



Homelessness Review

March 2022

**Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022
to 2027**

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Introduction

This Homelessness Review is written to accompany the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 27. The review examines homelessness in the borough during the last 3 to 5 years, related issues around affordability and supply of affordable homes. This enables the Council to identify and understand the trends in housing need and homelessness and our response.

Homelessness is caused by multiple factors. This document looks at levels of homelessness within the context of the wider housing market, the costs of market homes, private rented properties as well as the maximum levels of benefit paid towards housing costs.

Much of the data around homelessness is taken from the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), enacted April 2018. This significantly changed our duties and the amount of information available at each stage of an applicant’s housing journey. This also means it is not possible to compare outcomes between the old and new legal duties.

Terminology

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) introduced new processes and terminology for the way local authorities manage homelessness applications. The data in this document is presented in terms of “duties”. These terms are explained briefly below.

Prevention Duty

Anyone can approach the Council for housing advice and assistance. A prevention duty applies when the Council is satisfied an applicant is eligible and threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This duty triggers co production with the applicant of a

personalised housing plan (PHP) and casework which includes a variety of activities to prevent the applicant becoming homeless. The prevention duty ends:

- If the prevention activities remove the homelessness threat
- After 56 days if the applicant becomes homeless
- If the applicant refuses an offer of suitable accommodation

Relief Duty

This duty applies when the Council is satisfied an applicant is eligible and is homeless. The Council has a duty to assess and provide a PHP. The duty ends:

- If the relief help works and the applicant is no longer homeless
- If suitable accommodation is available for six months
- If the applicant deliberately and unreasonably refuses to cooperate
- If the applicant refuses a suitable offer of accommodation

Main Duty

The 'main' duty is defined in section 193 Housing Act 1996 and applied to priority need applicants only, but they are excluded from the full duty if they:

- Deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate, in this case they are still entitled to a 'final offer' of a 6 month private sector tenancy
- Refuse a final offer of suitable accommodation at the relief stage

About the borough

Population

According to the 2016 mid year population estimates, Reigate and Banstead has a population of 145,648. This has increased by 5.7% since mid 2011. The population of Reigate and Banstead is 35% higher than the average of the other districts and boroughs in Surrey. The gender of the population is split fairly evenly between males and females and the 2011 Census showed that 85% of the population is classified as white British.

Income and employment

The claimant count of those aged 16 to 64 required to look for work in England was 5.5% of the population according to the Office for National Statistics in August 2021. Within Surrey 23,615 claimants were seeking employment accounting for 3.2% of the working population. The borough rate stood at 3,145 claimants or 3.5% of the local population and is joint third highest in the county, although still below the England average. In the UK the average

resident income was £25,780 in 2020. The median borough resident earned income was recorded as £32,310. This is above the Surrey median earned average of £30,896 and higher than the South East and UK averages.

Deprivation

The borough has low levels of income deprivation although this masks differences within the borough. In Reigate and Banstead 6.7% of the population was income deprived in 2019 according to the Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities statistics. Of the 316 local authorities in England, the borough is ranked 273rd most income deprived. Looking more closely at the 86 neighbourhoods in the borough, Merstham was amongst the 20 percent most income deprived in England.

The Local Housing Market

Whilst some caution should be applied to current figures available on tenure as they are based on 2011 Census data, they provide a guide. It is worth noting, the Council had no housing stock in 2011, we can assume this option was selected in tenure in error by respondents. The Census 2021 is likely to show a small shift between tenures, perhaps with a slight increase in numbers of private rented homes reflecting the upwards shift in average age of households buying a first home, the impacts of changing mortgage lending practices and the rising cost of market sale homes.

Table 1: Borough tenure split

Owned outright	Owned with mortgage / loan	Shared ownership	Rent from council	Other social rented	Private rented	Living rent free
33.2%	39.9%	1.2%	2.4%	9.5%	12.9%	0.9%

Source: Census 2011, Surrey

It is also interesting to consider the proportions of different types of property within the borough to understand the supply, the types of properties and related housing costs for those seeking to move or purchase. Again, these figures are extracted from Census 2011 and since this time the borough has delivered additional new build homes, some office conversions have created residential dwellings and some houses will have converted to flats.

Table 2: Borough dwelling types

Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats	Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
28%	30%	17%	24%	1%

Source: Census 2011, Surrey

The Land Registry reports in their Price Paid Data that during 2020 to 2021, the average sale value of properties in the borough was £567,685 in quarter 4, having decreased by 4.9 percent during the year. For those buying their first home, most entry level purchases are for flats and maisonettes and some terraced houses which are typically lower value properties. The average flat or maisonette value during this time was £270,330 and average terraced house £418,439.

Housing market affordability is recognised as the most significant challenge facing the housing market and one that has intensified in recent decades. A comparison of median incomes and average house prices shows over 12 times income ratio are needed to purchase.

High market housing costs have also impacted on private rental costs. According to the Valuation Office Agency in 2019 the average median monthly one bedroom rent was £825, two bedroom rent was £1,075, three bedroom rent £1,375 and four bed rent £1,900. Looking at current prices on Rightmove during September 2021, typical rents are now higher. A one bed flat is around £850 a month, two bed flat around £1,200 a month and three bed house around £1,600 a month.

In comparison local housing allowance rates (LHA), which is the maximum benefit paid towards housing costs, are below average private rents. Households facing homelessness tend to have lower incomes therefore face even less choice when entering the private sector market. They can only afford lowest quartile rents and these are in short supply. The borough falls within two Broad Rental Market Areas and this means two different LHA rates have been set geographically.

Table 3: Borough local housing rates 2021 to 2022 April 2021 LHA rates Crawley and Reigate

	Shared	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Weekly cost	£101.61	£172.60	£218.63	£276.16	£356.71
Monthly cost	£440.31	£747.93	£947.40	£1,196.69	£1,545.74

Table 4: Borough local housing rates 2021 to 2022 April 2021 LHA rates Outer South (North of the borough including Preston)

	Shared	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Weekly cost	£103.56	£201.37	£253.15	£316.44	£399.29
Monthly cost	£448.77	£872.60	£1,096.98	£1,371.24	£1,730.26

Discretionary Housing Payments

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are administered by the Housing Benefit team with many applications made by applicants supported by Housing Services. The funding is used to prevent homelessness and bridge affordability gaps of households experiencing financial difficulty. Normally DHP funding is set at 0.1% to 0.2% of expenditure. Since 2010 there have been funding increases in recognition of the impacts of welfare reform. Unfortunately, the additional funding is being phased out. The table below shows DHP funding has increased each year generally. Typically, households assisted by the Housing Team account for up to half of DHP spend annually.

Table 5: Discretionary Housing Payment budget

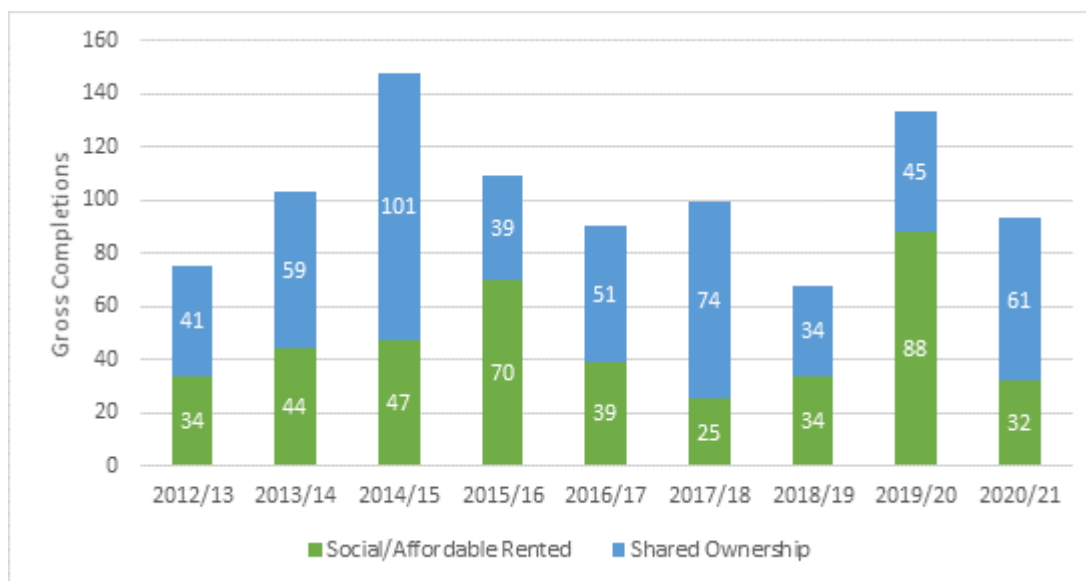
Year	Total DHP fund	Total Spend
2020-21	£340,034	£286,767
2019-20	£268,903	£265,255
2018-19	£253,984	£229,604
2017-18	£271,256	£265,491
2016-17	£185,815	£185,463

New Housing Delivery

The Council has a housing target to deliver at least 6,900 dwellings over the local plan period (2012 to 2027) averaging at 460 net dwellings per annum. Since 1st April 2012, 4,922 net dwellings have been completed equating to an annual average of 547 per year.

