

# Supporting Document for the Coventry Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2013-18:

## The Coventry Context and The Coventry Homelessness Review



# The Coventry Context

## The Coventry Context

This supporting document presents statistics about Coventry's housing stock and housing market, the demand for housing, the supply of new housing and the affordability of different tenure types. It is intended to provide evidence to support the Coventry Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2013-18, in conjunction with the Homelessness Review, which gives more detailed information about homelessness in Coventry.

In doing so it draws upon various sources of information, including:

- The Coventry Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2012.
- The Draft Coventry Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2012 (PSSCS). This is currently in draft form and potentially subject to change. This document will be updated with the findings of the final document if necessary.
- The *Facts About Coventry* website, which brings together a wide range of statistical sources ([www.facts-about-coventry.com](http://www.facts-about-coventry.com)).
- Data sets managed by Coventry City Council such as the Coventry Homefinder register, Council Tax records and the empty homes database.
- National data sets such as the 2011 Census.

### Coventry – The City's Population

Coventry is a city in the West Midlands with a population of approximately 316,900 people. 14.5% of the people of Coventry are over 65, and 18.4% are under 15. 66.6% of the population of the city are of White-British ethnicity (2011 Census).

More detailed information about the City's population and the results from the 2011 Census can be found on the Facts About Coventry website, [www.facts-about-coventry.com](http://www.facts-about-coventry.com)

## Housing - Stock Profile

### Tenure

The table below shows the tenure distribution of properties in Coventry, as identified by the 2011 Census.

**Table 1: 2011 Census - Tenure of Properties in Coventry 2012**

Tenure	Per cent
Owner Occupied – with mortgage	31.3%
Owner Occupied – without mortgage	29.3%
Shared Ownership	0.6%
Privately Rented	20.6%
Social Rented	17.0%
Other	1.2%

The table below shows the change in tenure of Coventry's housing in the ten years between 2001 and 2011.

**Table 2: Change in tenure in the ten years between 2001 and 2011**

		Coventry	West Midlands	England
Public Sector	2001 total	25,840	507,100	4,402,000
	2011 total	24,400	458,400	4,109,000
	Ten year change	-1,440	-48,700	-293,000
	% Change	-5.6%	-9.6%	-6.7%
Private Sector	2001 total	101,250	1,727,600	16,959,000
	2011 total	108,190	1,899,900	18,705,000
	Ten year change	6,940	172,300	1,746,000
	% Change	6.9%	10.0%	10.3%
Total	2001 total	127,090	2,234,700	21,361,000
	2011 total	132,590	2,358,300	22,814,000
	Ten year change	5,500	123,600	1,453,000
	% Change	4.3%	5.5%	6.8%

(SHMA 2012)

### Council Tax Bands

Coventry has a high proportion (71.1%) of properties in Council Tax Bands A and B, which represent properties with lower values, and very few properties in the higher bands, which represent high value properties. This compares with 56.3% of properties in the West Midlands and 44.4% of properties in England that are classed as Bands A and B.

**Table 3: Properties in each Council Tax Band as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.**

Council Tax Band	Coventry %	WEST MIDLANDS %	ENGLAND %
A	41.3%	31.1%	24.8%
B	29.8%	25.2%	19.6%
C	16.5%	19.3%	21.8%
D	6.5%	11.1%	15.3%
E	3.2%	7.0%	9.4%
F	1.6%	3.8%	5.0%
G	1.0%	2.3%	3.5%
H	0.1%	0.2%	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(source: Valuation Office Agency)

**Figure 1: Properties in each Council Tax Band as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.**

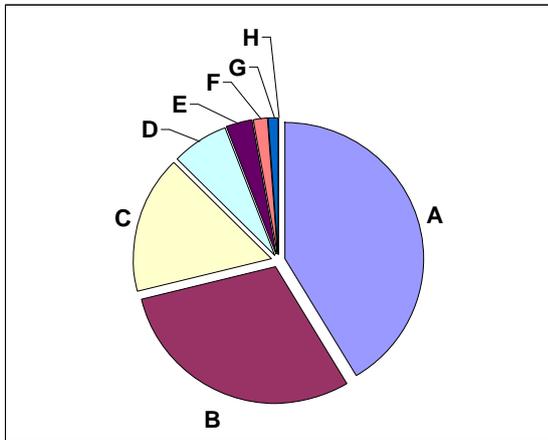
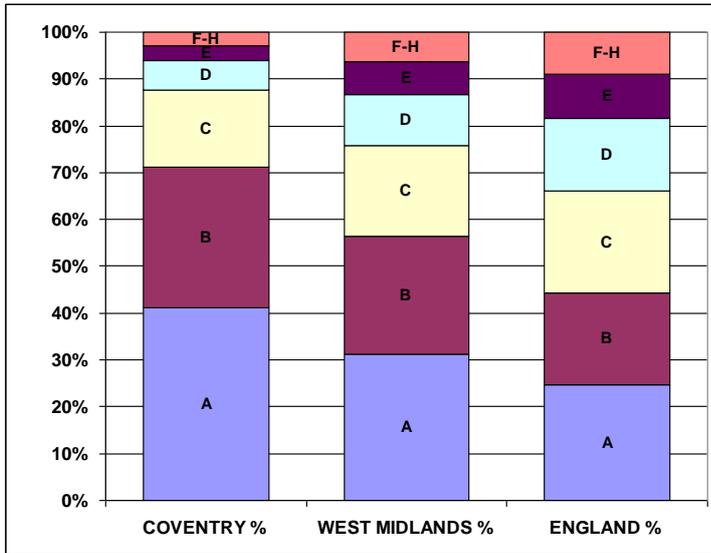


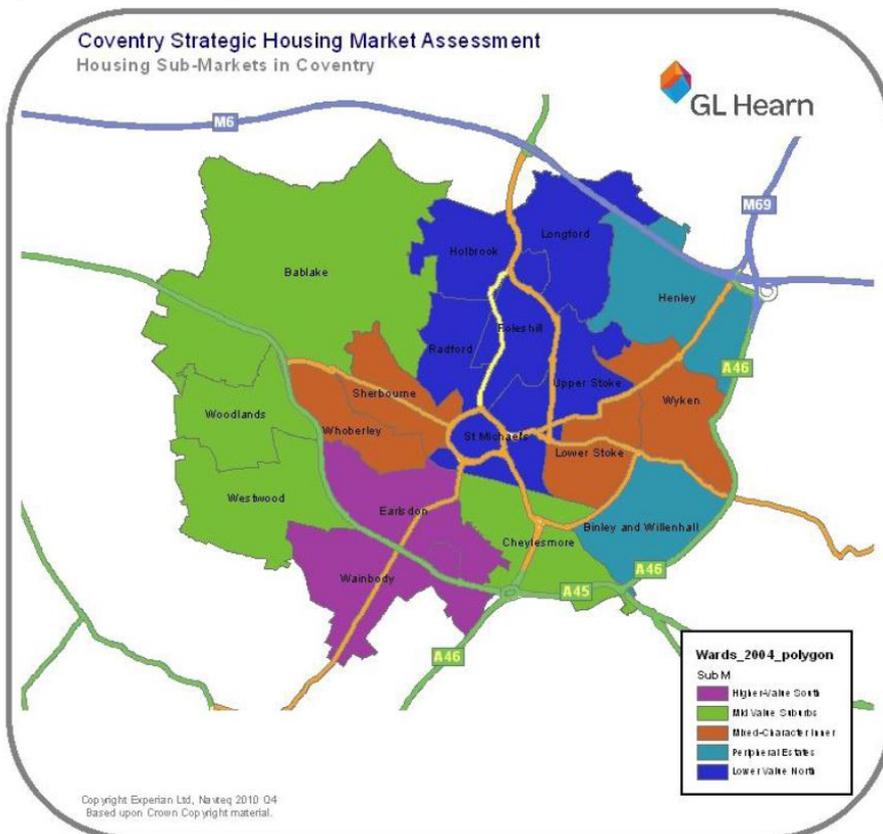
Figure 2: Council Tax Band Comparison – Coventry, West Midlands and England (31<sup>st</sup> March 2012)



