Since 2013, IPPR North and Justlife Foundation have been speaking to people living in unsupported temporary accommodation (UTA) – the hidden homeless – to discover what life is really like for them. We have conducted 45 in-depth interviews, and have uncovered the bleak reality of life in this type of accommodation.

This reality is visualised as a user journey in this wallchart. ‘Peter’s’ experience of moving into and out of UTA is represented by an iceberg, both above and below the waterline. This journey moves through the four stages outlined in our latest summary report, *The journey home: Building a solution to unsupported temporary accommodation* – finding a bed, moving in and the first month, living in UTA, and moving out and moving on – plotting Peter’s unique journey across the ‘typical’ movement into and out of UTA. Although this shows one individual’s journey, it represents the experience of this type of accommodation that is broadly typical of the 45 people interviewed throughout the course of our research. It is therefore annotated at the bottom of each section by statistics and quotes from the other 44 individuals interviewed as part of this research.

In our visualisation, the peaks rising above the waterline represent the level of external support that Peter receives at each point in his journey, while the expanse below the water represents what’s going on ‘under the surface’ – specifically mental health deterioration and loss of control. The different types of support that Peter receives are denoted by three different symbols: ● = informal support, ■ = statutory support, and ◆ = voluntary sector organisation (VSO) support. The journey highlights the reality that service involvement falls away once an individual finds their way into UTA, and it is from this point that many people reported worsening mental health and increased lack of control over their lives. Of the 45 residents interviewed, 38 reported deteriorating mental health, and 39 felt a lack of control, therefore intensifying their negative experiences of UTA.

It is important to note that this research is qualitative, based on individuals’ retellings of their experiences within UTA.
**PETER’S JOURNEY**

### STAGE 1: FINDING A BED

- **LOCAL AUTHORITY**
  - Peter presents as homeless but is turned away.
- **INFORMAL SUPPORT/FRIENDS**
  - Peter turns to friends to help him out.
- **SOFA SURFING**
  - Staying with friends for 8 months.
- **NIGHT SHELTER**
  - ...for a couple of nights.

**TABLE: How people found a bed in UTA**

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**QUOTES**

- "I called into Shelter and I saw someone there... They mentioned [UTA] and phoned the manager. I had no money to get there, I didn’t know where I was going, and Shelter gave me £5 for the key... So I got the £5 and the manager was just sitting there on the settee when I walked through the door.

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**STAGE 2: MOVING IN & THE FIRST MONTH**

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**STAGE 3: LIVING IN UNSUPPORTED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION**

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**STAGE 4: MOVING OUT & MOVING ON**

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