The Council's Local Plan has a target to deliver 1,500 affordable homes over the Plan period, as part of the overall delivery of additional homes. This averages at 100 net affordable dwellings per year. Between 2012 to 2013 and 2020 to 2021 a total of 918 affordable homes were completed and this target is on track.

Figure 1 Annual new build affordable housing delivery



All the affordable units delivered to date are based on a tenure mix of 40 percent social or affordable rented homes and 60 percent shared ownership. To date, 45 percent of completions (413 homes) are for social or affordable rented homes and 55 percent (505 homes) shared ownership. This tenure mix was revised in 2020 to 60% social or affordable rented and 40% shared ownership reflecting changing needs and affordability challenges in the borough. Sites based on the revised mix have yet to be delivered.

Trends in Homelessness

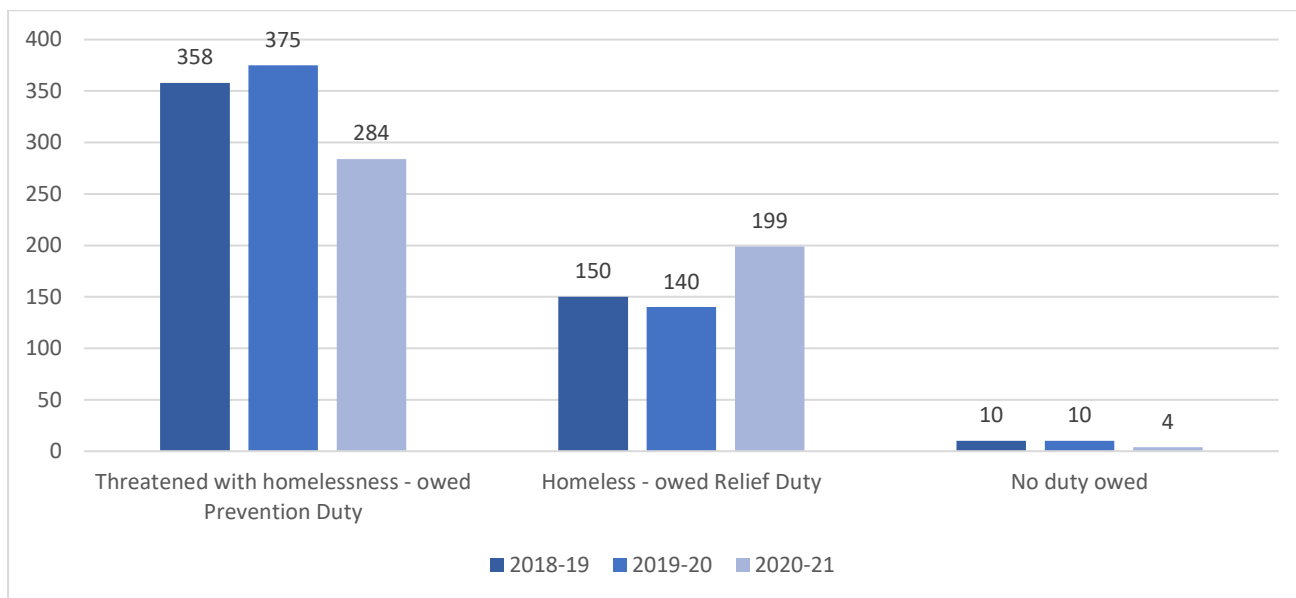
Homelessness Reduction Act

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA), enacted April 2018, placed new legislative requirements on local authorities and extended many of the duties and responsibilities on local authorities set out in the Housing Act 1996. The legislative changes, which built upon the homelessness prevention approach already adopted by the team, are fully embedded into the Housing Service. New software was installed to better support our strong casework approach and enable the team to manage the additional administration burden of the Act. The team implemented new practices, changed its structure, and expanded to manage the duties and administration. A revised team structure is in place with a Prevention Team managing all initial housing enquiries, advice and homelessness prevention duties. The Relief Team provides overlap with the Prevention Team and in addition handles all homelessness relief and main duty cases.

Homelessness applications

The Housing Team carried out a total of 1,530 initial assessments of homeless households during 2018 to 2021. In reality a higher number of applicants contacted the Team, but not all contacts led to an application as many were resolved with advice and signposting. The graph below shows a breakdown of the duties.

Figure 2 Homelessness Assessments 2018 to 2019 through to 2020 to 2021

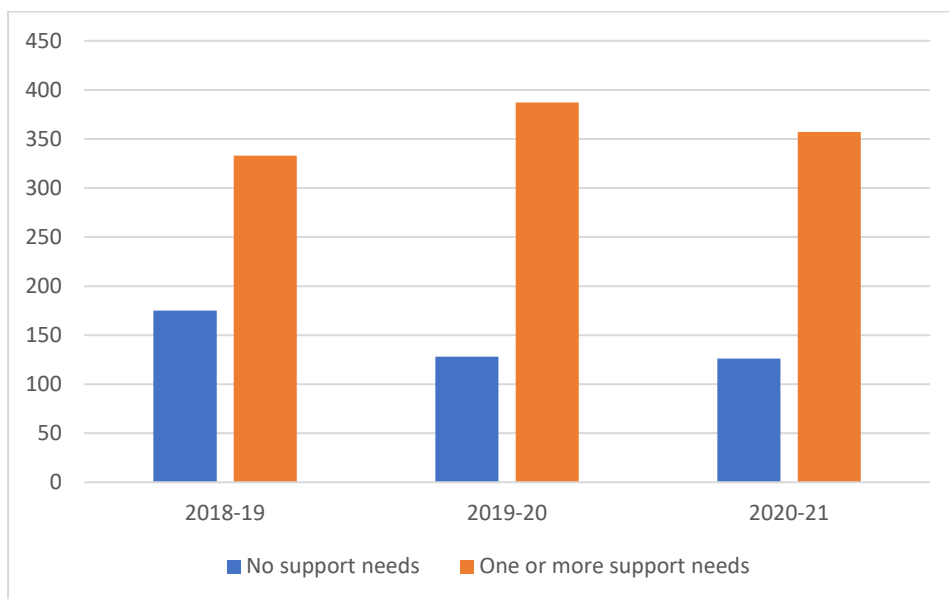


The number of initial assessments for both prevention and relief duties remained broadly consistent during 2018 to 2020. However, there were slight changes in 2020 to 2021, where initial assessments declined for prevention duties and increased for relief duties.

Homelessness and support needs

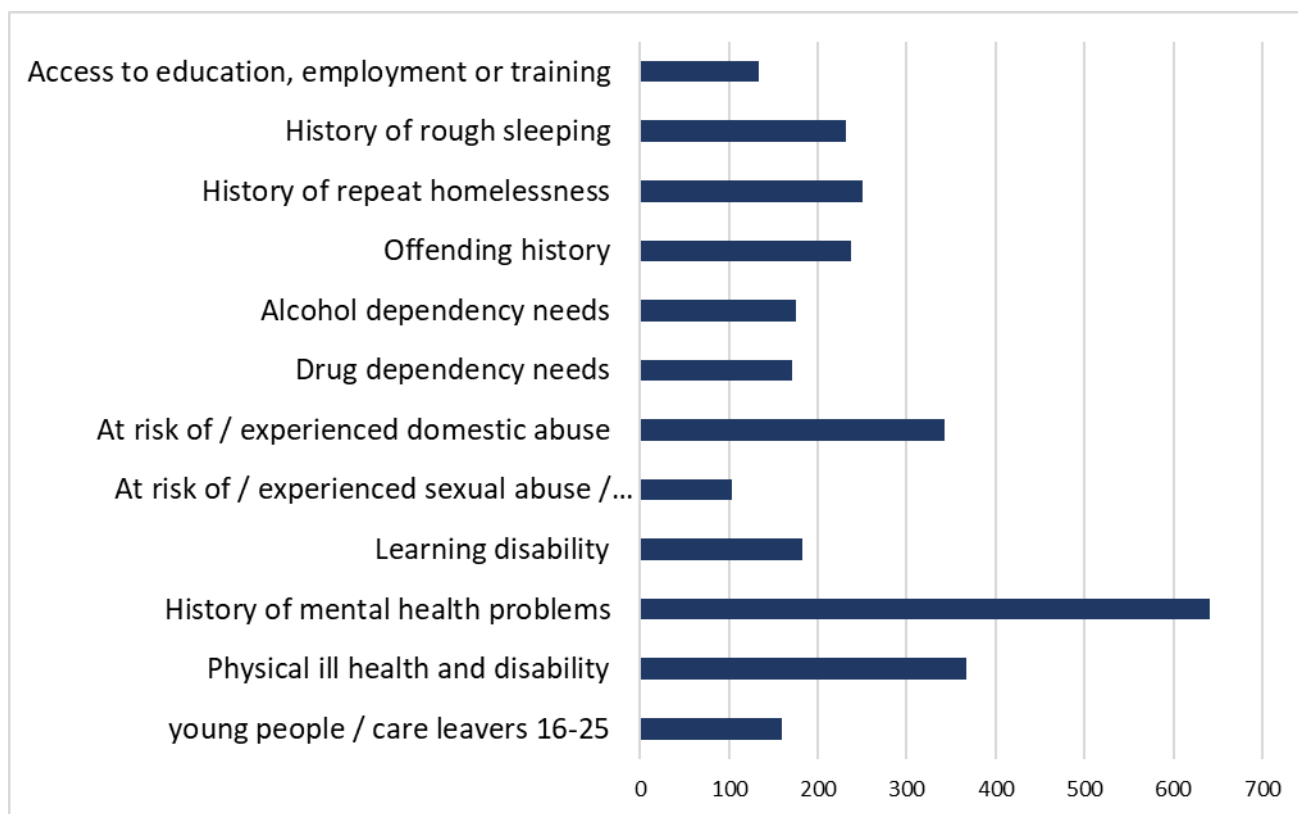
Since the introduction of the HRA, the proportion of households reporting support needs has been consistently high in comparison to those with no support needs.