### Housing Sub-Markets within the City

Bringing together the elements of the stock profile in Coventry, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012) identified five key housing sub-markets within the City:

Figure 3: Housing Market Sub-Areas (SHMA 2012)



### **1. Higher-Value South:** (coloured purple in Fig 3)

The south of the City, comprising the wards of Earlsdon and Wainbody, was consistently identified by estate agents as the most desirable. These two wards demonstrated the highest house prices across all housing types. They have the highest proportions of detached and semi-detached homes (62% in Earlsdon and 73% in Wainbody) with more than 60% of properties in Band E-H. Over 55% of sales are of detached and semi-detached properties. These wards have a low proportion of social housing (with less than 10% of the housing stock owned by social landlords).

The socio-economic profile of the wards is generally more affluent, with more than 60% of the population in 2001 employed in higher-level occupations. Unemployment is low at less than 2.5%. The age structure of the population varies slightly between the wards.

### **2. Mid-Value Outer West / South West Suburbs:** (coloured green in Fig 3)

The mid-value suburbs describe a group of wards around the fringes of the City which contain a mix of property types, but are generally focused on 'mid market' semi-detached and terraced properties. This group of areas comprises Westwood, Woodlands, Cheylesmore and Bablake focused in the west and south of the City. Over 40% of properties in these wards are in property bands C or above. House prices are lower than in the higher-value south, but above those in other parts of the City. These areas contain some 'peripheral' estates which were developed as social housing at Tile Hill and Canley (in the west of the City). These areas still contain concentrations of social housing, deprivation and unemployment. Outside of these areas, unemployment is below the Coventry average and more than 50% of working residents are in higher-level occupations.

### **3. Mixed Character Inner East / West:** (coloured orange in Fig 3)

The third group comprises a series of neighbourhoods which are more urban and mixed in character, with more than 55% of sales/ stock comprising terraced housing in most wards. It includes the wards of Whoberley, Sherbourne, Lower Stoke and Wyken. Housing in these areas is at medium-level prices, ranging from £120,000 - £130,000 for a terraced property and £135,000 - £150,000 for a semi-detached property. In these areas, an above average proportion of the population is aged 25-49. Between 10-20% of the population in 2001 was from a BME group. Unemployment levels are average.

#### **4. Large Peripheral Estates:** (coloured light blue in Fig 3)

The fourth sub-market includes the wards of Henley and Binley & Willenhall which contain large estates built as social housing – but overall are more moderately priced than Westwood/Woodlands. They contain high concentrations of social housing (24-26% of stock) and nearing 70% of properties fall within Bands A or B. Despite their outer-urban location, they contain a relatively high proportion of flats. Levels of unemployment are above average.

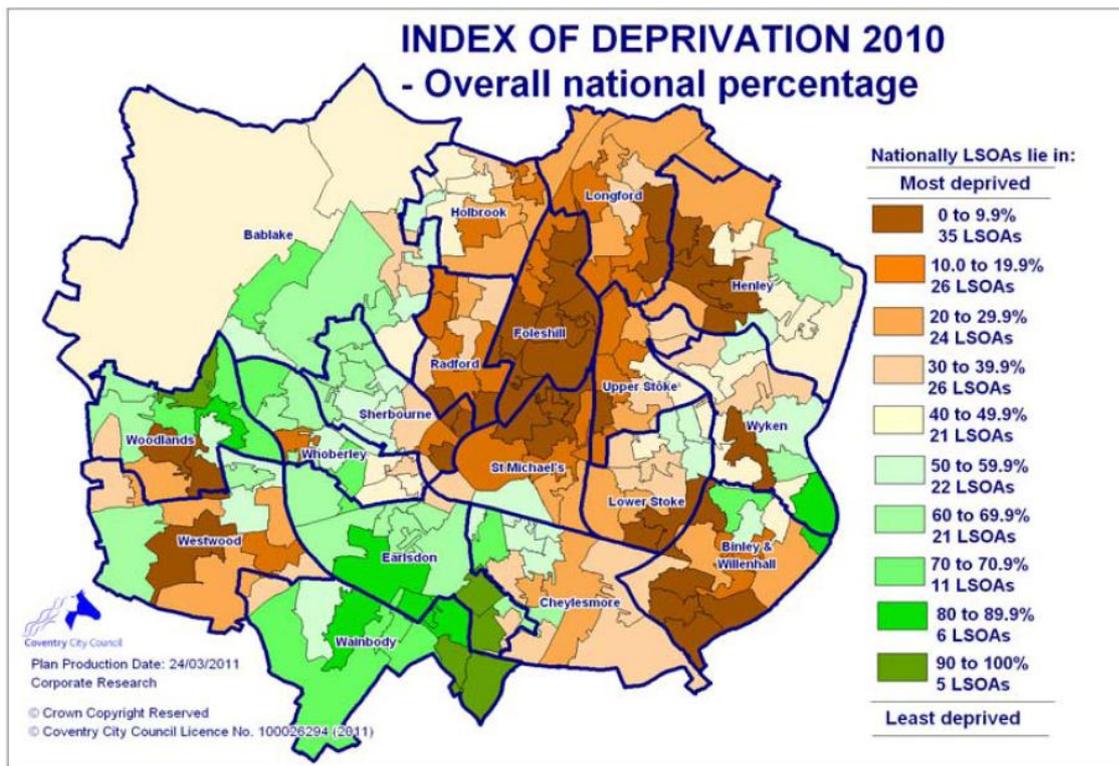
#### **5. Lower Value North:** (coloured dark blue in Fig 3)

The north of the City is recognised by estate agents as the lowest value area. It comprises the wards of St Michael's, Foleshill, Longford, Radford, Holbrook, and Upper Stoke. This area demonstrates the lowest house prices in the City, with terraced properties selling for under £100,000 in Foleshill, Longford, St Michaels and Holbrook wards. Average house prices in all wards in this area are below £110,000. A high proportion of properties are in Council Tax Bands A and B (over 60% in all wards), with terraced properties making up more than 55% of all sales by ward. The area demonstrates the highest levels of private sector housing stock which is non-decent or with Category 1 hazards, and contains the highest levels of vulnerable households in non-decent properties. There are a high proportion of people aged 25-49 resident in this sub-market. In all wards, more than 20% of the population is from a BME group. Unemployment is above the Coventry average, and the proportion of people employed in higher-level occupations is below average. The area demonstrates the greatest spatial concentrations of deprivation.

