

# Hundreds of homeless died on the UK's streets in past year

Tom Lomax

MORE than 440 people experiencing homelessness have died on streets or in temporary accommodation in the UK in the past year, an investigation has found.

The figures were compiled by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (BIJ) as part of their long-term project, Dying Homeless, to count those that die when experiencing homelessness in the UK.

Data shows there were at least 449 deaths in a year – more than one each day. It is acknowledged that the figures are likely to be a substantial underestimate as no official body counts homeless deaths in Britain.

The causes of death were varied, including violence, drug overdoses, illnesses and murder, among other reasons. The average age at death was 49 for men and 53 for women, almost 40 per cent lower than the average life expectancy of 82 years in the UK.

The statistics were released in the same week as World Homeless Day, an annual event to bring awareness to the homelessness crisis and encourage people to get involved.

Amanda Dubarry, chief executive of the homeless charity Caritas Anchor House, in the London Borough of Newham, said: “We are appalled at the unacceptably high numbers of deaths amongst people

experiencing homelessness across the UK.

“We hope these statistics will be a wake-up call to the crisis of homelessness, for both the public and the authorities involved, especially as the colder winter months approach and the danger for these vulnerable people increases.”