Figure 3 Proportion of households owed a homelessness duty with a support need



Since 2019, the proportion of households reporting complex needs, defined as multiple support needs, who require more support has risen. This has added pressure on the Housing Teams and other partners to deliver more support and to source and provide appropriate accommodation.

Figure 4 Most common support needs of households owed a homelessness duty



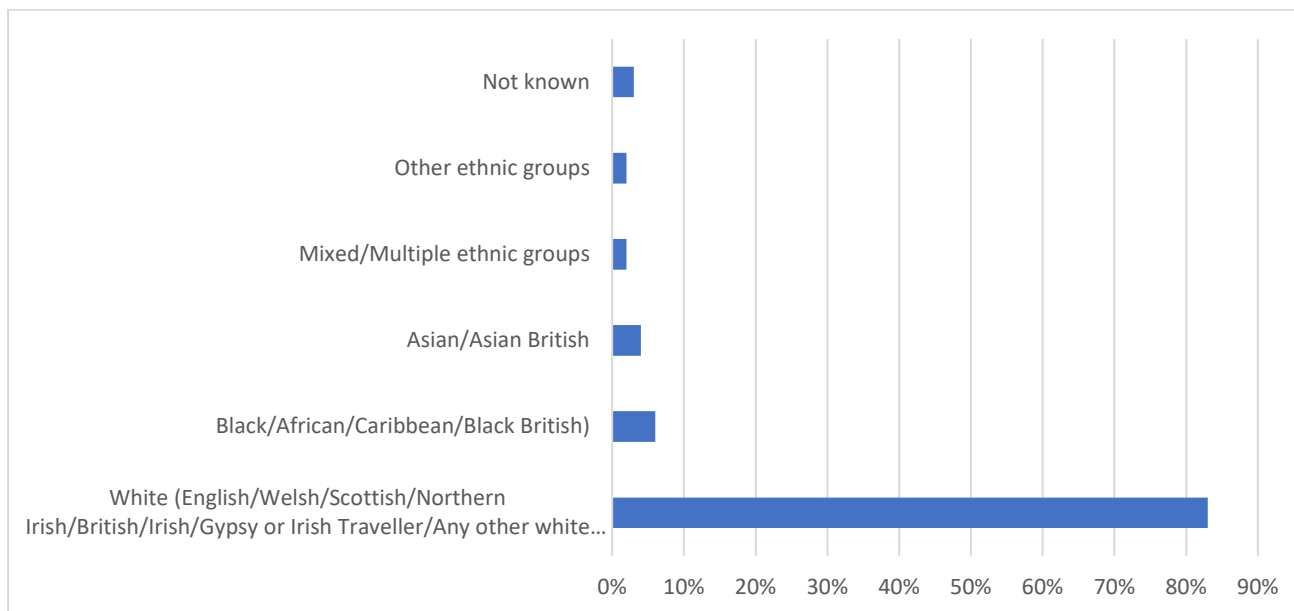
The graph above collates the most common support needs recorded during 2018 to 2021. Over 3,200 support needs were identified by applicants. Mental ill health is the most common single need accounting for 20 percent of all needs. This is followed by physical ill health or disability, and thirdly by risk of or having experienced domestic abuse, both of which account for 11 percent of needs. However, when you collate the two interconnected needs of having a history of rough sleeping and history of repeat homelessness this becomes the second most common support need. Further analysis shows the combined substance misuse groups, become one of the five most common support needs. The reality is that many applicants experience multiple needs and mental ill health unifies many other related support needs.

Homelessness and Age

At 53 percent, more than half of all applicants owed a prevention or relief duty between 2018 and 2021 fall into the 25 to 44 age group. 23 percent of applicants owed a duty fall into the 18 to 24 and 23 percent fall into the 45 to 74 group. This indicates homelessness tends to affect working age households, often with children.

Homelessness and ethnicity

Figure 5 Ethnicity of applicants owed a homelessness duty 2018 to 2021



The most common ethnicity of the main applicant owed a housing prevention or relief duty is White. In comparison to the last Homelessness Strategy, there has been a one percent increase in the proportion of White main applicants and a 4% decrease of Black applicants. The percentage of Asian applicants has remained the same with a decrease in acceptances from all other ethnic groups.

Homelessness and sexual identification

Understanding the specific housing issues facing the LGBTQ+ community helps to shape the advice, assistance, and accommodation options available. The following basic data has been recorded through the quarterly homelessness data collection to government.

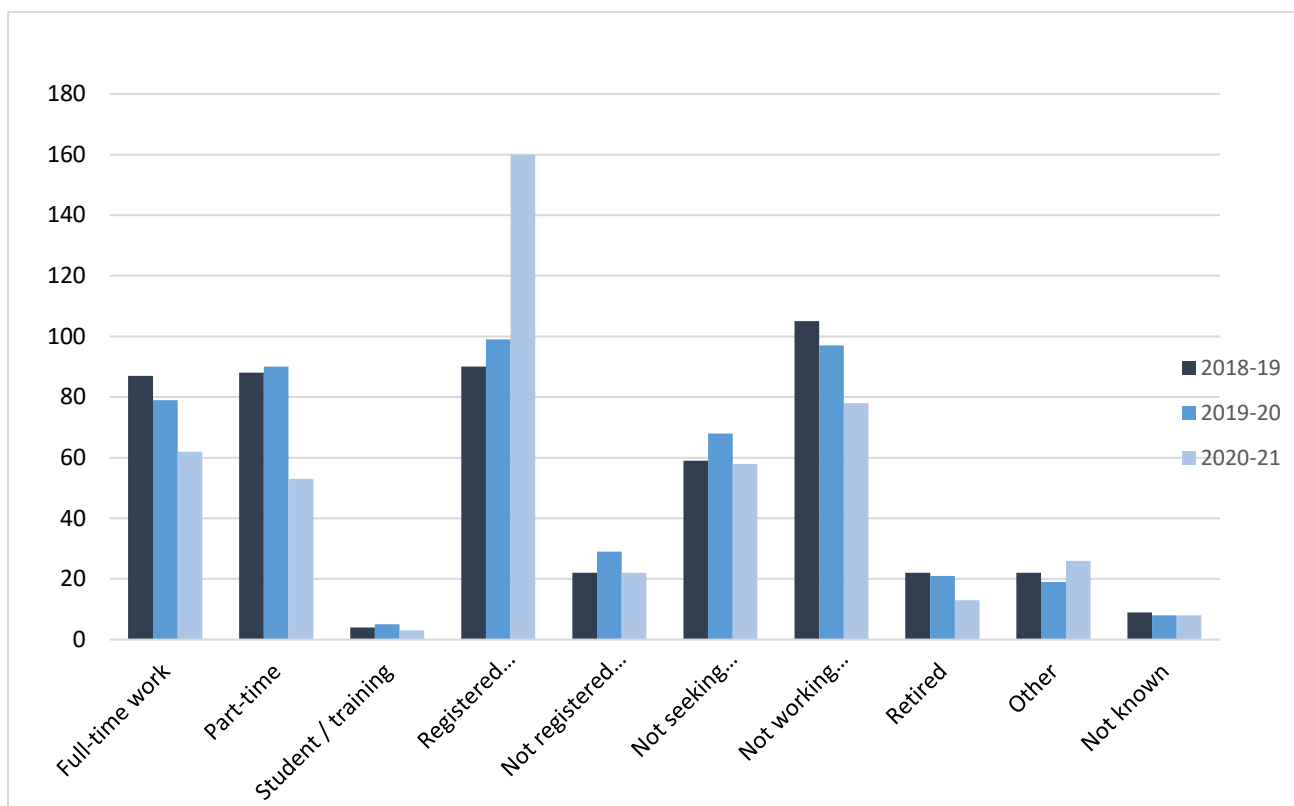
Table 5: Sexual identification of homeless applicants

Sexual Identification	2019-20	2020-21
Heterosexual or Straight	450	431
Homosexual (Gay or Lesbian)	8	6
Other	15	10
Prefer not to say	43	42

Between 2019 to 2021, a total of 88% of applicants owed a prevention or relief duty identified as heterosexual or straight and 1% as homosexual (Gay or Lesbian). The remaining 8% of applicants chose not to disclose, with 3% selecting 'Other'.