## Deprivation

Coventry is ranked 52 out of 326 Local Authority Districts under the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (with 1 being the most deprived), but there is a wide variation within the city. 35 LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) neighbourhoods are within the 10% most deprived areas in the country, but there are also 5 areas in the 10% least deprived areas in the country. The central and north-eastern areas of the City, particularly St Michael's and Foleshill, have a high number of deprived neighbourhoods, but there are also pockets of significant deprivation in other parts of the City including Henley and Binley & Willenhall.

Figure 4: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010



More detailed information on the Index of Multiple Deprivation is available:

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/135/english\\_indices\\_of\\_deprivation\\_reports](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/135/english_indices_of_deprivation_reports)

## Housing Stock Conditions

### Stock Condition in the Private Sector

In 2012 a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (PSSCS) was carried out by consultants on behalf of Coventry City Council to determine the condition of private sector housing stock.

The survey found that overall, 34.9% of properties in the private sector were non-decent. This is the equivalent of 38,400 non-decent homes in Coventry. There was a slightly higher occurrence of non-decency in owner-occupied properties (34.9%) than in privately rented properties (34.6%). This is in contrast to the figures for England (from the English Housing Survey 2009) which show 29.3% non-decency in owner-occupied homes but 40.8% non-decency in the private rented sector.

Table 4 shows that the main reason for failure of dwellings as a decent home was the presence of Category 1 hazards (under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System – HHSRS) followed by a poor degree of thermal comfort and the need for repairs. Lack of modern facilities represented a smaller proportion of failures.

**Table 4: Reasons for failure of dwellings as a decent home**

Reason	Dwellings	% of non-decent	% of stock
Category 1 Hazard	22,100	58.6%	20.1%
In need of repair	10,800	28.6%	9.8%
Lacking modern facilities	4,200	11.3%	3.9%
Poor degree of thermal comfort	11,300	29.9%	10.3%
Non Decent	38,400	100%	34.9%

(Draft PSSCS 2012 – note: the failure reasons total more than the figure for non-decent dwellings as some will fail on more than one criterion)

The Stock Condition Survey also assessed the estimated cost to remedy these failures, showing that private housing in Coventry requires £130.4m of investment to meet decent homes standards, or an average of £3,400 per non-decent property.

**Table 5: Repair costs by non-decency reason**

Reason	Total Cost (£m)	Cost per dwelling (£)
Category 1 Hazard	23.9	1,080
In need of repair	24.5	1,350
Lacking modern facilities	43.7	10,300
Poor degree of thermal comfort	38.3	3,410
Total (and average per dwelling)	130.4	3,400

(Draft PSSCS 2012)

### Fuel Poverty

A household is considered to be in fuel poverty when more than 10% of their income has to be spent to achieve an adequate level of warmth in their home.

In 2010, 21% of households in Coventry were in fuel poverty compared to the national average of 19%. At the LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) neighbourhood level, 68 out of the 197 LSOAs have fuel poverty levels at over 25% and of these; eight have levels of over 30%. The Climate Change Strategy for Coventry indicates that approximately 36% of the City's carbon dioxide emissions are from the housing stock.

### Empty Homes

As at 1st April 2012, 2587 properties were empty and of these, 1434 had been empty for over 6 months. The Council works towards bringing empty properties back into use, particularly concentrating on those properties that have been empty for over two years, or are causing a nuisance in the local community through disrepair, vandalism etc. Over the past five years, 705 properties have been brought back into use through the direct action of the Council and currently (Oct 2012), there are 449 empty homes cases being investigated.

**Table 6: Empty homes brought back into use through the direct action of the Council**

Year	Number of properties brought back into use
2007/08	111
2008/09	123 (45 of which were empty for 2 years or causing nuisance)
2009/10	128 (52 of which were empty for 2 years or causing nuisance)
2010/11	142 (52 of which were empty for 2 years or causing nuisance)
2011/12	201 (73 of which were empty for 2 years or causing nuisance)

**Table 7: Locations of empty homes cases currently being investigated (2012)**

Ward	Number	Percentage	Ward	Number	Percentage
Foleshill	69	15.4%	Whoberley	20	4.5%
St Michael's	46	10.2%	Westwood	18	4.0%
Radford	36	8.0%	Binley&Willenhall	16	3.6%
Lower Stoke	35	7.8%	Cheylesmore	16	3.6%
Longford	34	7.6%	Wainbody	12	2.7%
Holbrook	30	6.7%	Woodlands	11	2.4%
Henley	29	6.5%	Wyken	11	2.4%
Upper Stoke	28	6.2%	Sherbourne	9	2.0%
Earlsdon	21	4.7%	Bablake	8	1.8%
			Total	449	100.0%

## Housing Demand

### Coventry Homefinder

Coventry Homefinder is the choice based lettings system by which the majority of social housing in Coventry is allocated. Applicants register on the system and are placed in a band (from Band 1A to Band 3B), giving relative priority depending on their housing needs. Band 1A and 1B are those with very urgent housing needs, Bands 2A, 2B and 2C are those with urgent housing needs, and Bands 3A and 3B are other applicants.

Once registered, applicants can 'bid on' (express an interest in) available social housing properties that are advertised each week by the 12 partner Registered Providers.

