

DEMOS

# Wall to Wall Support

Presentation for EELGA,  
16 May 2024



# ABOUT US

DEMOS

**We're an  
independent  
think tank  
and a charity**

**We champion  
involving  
citizens in  
policy making**

**We conduct  
participatory  
research and  
policy  
projects**

DEMOS

# WALL TO WALL SUPPORT

JOINING UP PUBLIC  
SERVICES AND HOUSING  
FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN,  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

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Supported by



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DECEMBER 2023

# RELATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICES



This research is part of Demos's work on *relational public services*.

- Public service reform that puts people and improving relationships at its heart.
- Integrated services to provide holistic support to people
- Preventing problems arising or getting worse, not just 'crisis management'

# Why focus on vulnerable children, young people and families?

Higher need for public services & support services

More likely to struggle with housing costs

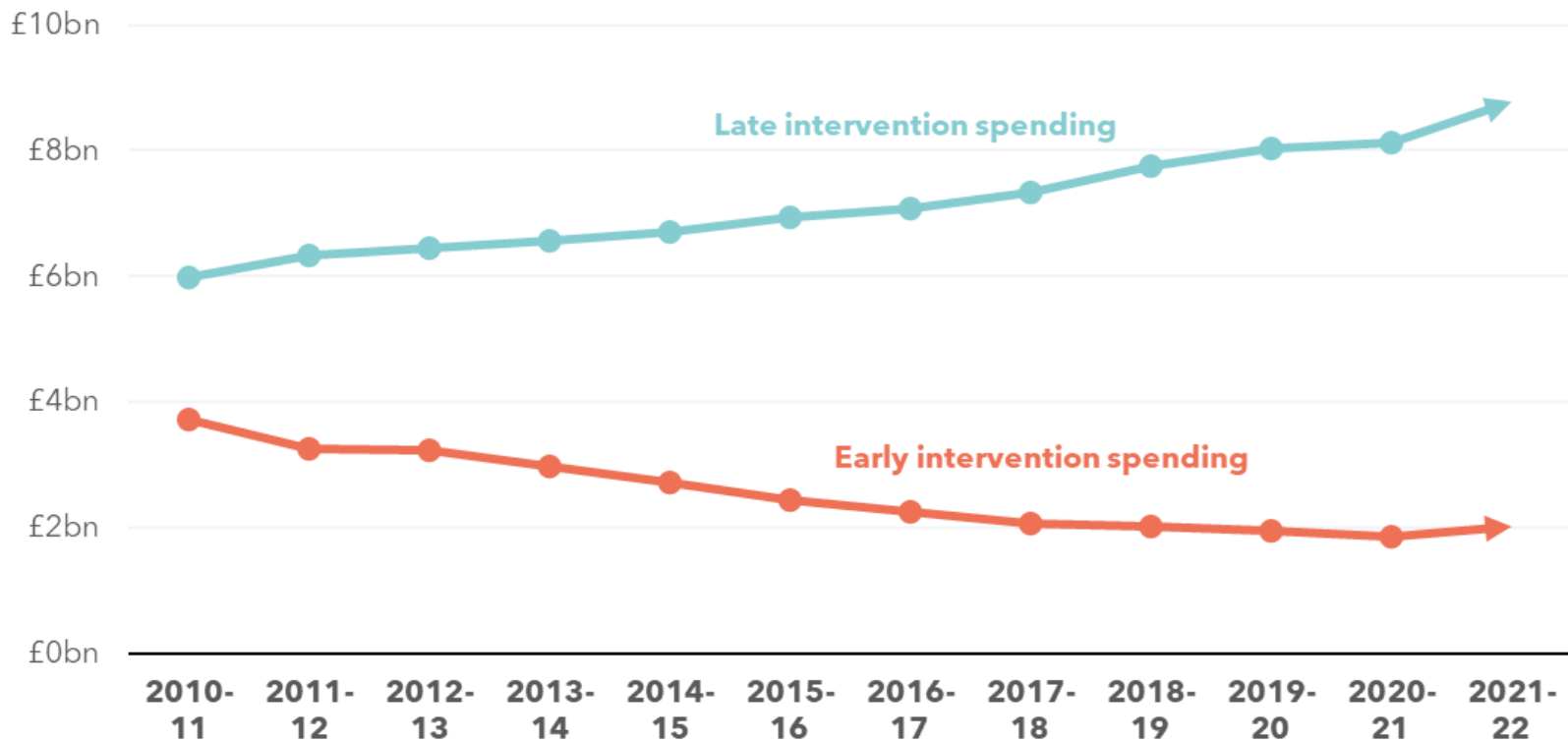
Groups who need a range of joined-up services

# Our research

- Desk-based evidence review
- In-depth qualitative research with 10 young people and 10 parents over a period of four weeks each
- Survey of 200 young people aged 18-24 and 300 parents of children aged 11-17
- Original economic analysis conducted by WPI Economics
- Advice and feedback from Steering Group
- Two roundtables with stakeholders

## Late intervention spending increasingly dominates expenditure on children's services in England

Real terms in spending on children's services, by stage of intervention (2021-22 prices)



“

Resources have become trapped at  
**the crisis end of the system**, with not  
enough early support available.