Homelessness and employment status

Figure 6 Employment status of applicants owed a homelessness duty 2018 to 2021

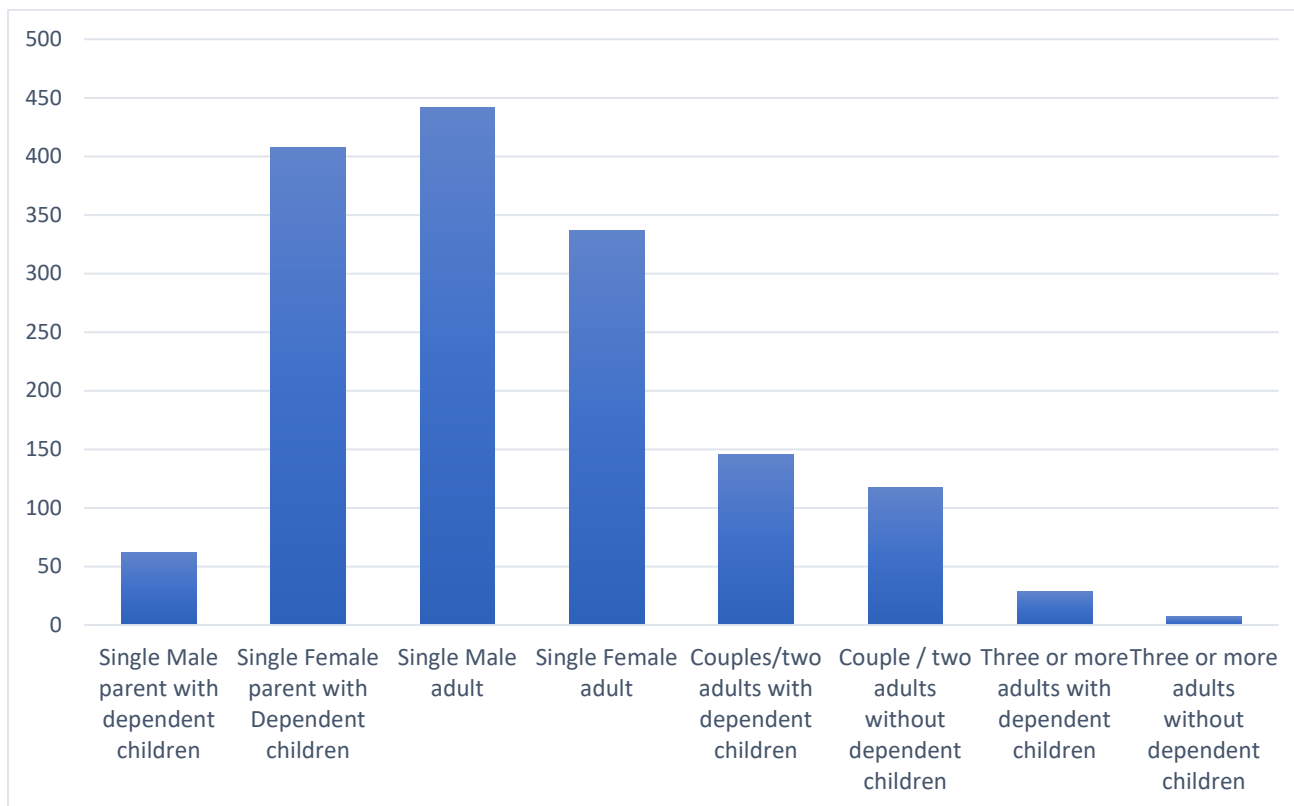


Although difficult to draw trends from such a short time period, in the two years up to the Pandemic the employment status of applicants was stable. This reflects the overall employment market in the borough in which there is high employment. But as the graph above shows, there was a significant increase in the proportion of applicants with an unemployed status in the financial year 2020 to 2021. This reflects the economic impacts of the Pandemic during this time as many workers were made redundant. This is anticipated to be a temporary situation and already the employment market appears to be recovering in many sectors.

Looking closely at the data, we can see that the numbers of applicants not working due to a longterm illness or disability is relatively high. This corresponds with the numbers of households owed a housing duty reporting a support need related to physical ill health and disability and the numbers overall reporting one or more support needs.

Homelessness and household composition

Figure 7 Household composition of those owed a prevention or relief duty 2018 to 2021



Overall single people account for 50 percent of all prevention and relief duty acceptances. Looking in more detail at the prevention duty stage, slightly more single females (236) were owed a duty than males (209), but this switches at the relief duty stage to a higher number of single males (233) owed a duty than females (101). This change correlates with the data recorded about the accommodation status of households at the relief duty stage which shows increases in discharges from institutions, no fixed address and rough sleeping which tend to be more common situations for men than women. We also know a high proportion of households experience multiple support needs and that single people with complex needs continue to experience housing instability due to a lack of medium to high support accommodation and outreach housing support.

The next largest household type accepted for a relief duty is single female parents with dependent children at 26 percent. This correlates with data around non violent relationship breakdown and domestic abuse and societal trends on caring responsibilities.

Causes of Homelessness

The main cause of homelessness at the point of first contact with the Housing Team has changed over the years from the end of a private rented tenancy being the most common cause prior to the HRA, to family or friend evictions being the most common cause. This also

correlates with the increase in prevention and relief Duties owed to single people and rising housing costs.

Table 6: Prevention Duty reason for risk of homelessness

Cause of threat of homelessness	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Family or friends eviction	87	105	121	313
End of private rent assured shorthold	93	95	68	256
Other	85	61	30	176
End of social tenancy	30	42	12	84
Non violent relationship breakdown	28	27	24	79
Domestic abuse	18	25	21	64
Supported Housing eviction	7	10	5	22
End of non assured shorthold private rent	4	7	6	17
Other violence or harassment	4	3	2	9

Source: Reigate and Banstead BC

Table 6 above shows the main causes of homelessness at the point a homelessness prevention duty is accepted. Family or friend eviction is the most common cause, followed by the end of a private rented assured tenancy. Whilst the 'other' category features strongly in years 2018 to 2020 the numbers have declined year on year, reflecting changes in the categorisation of cases. Examples of 'other' causes include unaffordability, loss of tied accommodation, social tenancy succession cases, property guardians and mortgage repossessions. Putting the 'other' category aside, the third most common reason for threat of homelessness is the end of a social housing tenancy.

Table 7: Households owed a Relief Duty by reason for risk of homelessness

Cause Relief Duty	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Family or friends eviction	33	34	60	127

Domestic abuse	30	25	33	88
Other	32	21	24	77
End of private rent assured shorthold	20	17	10	47
Supported Housing eviction	11	15	20	46
Non violent relationship breakdown	7	9	21	37
End of social tenancy	7	9	9	25
Other violence or harassment	6	2	8	16
Left institution with no accommodation available	3	5	7	15
End of non assured shorthold private rent	1	3	7	11

Source: Reigate & Banstead BC

In terms of cause of homelessness at the relief duty acceptance stage, the most common cause remains family or friend eviction as Table 7 above shows. At this point domestic abuse as a cause becomes the second highest reason. Putting aside the homeless cause classified as 'other', the loss of an assured shorthold tenancy is the third most common reason. Overall, the reduction in numbers owed a duty transferring through from the prevention duty to the relief duty reflects the intensive casework undertaken by the Homelessness Prevention Team who negotiate with family or friends, private and social landlords to enable households to remain for the foreseeable future or to secure enough time to make a planned move.

Table 8: Accommodation type occupied at time of prevention duty

Accommodation type: Prevention Duty	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Private rented	145	138	87	370
Living with family	102	120	125	347
Social rented sector	44	46	16	106
Living with friends	33	39	33	105

Other category	25	23	20	68
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Source: Reigate & Banstead BC

The type of accommodation occupied at the point a prevention duty is accepted for a household reflects the cause of homelessness. The table above captures the main types. Extremely small numbers of prevention cases are homeowners, from institutions, refuges, temporary accommodation or national asylum seeker accommodation.

Table 9: Accommodation type at time of relief duty acceptance

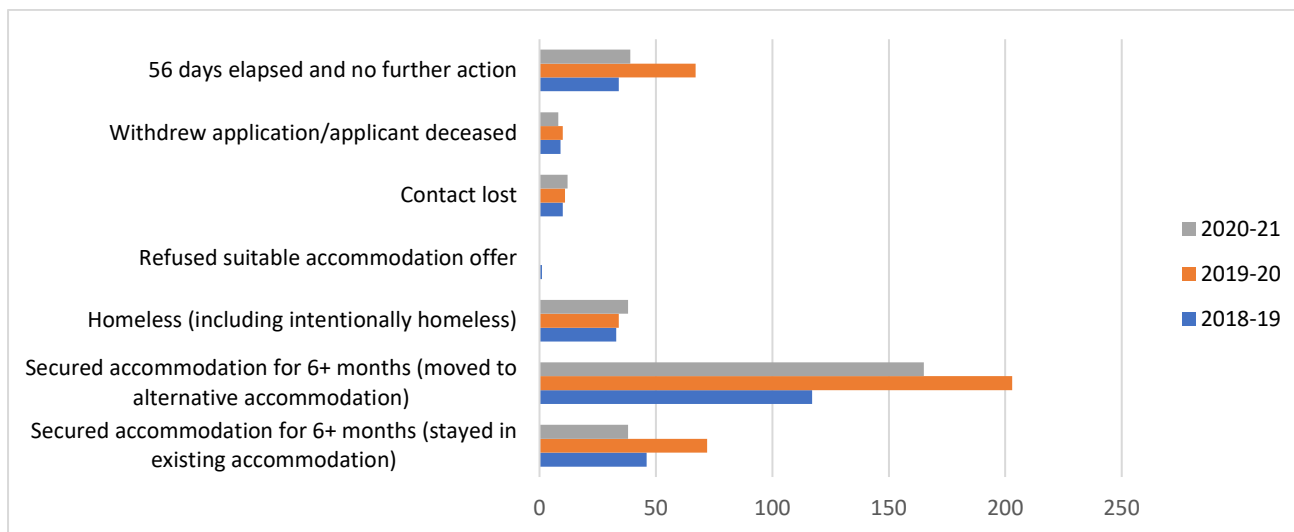
Accommodation type: Relief Duty	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Living with family	35	41	55	131
No fixed abode	24	17	23	64
Private rented	20	15	19	54
Social rented sector	10	15	23	48
Homeless on leaving an institution	10	11	22	43
Refuge	18	10	11	39
Rough Sleeping	4	13	21	38
Living with friends	15	13	9	37

Source: Reigate & Banstead BC

As Table 9 above shows, the living arrangements of households owed a relief duty is different from those at the prevention duty stage. This reflects the different circumstances and acute housing need of households at this stage. At the relief stage, we can see higher proportions of applicants coming from insecure housing or without accommodation. The numbers of people at risk of or who are rough sleeping are higher.