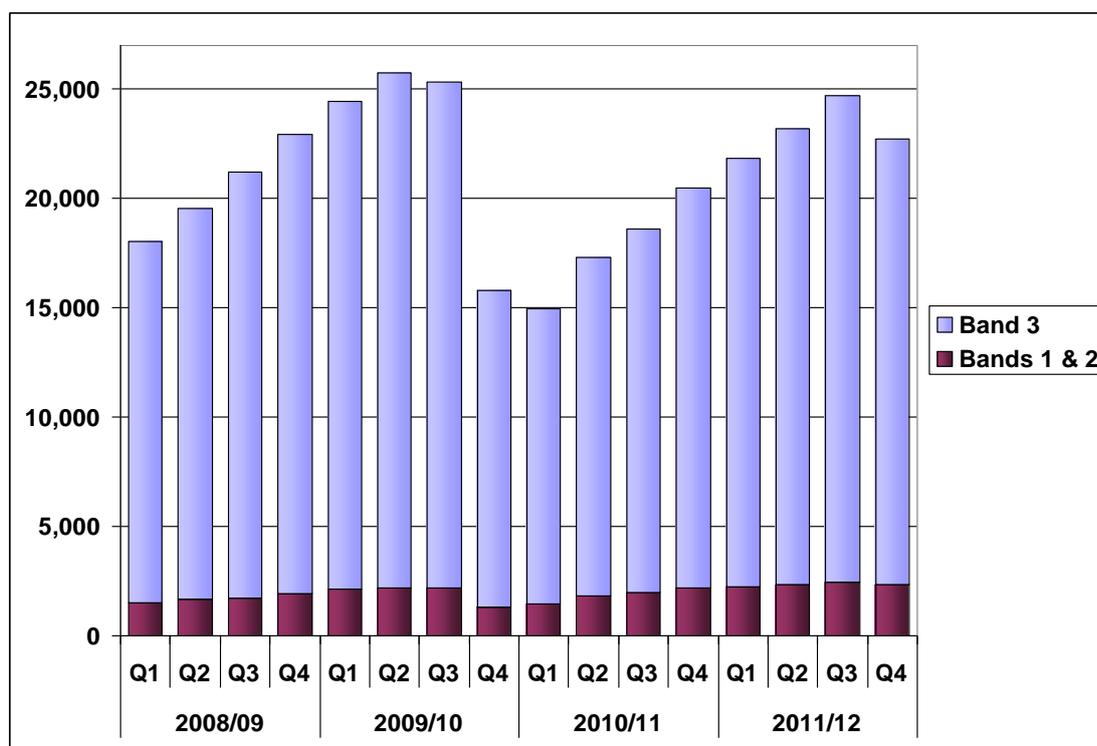
### Numbers on the Register

The total number of applicants on the Coventry Homefinder register has fluctuated since it was introduced in September 2007. From a base of 6,493 in April 2007, the number of applicants rapidly rose to a peak of over 25,000 in 2009/10. A review of the register was carried out in early 2010 and this resulted in a considerable fall in numbers on the register.

Since that review, the number of households registering had increased the register again to similar levels, but an upgrade of the IT system carried out in November 2011 now allows an automatic review of each household's application on the anniversary of their registration date.

The proportion of households in priority bands 1 and 2 has stayed relatively consistent throughout, at approx 10% of the total register.

**Figure 5 – Trends in the number of applicants on the Coventry Homefinder Register since 2008/09**



**Table 8 – The Coventry Homefinder Register as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012**

<b>Band 1A</b>	70
<b>Band 1B</b>	78
<b>Band 2A</b>	1,148
<b>Band 2B</b>	433
<b>Band 2C</b>	630
<b>Band 3A</b>	19,005
<b>Band 3B</b>	1,354
<b>Total</b>	22,718

<b>Priority need bands 1A-2C</b>	2,359	10.4%
<b>Non-priority need bands 3A-3B</b>	20,359	89.6%
<b>Total</b>	22,718	

### Active Participation

The Choice Based Lettings system requires applicants to take an active part and exercise choice, by placing a 'bid' on the system to register their interest in particular properties that become available for letting.

Overall, 36% of applicants have never placed a bid on the system, and only 43.5% of applicants (9,885 applicants) placed a bid within the year 2011/12.

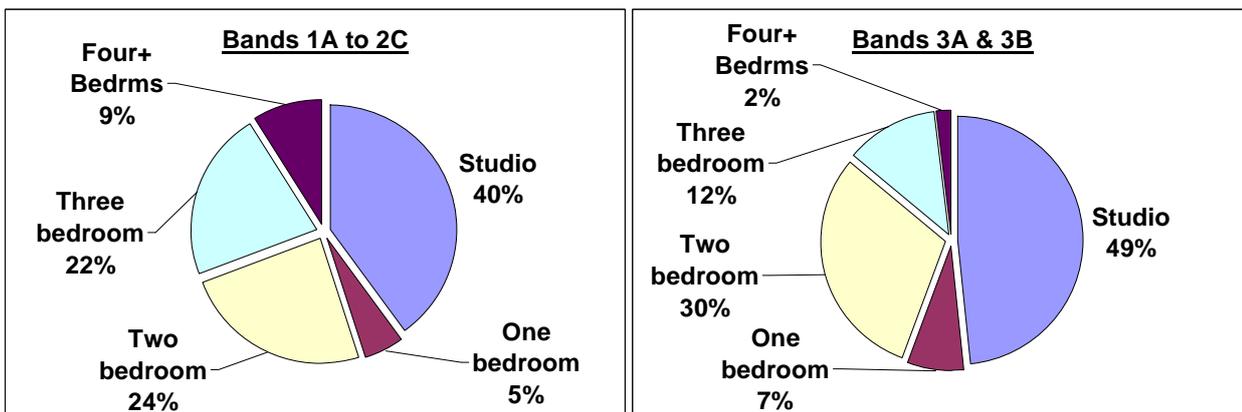
### Minimum Bedroom Requirements

When an applicant registers with Coventry Homefinder, their household composition is assessed to determine the minimum number of bedrooms they require. Generally, a higher proportion of applicants in Bands 1 & 2 (priority need bands) require larger, family sized properties.

**Table 9 – Minimum Bedroom Requirements of Applicants (2012)**

	Numbers			Percentages		
	Bands 1&2	Band 3	Total	Bands 1&2	Band 3	Total
<b>Studio</b>	944	9,835	10,779	40%	48%	47%
<b>One bedroom</b>	115	1,501	1,616	5%	7%	7%
<b>Two bedroom</b>	570	6,204	6,774	24%	30%	30%
<b>Three bedroom</b>	519	2,423	2,942	22%	12%	13%
<b>Four+ Bedrooms</b>	211	396	607	9%	2%	3%
<b>Total</b>	2,359	20,359	22,718	100%	100%	100%

**Figure 6 – Minimum Bedroom Requirements of Applicants in Priority Bands 1A – 2C and Non-Priority Bands 3A – 3B (2012)**



## Mobility and Adapted Properties

Applicants may identify a need for a property with particular design features or adaptations due to a physical disability or mobility need. The number of applicants that have these requirements is relatively small (182 applicants - less than 1% of the overall register) but the group is significant as over 60% of those with mobility needs are in very urgent or urgent housing need (Bands 1&2).

## Ethnic Origin of Main Applicant

33% of applicants on the Homefinder register identify their ethnic origin as a group other than White-British. This compares closely to the proportion of the city's population who are not White-British – 33.4% in the 2011 Census. 63% of applicants on the Homefinder register identify themselves as White-British (4% choose not to state their ethnic origin).

11.4% of the households in the priority bands (and 9.1% of the total register) identify themselves as Black-African. The 2011 Census data shows that Black-African people make up 4.0% of the Coventry population. Conversely, 1.9% of applicants on the Homefinder register are Asian-Indian, compared to 8.8% of the total population of the city.