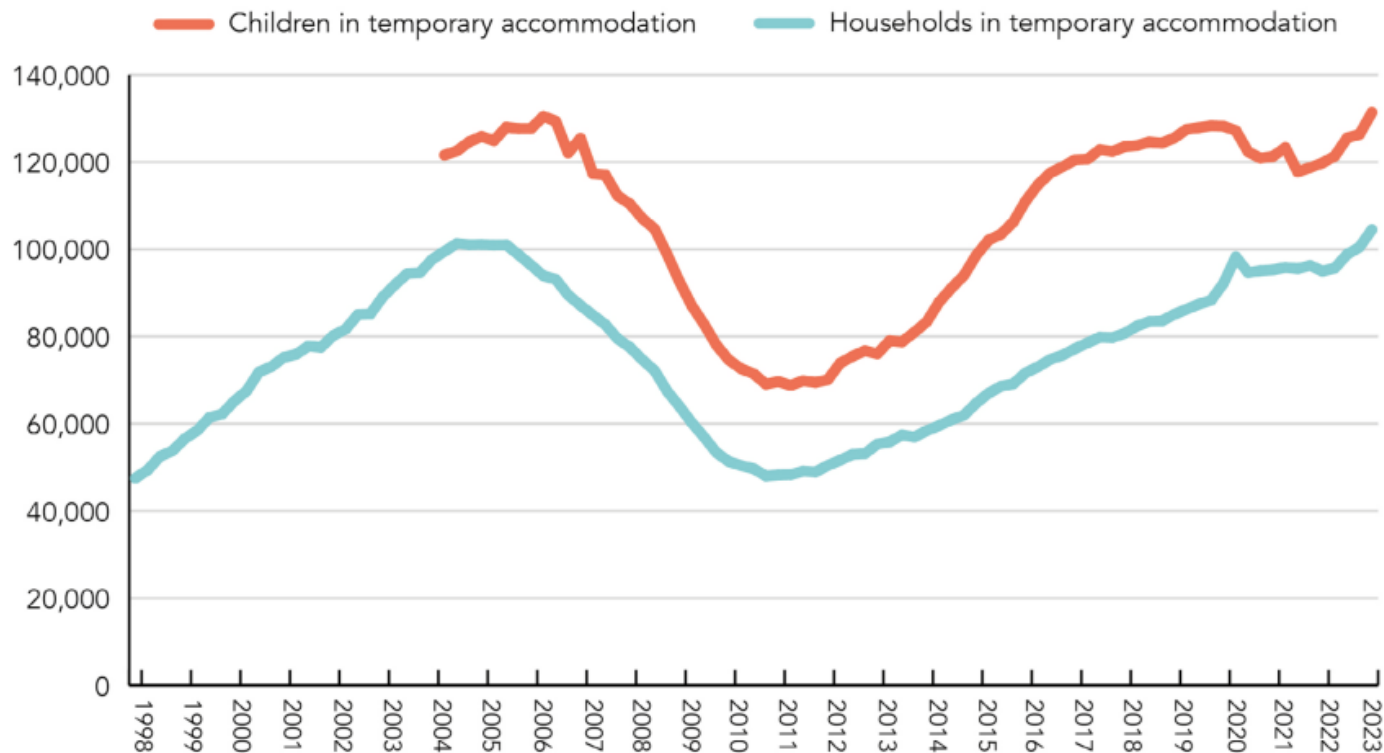
— *Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for  
Education, February 2023*



## The number of households and children in temporary accommodation in England has increased significantly since 2011

**FIGURE 4**

HOUSEHOLDS AND CHILDREN IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION IN ENGLAND



# What problems do young people and families encounter?

Siloed services

Inaccessible and  
unresponsive  
services

Sometimes it's  
hard to know  
exactly what you  
need

“

[Living in hostels] was really stressful. I got moved around a lot, and it had a really bad impact on my mental health. It was really unstable.

*— Anna, age 22, who lived in temporary accommodation for around four years*

“

The school recommended somewhere for mental health [for my daughter] after lockdown. I rang them, and they didn't answer even though I rang several times. I left the information on the voicemail and they never got back to me. I was in the dark about where you can get help for children's mental health, and then I lost faith as no one got back to me.