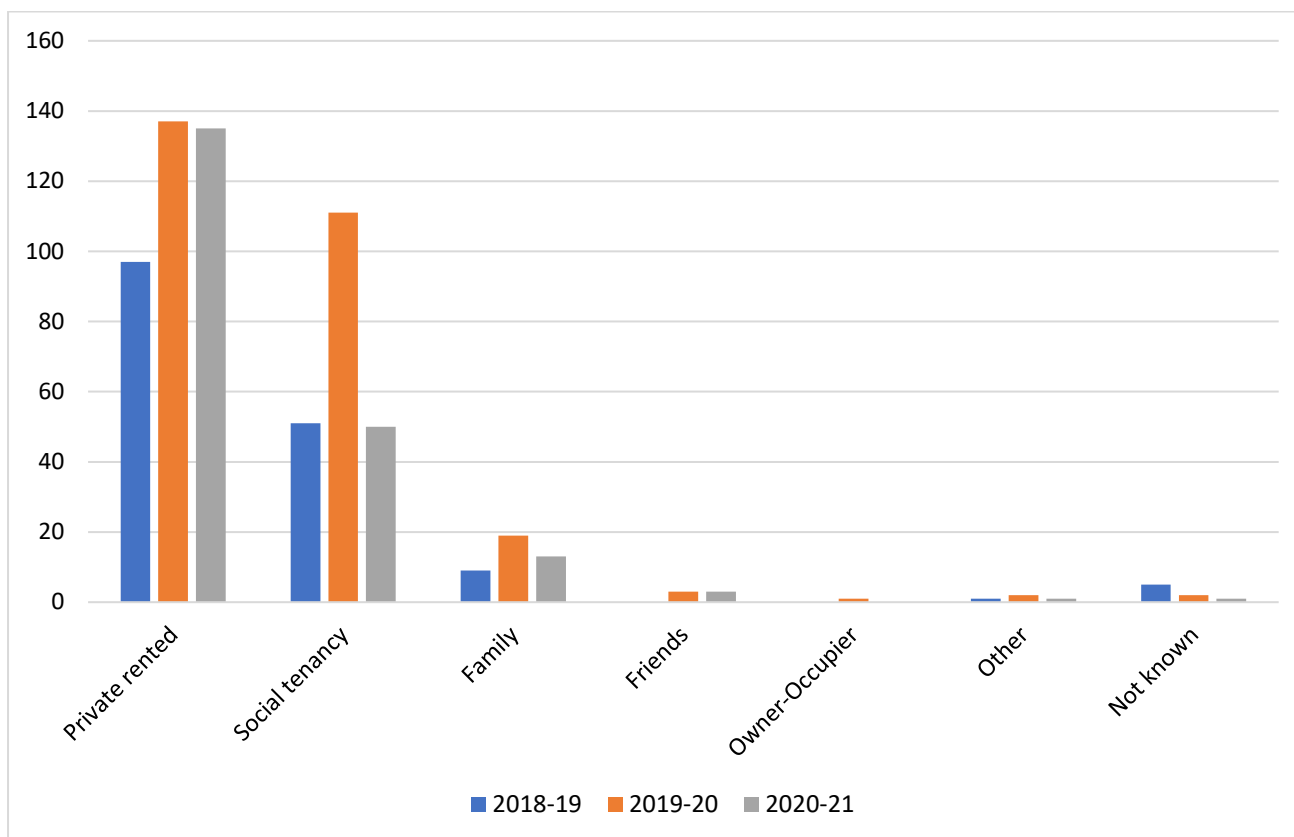
Homelessness duty outcomes

Figure 8 Housing outcome for those owed a prevention duty 2018 to 2021



As the graph above shows, for 51 percent of prevention cases their housing issue was resolved by securing alternative accommodation. A good proportion (16 percent) of households are also assisted to remain in their existing homes which is the preferred outcome for many applicants. This is achieved through negotiation with landlords, family and friends, but also by helping with budgeting and money advice to support households to manage financial difficulties which may be impacting on housing affordability. The graph also shows that for 15 percent of cases the duty elapsed and there was no further action.

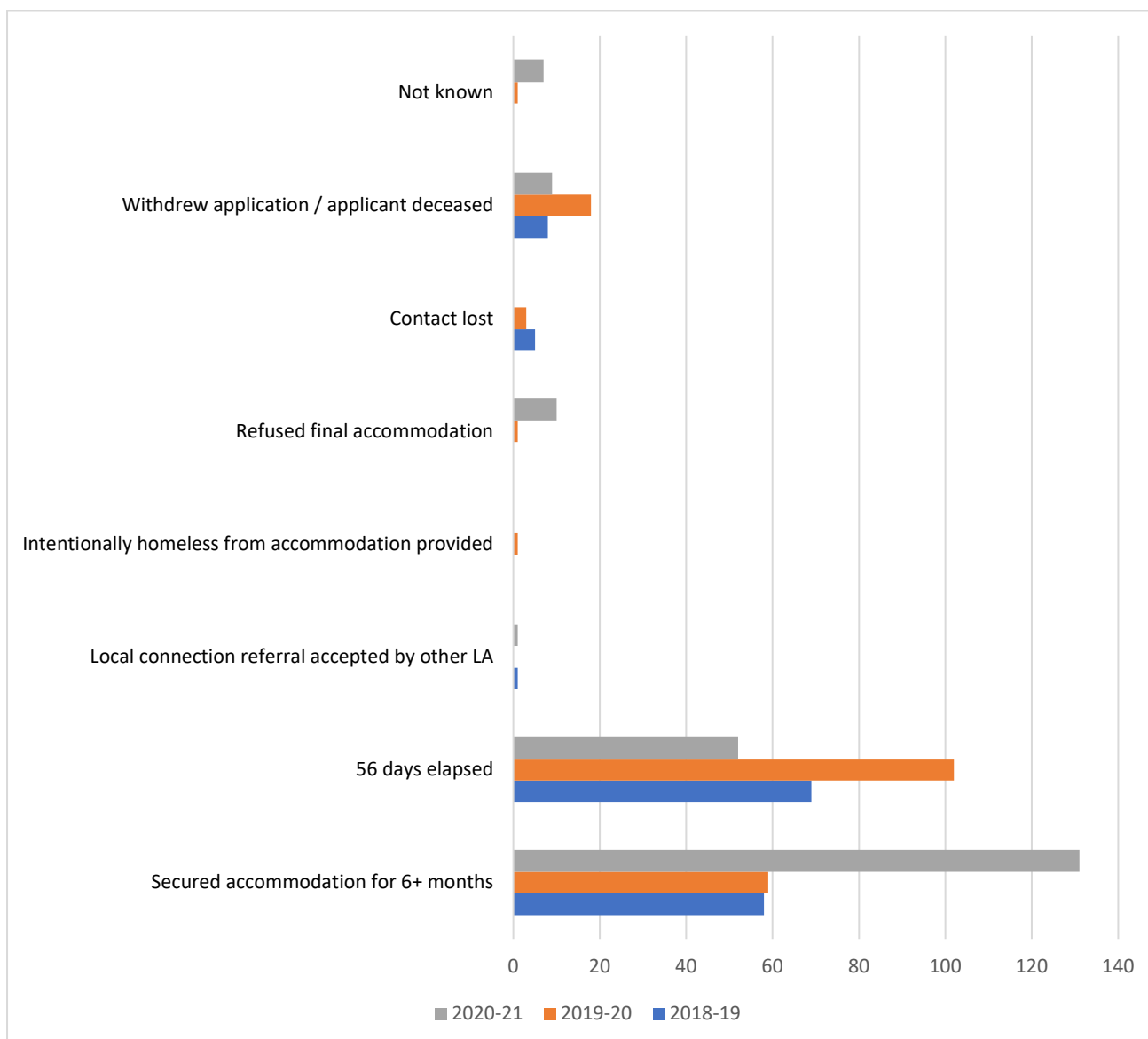
Figure 9 Type of accommodation secured at end of prevention duty



The graph above shows that most households who were assisted to prevent their homelessness secured or remained in private rented accommodation highlighting the importance of this tenure. A high number of new tenancies and the saving of ‘at risk’ private tenancies was achieved by the Housing Team, NextStep, and by applicants themselves having received the Team’s advice and sometimes financial assistance.