**Table 10: Percentage of each band made up by households of each ethnic origin, compared to the percentage of the overall population in Coventry**

	Band 1&2	% of Bands 1&2	Band 3	% of Band 3	Total	% of total	% pop'n of Cov
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	18	0.8%	92	0.5%	110	0.5%	0.9%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	51	2.2%	382	1.9%	433	1.9%	8.8%
Asian/Asian British - Other	52	2.2%	356	1.7%	408	1.8%	2.4%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	54	2.3%	243	1.2%	297	1.3%	3.0%
Black/Black British - African	269	11.4%	1,791	8.8%	2,060	9.1%	4.0%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	55	2.3%	459	2.3%	514	2.3%	1.0%
Black/Black British - Other	25	1.1%	168	0.8%	193	0.8%	0.5%
Chinese	4	0.2%	25	0.1%	29	0.1%	1.2%
Mixed - Other	9	0.4%	117	0.6%	126	0.6%	0.4%
Mixed - White and Asian	21	0.9%	125	0.6%	146	0.6%	0.8%
Mixed - White and Black African	12	0.5%	145	0.7%	157	0.7%	0.3%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	30	1.3%	426	2.1%	456	2.0%	1.2%
Not Stated	138	5.8%	776	3.8%	914	4.0%	0.0%
Other	94	4.0%	637	3.1%	731	3.2%	1.6%
White - British	1,401	59.4%	12,906	63.4%	14,307	63.0%	66.6%

	Band 1&2	% of Bands 1&2	Band 3	% of Band 3	Total	% of total	% pop'n of Cov
White - Irish	36	1.5%	243	1.2%	279	1.2%	2.3%
White - Other	90	3.8%	1,468	7.2%	1,558	6.9%	4.9%
Total	2,359	100%	20,359	100%	22,718	100%	100%

(Ethnicity from 2011 Census – Office for National Statistics)

### Homelessness in Coventry

During the year 2011/12, 1146 households approached the Council for assistance and completed a homelessness application. After assessment, 576 were found to be homeless, eligible, in priority need and not intentionally homeless (known as 'statutorily homeless' or 'acceptances', and owed the main homelessness duty).

**Table 11 - Homelessness Applications - Decisions Made**

Year	Applications/ Decisions Made	Accepted as Statutorily Homeless
2007/08	1159	528
2008/09	1859	550
2009/10	1533	538
2010/11	1751	703
2011/12	1146	576

A more detailed analysis of homelessness in Coventry is available in the Homelessness Review.

## Housing Supply

### New Housing Development

The emerging Core Strategy has identified the requirement for an additional 11,373 dwellings from 2011 to 2028. This is based on the expected jobs-led growth in the City's population.

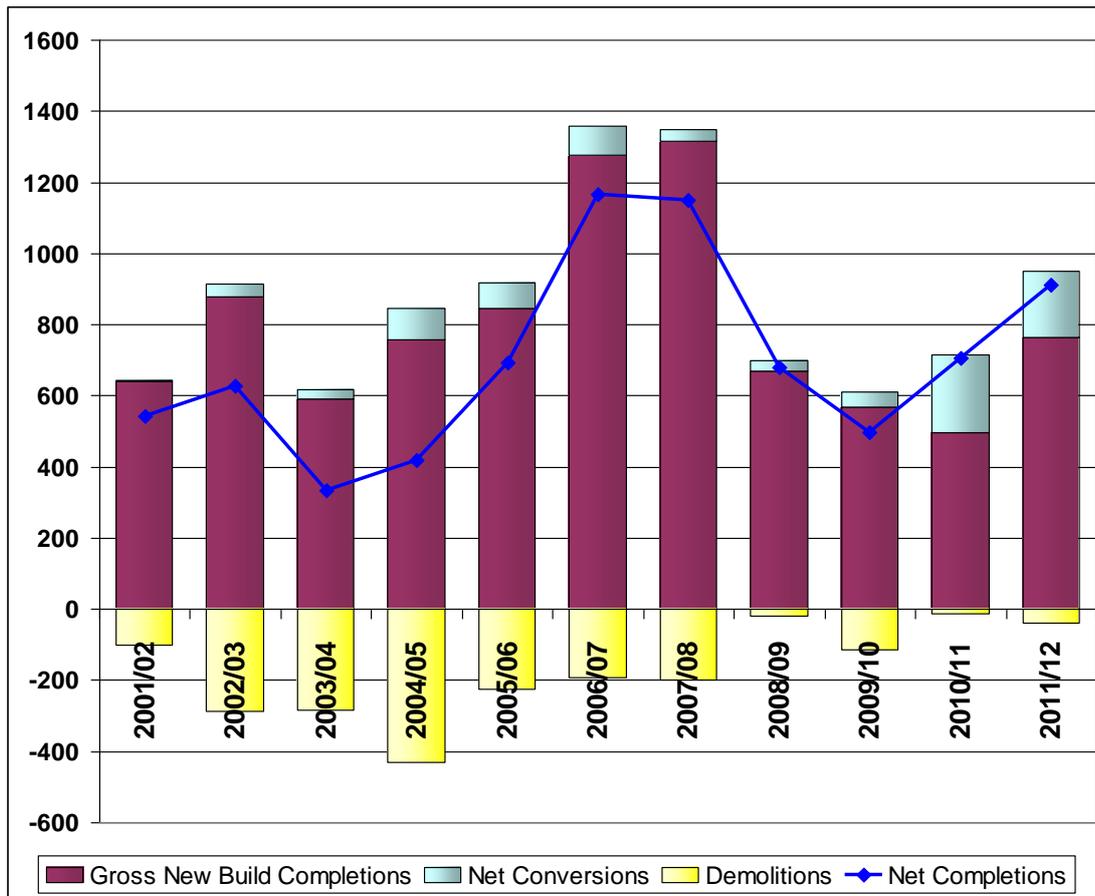
Housing development in Coventry was affected by the credit crunch and recession, and the fall in housing construction that followed. Gross new build completions fell from a peak of 1,315 in 2007/08 to a low of 497 in 2010/11.

**Table 12 – Housing Completions, Conversions and Demolitions**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gross New Build Completions</b>	<b>Net Conversions</b>	<b>Total Completions</b>	<b>Demolitions</b>	<b>Net Completions</b>
<b>2002/03</b>	879	34	913	-287	<b>626</b>
<b>2003/04</b>	591	27	618	-284	<b>334</b>
<b>2004/05</b>	757	90	847	-429	<b>418</b>
<b>2005/06</b>	847	70	917	-226	<b>691</b>
<b>2006/07</b>	1278	80	1358	-193	<b>1165</b>
<b>2007/08</b>	1315	33	1348	-199	<b>1149</b>
<b>2008/09</b>	671	29	700	-20	<b>680</b>
<b>2009/10</b>	567	44	611	-115	<b>496</b>
<b>2010/11</b>	497	220	717	-12	<b>705</b>
<b>2011/12</b>	765	186	951	-39	<b>912</b>

(2011 Annual Monitoring Report)

Figure 7 – Housing Completions, Conversions and Demolitions



(2011 Annual Monitoring Report)

