaches to healing;
 - f. development of a Racial Equality Toolkit for homelessness practitioners;
 - g. regular training in anti-racist practice