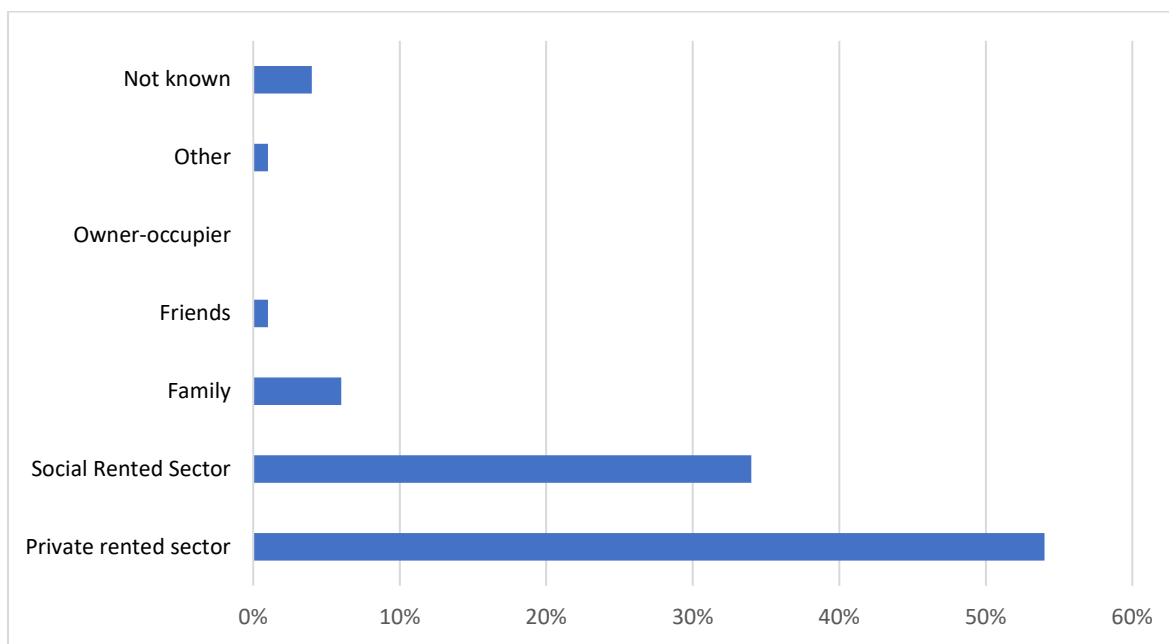
A good proportion were assisted to avoid eviction or secured a social tenancy through the housing register.

Figure 10 Reasons for end of a relief duty 2018 to 2021



The reasons for end of a relief duty differ from the prevention duty due to the different circumstances of applicants at these stages. Overall, relief applicants are in more acute need. The 2020 to 2021 period shows more than a 50 percent increase in relief duties ending by the securing of accommodation in comparison to the previous two years. The increased numbers of tenancies in 2020 to 2021 reflect the fact more single people approached as a result of the ‘Everyone In’ initiative. It particularly assisted single people in insecure housing or at risk of or rough sleeping. The Council received additional government funding to assist single people and could help with meeting the costs of securing private housing.

Figure 11 Ending of prevention or relief duty by accommodation secured 2018 to 2021

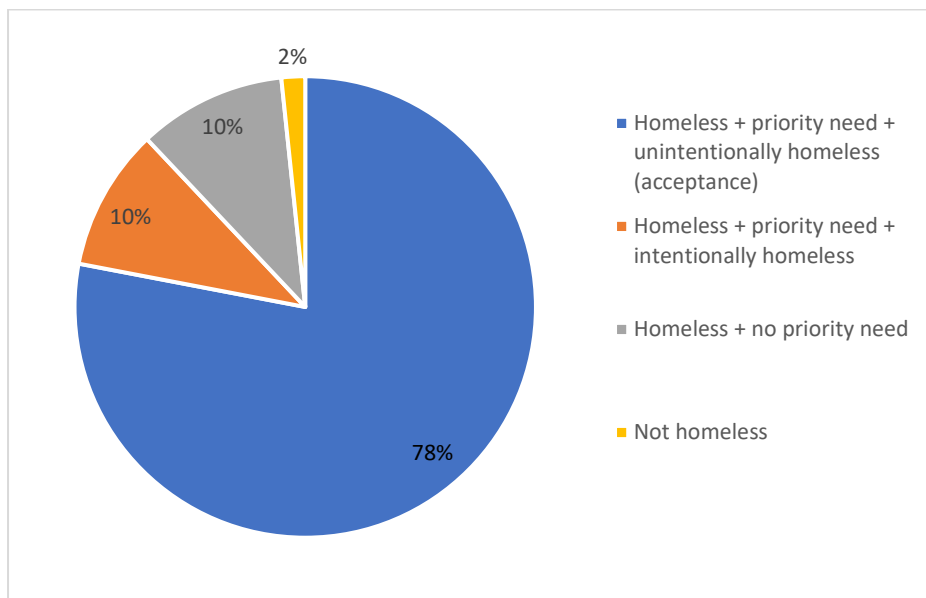


Over half of all prevention and relief duties that ended during 2018 to 2021 secured private rented accommodation. More private rented tenancies were secured for prevention duty cases than relief duty cases. The social rented sector assisted a third of all households, these were households who had already joined and been waiting on the register for some time.

Looking in more detail at the type of accommodation secured by relief duty cases, whilst the securing of private tenancies accounted for 46 percent of successes, securing a supported housing placement accounted for 22 percent of outcomes, followed by 13% securing a social housing tenancy. This reflects the higher numbers of people with support needs being assisted at the relief duty.