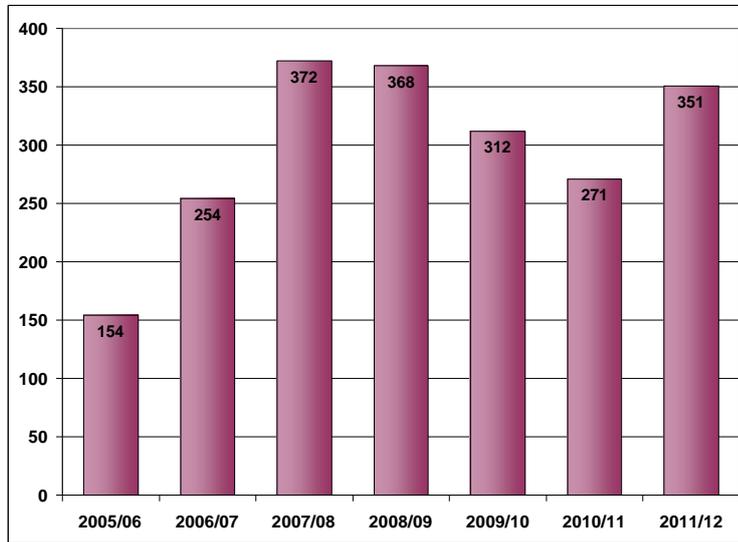
### New Affordable Housing Development

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) carried out in 2008 identified the need for an additional 304 affordable homes to be provided in the city each year. This was the target for affordable housing development for the period 2008/09 to 2011/12. Over the past five years, there has been an average of 335 additional affordable dwellings per year.

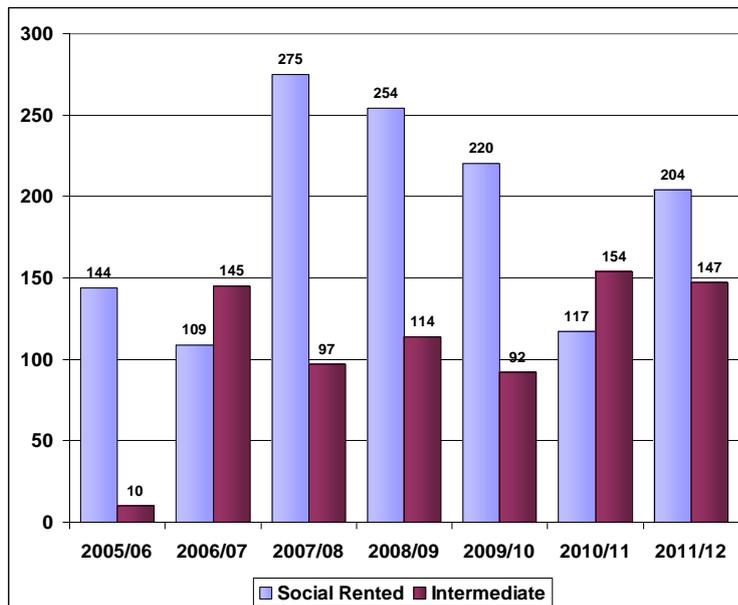
**Table 13 – Affordable Housing Completions since 2005/06**

Year	Social Rented	Intermediate	Total
2005/06	144	10	154
2006/07	109	145	254
2007/08	275	97	372
2008/09	254	114	368
2009/10	220	92	312
2010/11	117	154	271
2011/12	204	147	351

**Figure 8 – Affordable Housing Completions since 2005/06**



**Figure 9 – Social Rent and Intermediate Tenure Completions since 2005/06**

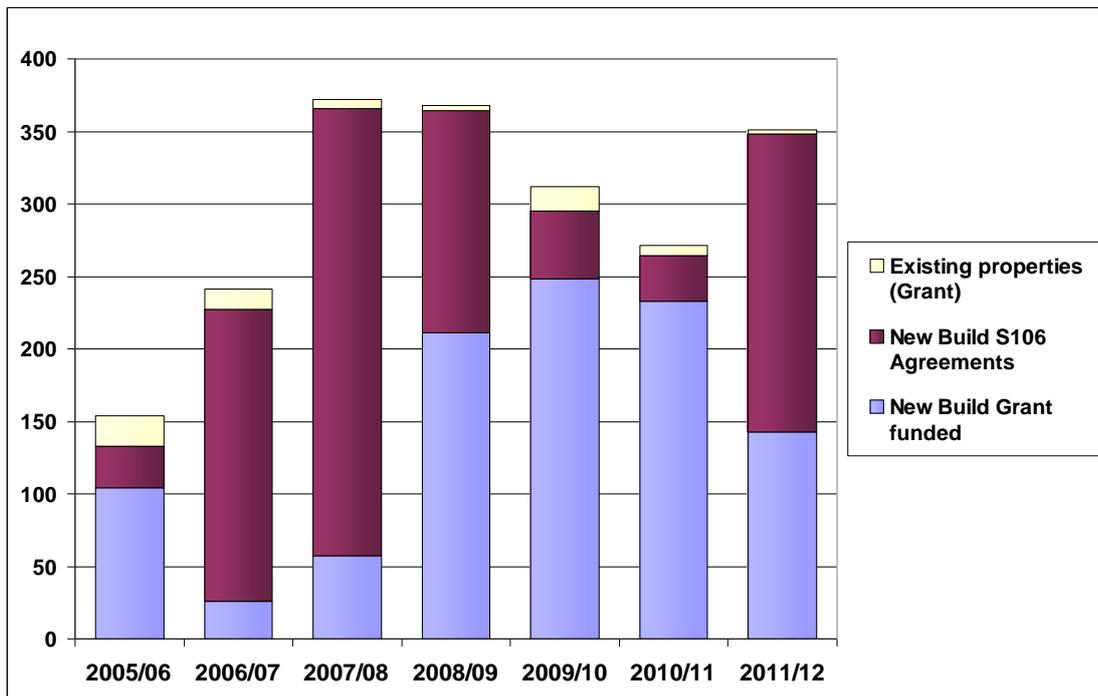


There are two main sources of affordable housing – grant funded housing developed by Registered Providers, and affordable housing provided by private developers through the planning system, usually through Section 106 agreements.

For the period 2008-2011, Coventry was very successful in gaining funding from the Homes and Communities Agency. When the credit crunch and recession caused a significant drop in house building, the Government at the time increased the funding available for affordable housing. As a result, for these years the proportion of affordable housing provided by Section 106 through the planning system is low, with a much greater proportion provided by grant funding through the HCA.

From 2011 onward, the Coalition Government has reduced the amount of grant funding for new affordable homes. A higher proportion of the affordable homes developed in 2011/12 were through Section 106 agreements.

