

The logo for The Behavioural Insights Team consists of a grey graphic of four overlapping diamonds forming a larger diamond shape, with a white cross-like pattern inside.

THE  
BEHAVIOURAL  
INSIGHTS TEAM.

## **Kent District Councils Behavioural Insights housing project – scope**

One of the most important responsibilities local authorities have is to support people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This often involves working with individuals or families to help them stay in their current accommodation or to find new permanent accommodation. The duty on local authorities will increase on 1 April 2018, when the Homelessness Reduction Act comes into effect. This legislation increases the number of people eligible for support, and requires local authorities to develop a Personal Housing Action Plan (PHAP) with each person or household. The PHAP aims to help households find accommodation in the private market where possible because demand for social housing so markedly outstrips supply.

In 2017, five District Councils in Kent (Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling, Swale, Sevenoaks and Maidstone) secured funding from the LGA for a behavioural insights project aimed at supporting housing options teams to reduce homelessness. In anticipation of the big changes that local authorities will face when the Homelessness Reduction Act comes into effect, BIT will be redesigning the cover letter that will be provided with each PHAP in Kent. This letter, introduces the PHAP, will be tested alongside a behaviourally informed version to assess which version is better understood and most persuasive.

In February and March 2018, BIT will conduct a randomised controlled trial to evaluate these letters. This RCT will take place on [Predictiv](#), a platform designed by BIT to support rigorous testing of behavioural interventions using online experiments. Predictiv will allow BIT to recruit a representative sample of 1,000 people in the South East of England of a given income level, in order to rigorously evaluate the effect of each version of the letter. The results of this experiment will be available before 1 April, so that the results can be built into the Councils' services.