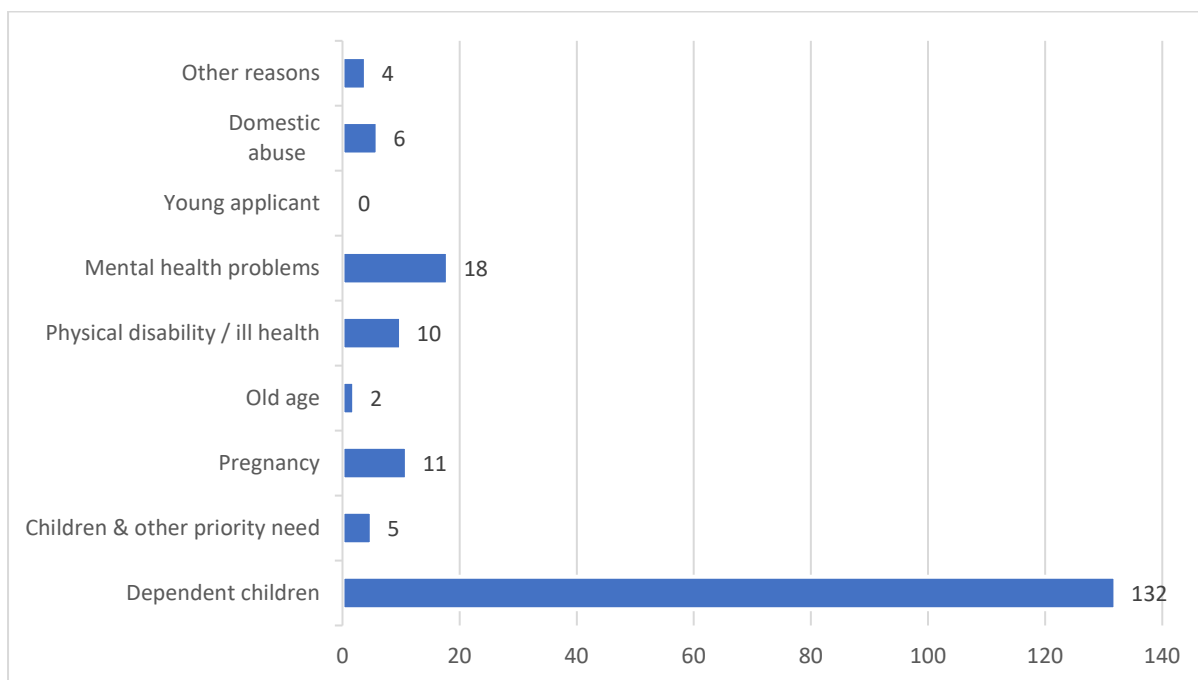
Main duty

Figure 12 Decisions reached on final duty 2018 to 2021



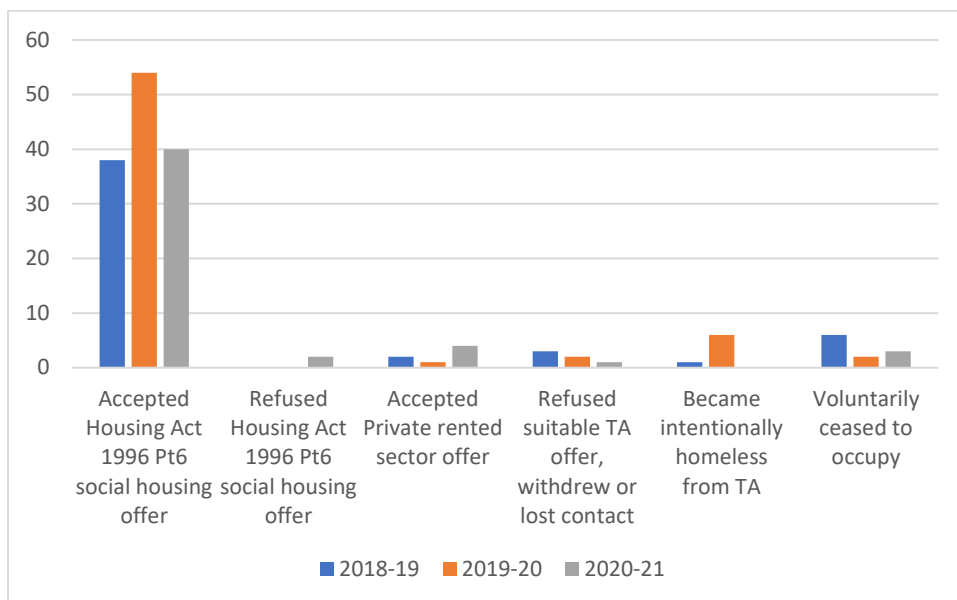
At the point the relief duty ends a decision is made by the Council on the main duty owed to each household. During 2018 to 2021 a total of 241 decisions were taken and a main duty accepted to 188 households. Much smaller numbers, were found to be either in priority need and intentionally homeless or homeless with no priority need. Only four households were found to be not homeless. Looking at the numbers accepted in each of the last three years, in the first year of the HRA 68 final duties were accepted, rising to 73 in 2019 to 2020 and declining to 47 in 2020 to 2021. This decline is linked to the particular impacts of temporary legislation during the Pandemic impacting on notice periods and evictions as well as court closures.

Figure 13 Priority need of households owed a main duty 2018 to 2021



Looking in more detail at the household type to whom a main homelessness duty was accepted, 70 percent of the total, were households with dependent children. Despite mental health being the most common reported support need this priority need accounted for 10% of main duty cases.

Figure 14 Reason for main duty ending 2018 to 2021



Almost all households owed a main housing duty during 2018 to 2021 were placed in band H of the Housing Register and were made and accepted an offer of a social housing tenancy. Only two households declined this offer in the financial year 2020 to 2021.

Furthermore, in the financial year 2020 to 2021 more households accepted a private rented sector offer reflecting the higher numbers of single people approaching as homeless during this unusual year, the efforts of the Housing Team and applicants to secure private rented accommodation and the availability of additional government funding targeted at single people.

Rough Sleepers

Looking at street homelessness, based on the information received from various agencies on any given night, we estimate there to be a couple of people sleeping rough at any given time. Members of the public are encouraged to report any sightings to Streetlink. These notifications are overseen by East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS). ESOS locates individuals, makes contact and helps them access an assessment bed as appropriate or other services whilst working closely with the Housing Team. During 2019 to 2020 ESOS received 78 Streetlink alerts and 143 alerts in 2020 to 2021. In terms of direct referrals from agencies, ESOS received around 67 referrals in 2019 to 2020 and 100 referrals in 2020 to 2021.

Generally, the street rough sleepers in the borough tend to be those who have migrated from the London area, or via Gatwick airport. Some are people we have had previous contact with or have assisted with accommodation in the past.

Government guidelines state that a count of street rough sleepers is not required where it is estimated there are less than 10 rough sleepers in a borough or district. However, each year all the Surrey authorities undertake a count in November, this is either an estimate or a street count. Reigate and Banstead usually undertakes a street count, we record on average 2 to 3 rough sleepers during this snapshot.

Rough sleeping also includes people who are of no fixed abode, so called sofa surfers, those in and out of prison or other institutions or leading chaotic lifestyles. Some of these individuals may find themselves street homeless for short periods. Our data analysis of the last three years shows a total of 62 percent of relief duties were for single people accounting for 334 duties. There is a gender split within this single cohort with males accounting for 70 percent of this single group and a lower proportion of females at 30 percent. Of these relief duties 13 percent reported they were of no fixed abode, 8 percent rough sleeping, and 9 percent homeless on leaving an institution, this is typically prison. The data recorded on support needs also highlights the high proportion of support needs around history of rough sleeping, repeat homelessness alongside other support needs. Many of the single people staying with friends or family usually with insecure arrangements are also vulnerable to homelessness and risk of rough sleeping.

Housing Register

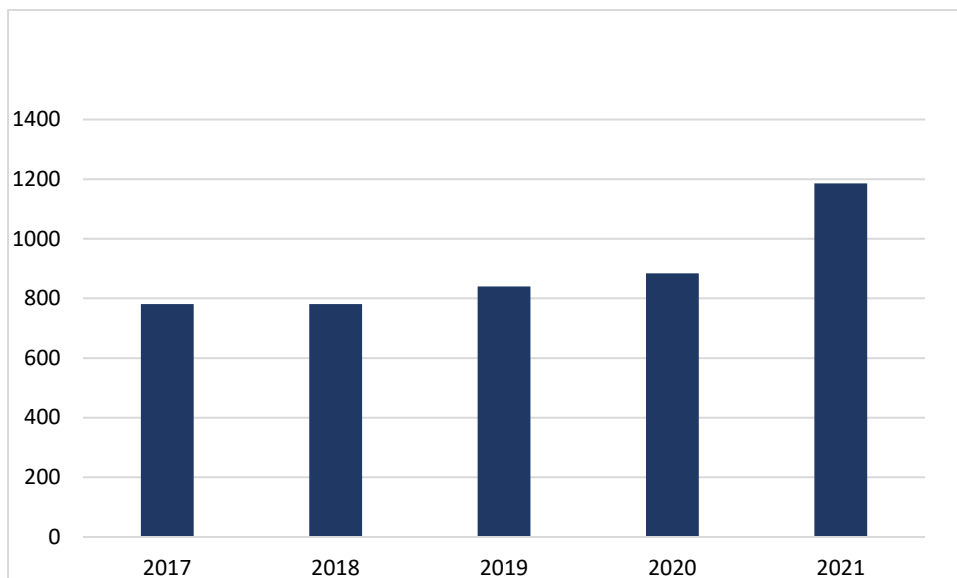
The Housing Register is a list of households with a housing need waiting for an allocation of social housing in the borough of Reigate and Banstead. The Council is a non stock holding local authority all properties are owned and managed by various housing associations. We have the right to nominate households to a minimum of 75% vacant homes and in reality, local stockholders offer a higher proportion of vacant homes to the Council.

Applications are split into those waiting to move into the social rented sector and those already in social housing who need to transfer. Each application is assessed and placed into one of five bands (A to D or H) to reflect the level of housing need. In many cases, applicants making a community contribution through employment, volunteering or studying will be placed in a higher priority band than those who are not.

The Council operates an online choice based lettings system called HomeChoice. Homes are advertised on the HomeChoice website where they are prioritised for one or more priority bands. Applicants can place bids on homes they would like to live in. After close of advertising, bids are assessed and placed in application effective date order. The successful bidder is nominated to the social landlord.

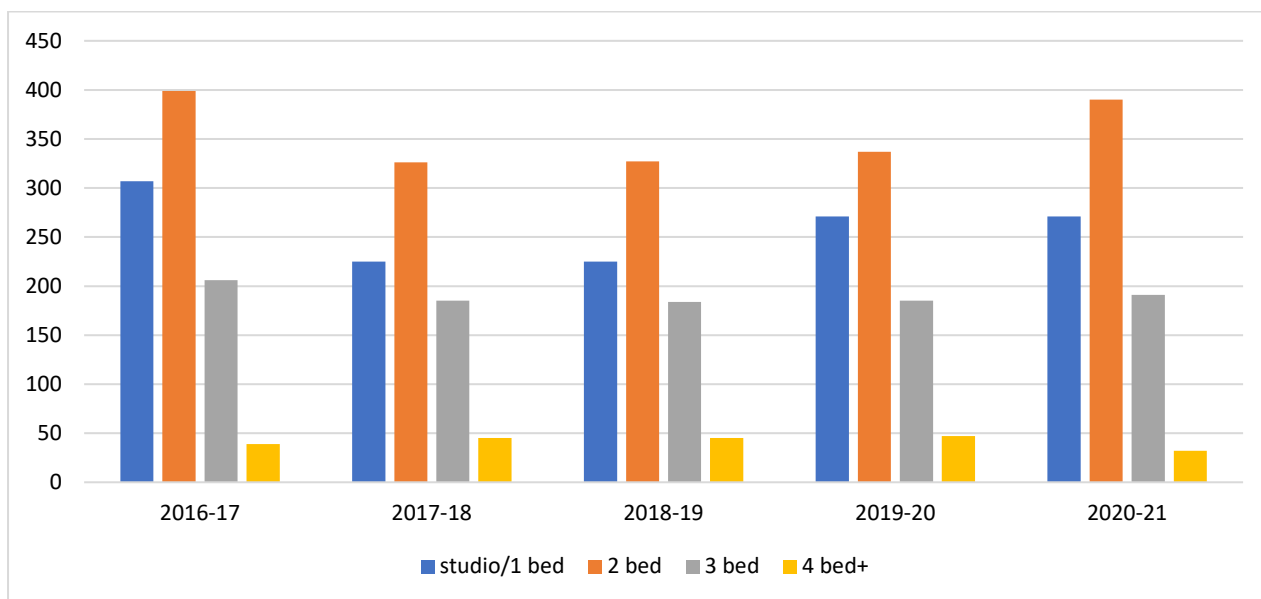
Not all homes are advertised, direct offers are made to band A and band H households, these are households in acute housing need or with specific accommodation requirements. There is a very limited supply of social housing in the borough and demand surpasses supply.