**Figure 10 – Funding source for Affordable Housing Completions**



## Supply of Social Housing – Properties available through Homefinder

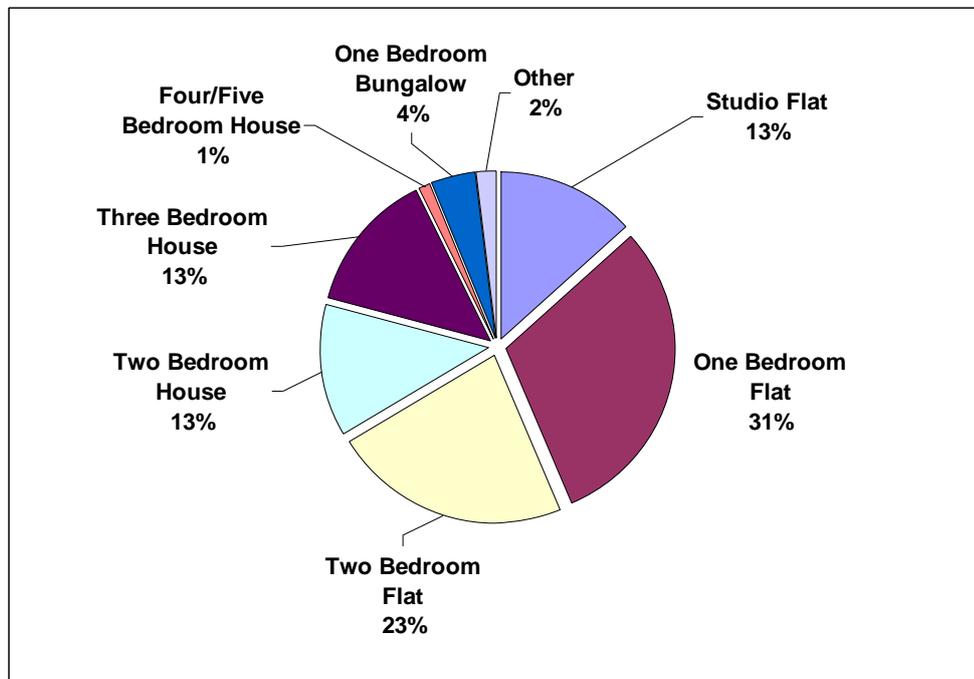
2,299 properties were advertised on Homefinder during 2011/12 and successfully let. Only 16% of the properties advertised had three or more bedrooms. 48% were studio or one bedroom properties suitable for one or two occupants only. 68% of the properties advertised were flats or maisonettes.

There were a total of 225 adverts with the outcome 'not let'. These were for 70 different properties (some properties were advertised multiple times). Sheltered bedsits/flats accounted for 187 out of the 225 'not let' adverts.

**Table 14 – Types of properties advertised on Homefinder 2011/12**

Property Type	Number	Percentage
Studio Flat	309	13.4%
One Bedroom Flat	695	30.2%
Two Bedroom Flat	520	22.6%
Two Bedroom House	299	13.0%
Three Bedroom House	308	13.4%
Four/Five Bedroom House	30	1.3%
One Bedroom Bungalow	91	4.0%
Other	47	2.0%

**Figure 11 – Types of properties advertised on Homefinder 2011/12**

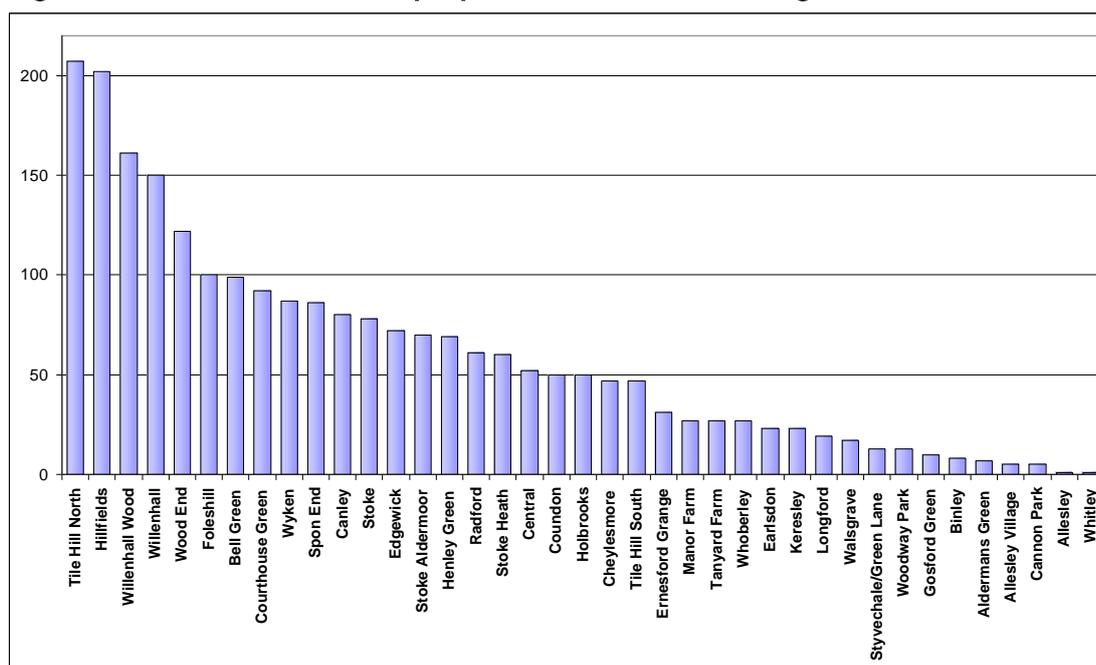


Of the properties advertised and let during 2011/12, 57% were in just ten areas of the city. Much of the city's social housing stock is concentrated in these areas of former Council housing estates.