— *Rosie, parent, living in council housing*

“

There's quite a lot of mould... people come round and can smell damp which is distressing. I get quite a bad cough because of it.

— *Young person (age 24), council housing, Stockport*

“ The council left me without hot water for five weeks at one point.

— *Female, parent, council housing, London*

Case study: Becky, parent, living in a housing association home, London

Becky has really bad damp behind radiators in her hallway and bathroom. It's been like that for two years. Builders took the radiators off two years ago and haven't replaced them. In the winter Becky and her partner are unable to bathe their children properly because it's so cold – the housing association just told her to shut the window, but it doesn't make a difference because it's black and rotten. When they complain about the mould, they then say she should have the window open for better ventilation.

# A lack of joined-up working also has a significant economic impact



Our research finds that a lack of joined-up services is estimated to cost the government between **£1.5bn and £4.3bn** every year...



...due to additional use of public services (such as health care or the criminal justice system) by young people and families who **did not receive adequate support or early help.**



# Examples of joining up services

- Sure Start (see recent IFS research on education and health impacts)
- Supporting Families (previously Troubled Families)
- Community Solutions, Barking and Dagenham Council
- 'Liberated method', Gateshead Council
- AllChild (formerly West London Zone)
- Cradle to Career North Birkenhead, Wirral Council, Right to Succeed & partners
- Greater Manchester Homes Partnership, Greater Manchester Combined Authority [Social Outcomes Contract]

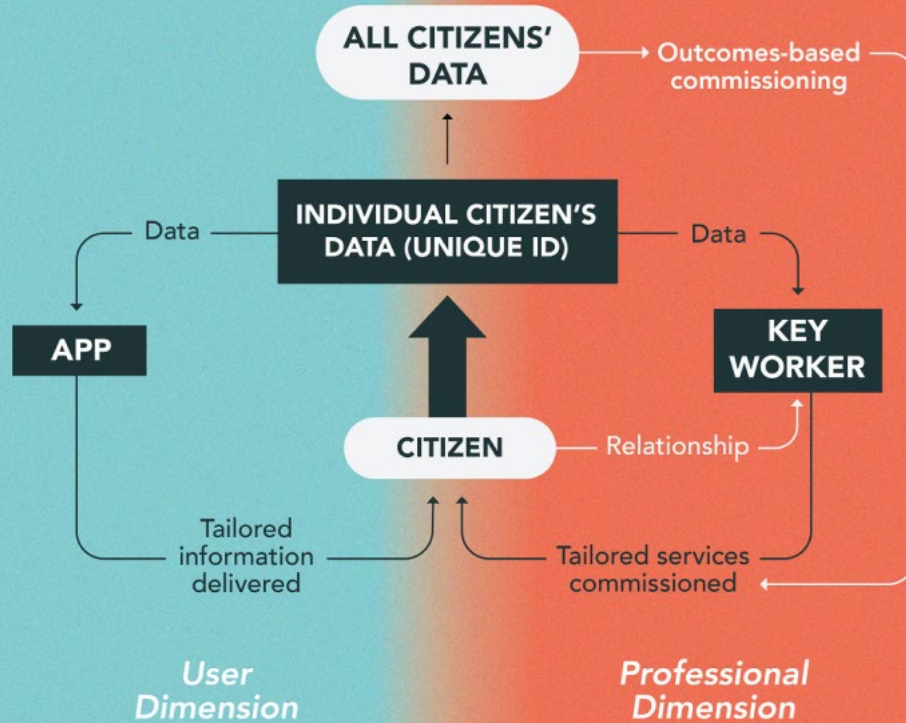
# Towards a new citizen-centred public service design

Break down silos  
and join up  
services...

...enabled by  
joined-up data and  
digital innovation...

...funded by  
investment to  
support  
prevention

## CITIZEN-CENTRED PUBLIC SERVICE DESIGN



# Prevention & public services

- Consensus that we need to shift the way that we spend public money and use public policy to focus on prevention (Tobacco and Vapes Bill 2024, WorkWell, Hewitt Review, Labour's NHS mission)
- Demos published an essay *The Preventative State: Rebuilding our local, social and civic foundations* (Apr 2023) - 'to truly reduce demand for public services in the long run, we need to not only prevent problems from arising, but create the conditions for flourishing and resilience within communities.'
- Demos has since proposed that the Treasury should create 'Preventative Departmental Expenditure Limits' (PDEL) - to classify and ring fence preventative investment, injecting long-termism into public spending.
- CIPFA currently running a project 'Exploring preventative investment in local government'

# Conclusion

We need to be bold and commit to deep reform - or else risk getting stuck in a continued spiral of rising need and rising crisis spending.

# THANK YOU



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