Figure 15 number of register applicants



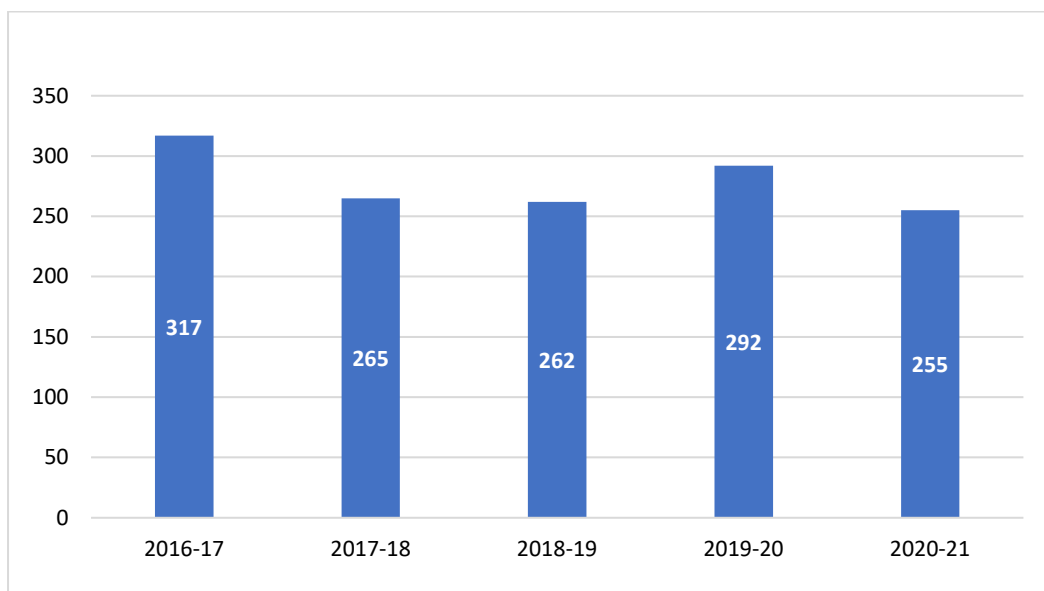
After a drop in the number of applicants on the register during 2017 to 2019, applications have increased. This has created more housing pressure and increased the waiting time on the register for each household. One of the impacts of the Pandemic has been an increase in numbers of households applying to join the Register as households faced reduced incomes, loss in earnings or redundancy.

Figure 16 register applicants by bedroom need



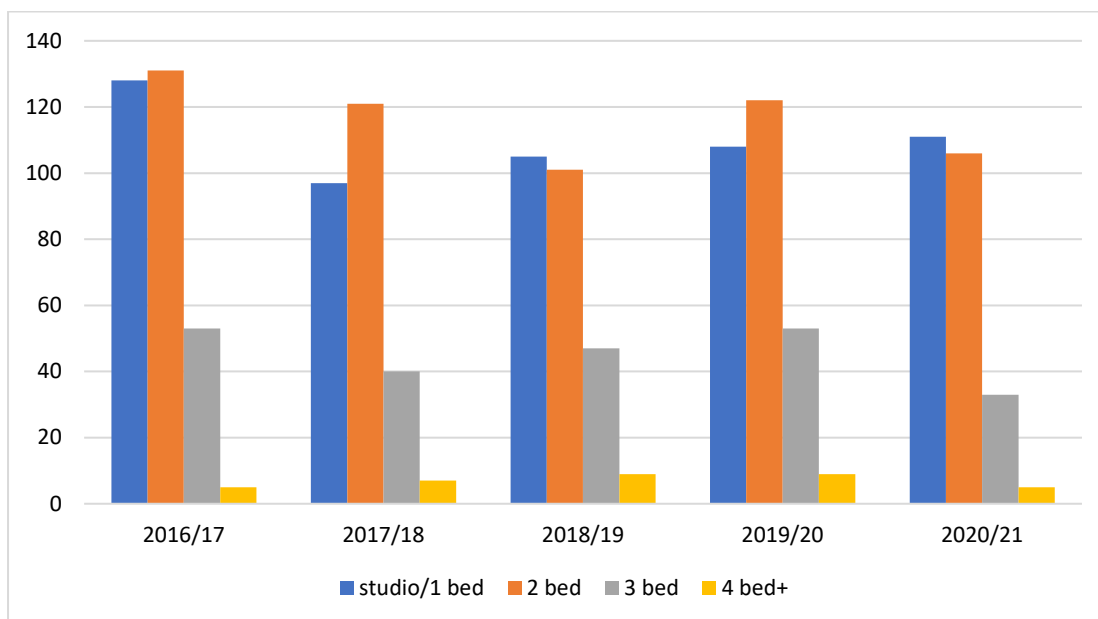
Over the last 5 financial years, the need by size of property has broadly remained stable. The majority of demand is for 2 bed properties and the least demand is for 4+ bed properties. Despite the relatively small numbers of households in need of 4+ bed homes, the wait time is longer for this group because there is a very limited supply.

Figure 17 number of lettings made through the register



The graph above shows that in 2020 to 2021 the lowest number of applicants were accommodated through the Housing Register into social housing tenancies. The decrease reflects the effects of Pandemic on numbers homes becoming vacant and a temporary slowing down in turnaround times for properties that became vacant.

Figure 18 lettings by bedroom size

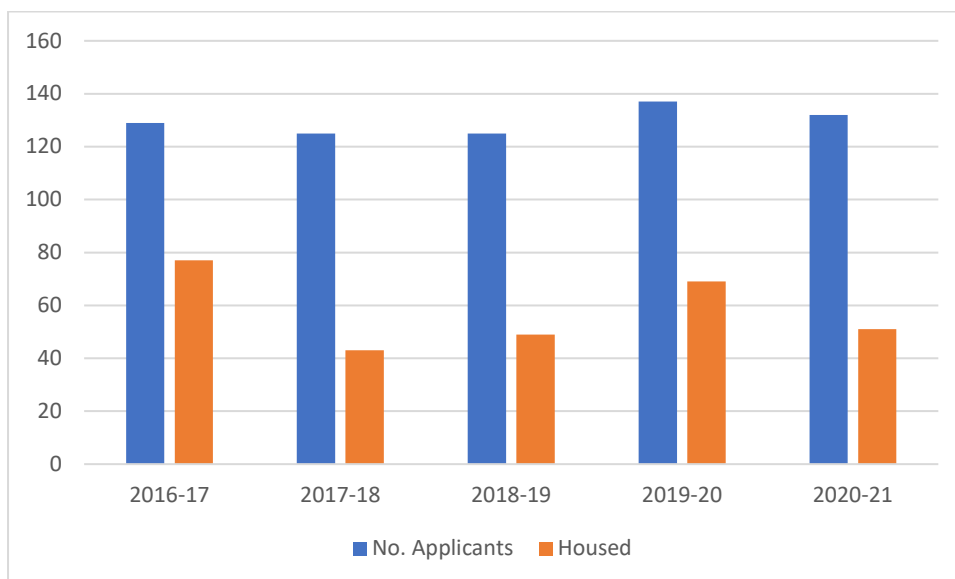


The graph above shows that over the last 5 financial years, the most common letting is to studio or 1 bed or 2 bed properties. This reflects the available social housing stock in the borough, with a higher proportion of smaller homes than larger family homes and also reflects the flow of households through the stock as household size changes. The highest number of lettings took place in the year 2016 to 2017 after this time they have reduced slightly. During 2020 to 2021 the number of three bedroom or larger homes available for letting reduced even further and the waiting time for larger homes has lengthened.

Band H

Band H applicants are high priority homeless households to whom the Council has accepted a duty to accommodate.

Figure 19 Number of band H applicants on the register and housed into social housing



Over the last 5 years, the numbers of Band H applicants have remained fairly consistent. After a sudden decrease in the numbers of Band H applicants being housed through the register in the year 2017 to 2018, numbers have increased. However, similarly to other applicants on the Register, Band H applicants were also subject to the effects of the Pandemic in during 2020 to 2021. With fewer void properties being available there was a slight reduction in band H applicants housed in social tenancies.

Homelessness Accommodation

The Council has access to around 115 self contained temporary accommodation units in the borough operated by Raven Housing Trust, Accent and Hyde Housing and a very small number operated by the Council. The Council also has non self contained accommodation in Horley used as emergency housing mainly for families.

In addition, the Council sources nightly paid self contained accommodation for families and shared facility accommodation for single people both in and out of the borough. We aim to keep as many households as possible in the borough and place out of borough when local options are exhausted. Placements out of area are typically in Crawley, West Sussex and the Croydon area.