**Table 15 – Area/Location of properties advertised during 2011/12**

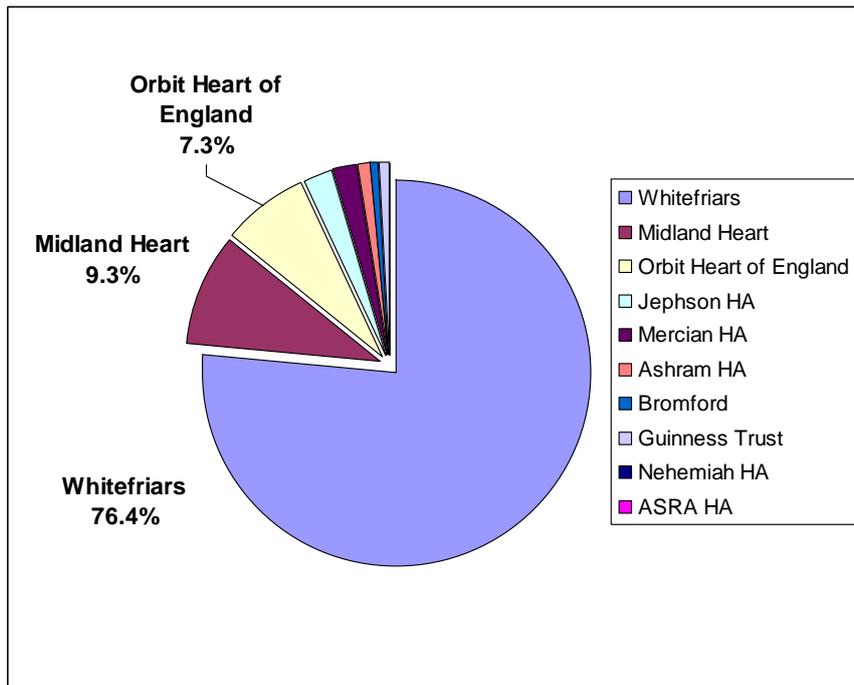
	Area	Total	%		Area	Total	%
1	<b>Tile Hill North</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>9.00%</b>	21	Cheylesmore	47	2.04%
2	<b>Hillfields</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>8.79%</b>	22	Tile Hill South	47	2.04%
3	<b>Willenhall Wood</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>7.00%</b>	23	Ernesford Grange	31	1.35%
4	<b>Willenhall</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>6.52%</b>	24	Manor Farm	27	1.17%
5	<b>Wood End</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>5.31%</b>	25	Tanyard Farm	27	1.17%
6	<b>Foleshill</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.35%</b>	26	Whoberley	27	1.17%
7	<b>Bell Green</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>4.31%</b>	27	Earlsdon	23	1.00%
8	<b>Courthouse Green</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>4.00%</b>	28	Keresley	23	1.00%
9	<b>Wyken</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>3.78%</b>	29	Longford	19	0.83%
10	<b>Spon End</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3.74%</b>	30	Walsgrave	17	0.74%
11	Canley	80	3.48%	31	Styvechale/Green Lane	13	0.57%
12	Stoke	78	3.39%	32	Woodway Park	13	0.57%
13	Edgewick	72	3.13%	33	Gosford Green	10	0.43%
14	Stoke Aldermoor	70	3.04%	34	Binley	8	0.35%
15	Henley Green	69	3.00%	35	Aldermans Green	7	0.30%
16	Radford	61	2.65%	36	Allesley Village	5	0.22%
17	Stoke Heath	60	2.61%	37	Cannon Park	5	0.22%
18	Central	52	2.26%	38	Allesley	1	0.04%
19	Coundon	50	2.17%	39	Whitley	1	0.04%
20	Holbrooks	50	2.17%				

**Figure 12 - Area/Location of properties advertised during 2011/12**



The majority of social housing properties in Coventry are owned and managed by Whitefriars Housing Group, and this is reflected in the properties that became available for letting during 2011/12. 76.4% were Whitefriars properties, 9.3% were Midland Heart properties, 7.3% were Orbit properties.

**Figure 13: Landlords of Properties Advertised on Coventry Homefinder 2011/12**



## Comparison –

### Demand and Supply of Social Housing through Coventry Homefinder 2011/12

A total of 272,573 bids were placed on the Homefinder system during 2011/12, which gives an overall average of 117 bids per property. The highest number of bids for a single property during 2011/12 was 752, for a three bedroom house in Radford.

Table 16 shows the minimum bedroom need of the applicants on the Homefinder register on 1st April 2012, and the bedroom numbers of the properties that were actually advertised during 2011/12.

This shows the shortage of large, four bedroom properties for households with reasonable preference (30 properties available during the year, compared to 211 households with priority banding and 396 without). It also shows that the number of

smaller studio/one bedroom properties that were advertised is similar to the number with reasonable preference, but the number of households in Band 3 with this bedroom need is very high.

There were only 17 properties advertised that had a maximum occupation of over 6 people, whereas there are 140 households with priority banding and 260 households in Band 3 that require more than 6 bed spaces. There were no properties available with maximum occupation of nine or more, whereas there are 48 households on the register needing this size of accommodation, of which 20 are in a priority band.

**Table 16: Coventry Homefinder comparison of bedrooms required by applicants and properties available 2011/12**

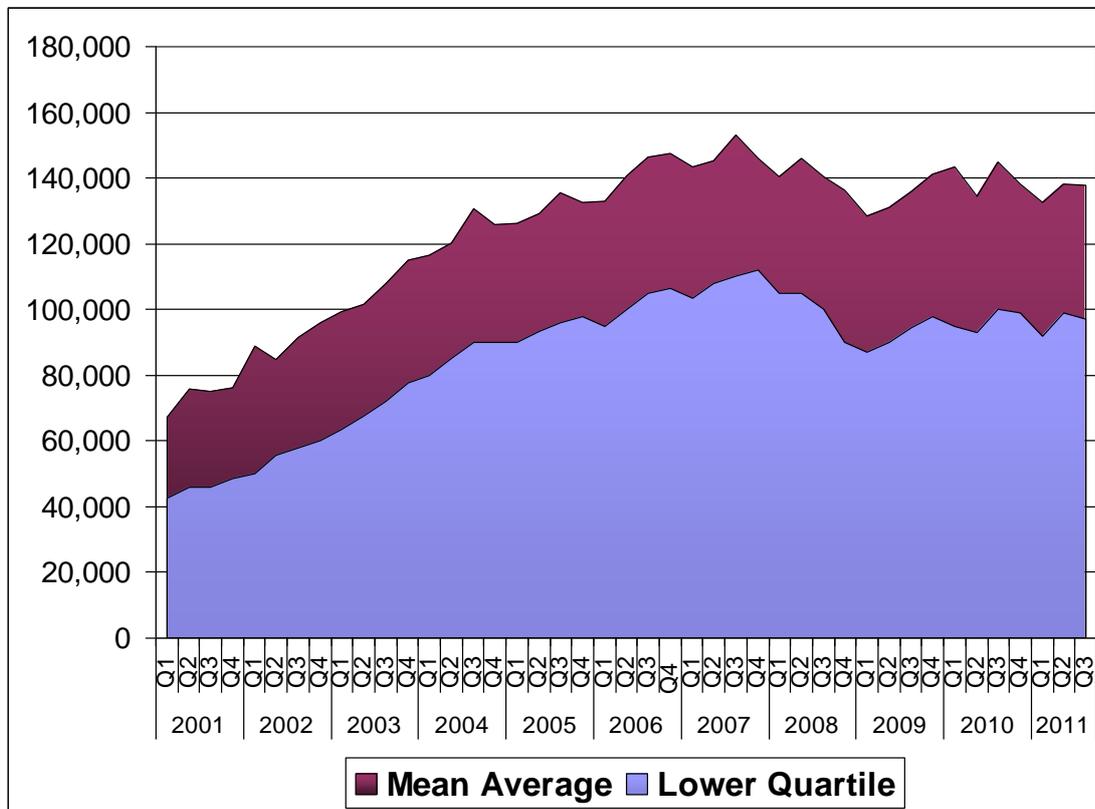
Properties by Bedroom - Advertised during 2011/12		Requirement by minimum bedroom need - Register on 1st April 2012	
Property Size	Number of properties	Bands 1&2 (very urgent/urgent housing need)	Band 3
Studio/1 bedroom	1,103	1,059	11,336
2 bedrooms	824	570	6,204
3 bedrooms	342	519	2,423
Four+ bedrooms	30	211	396
Total	2,299	2,359	20,359

# Housing Affordability

## Property Prices in Coventry

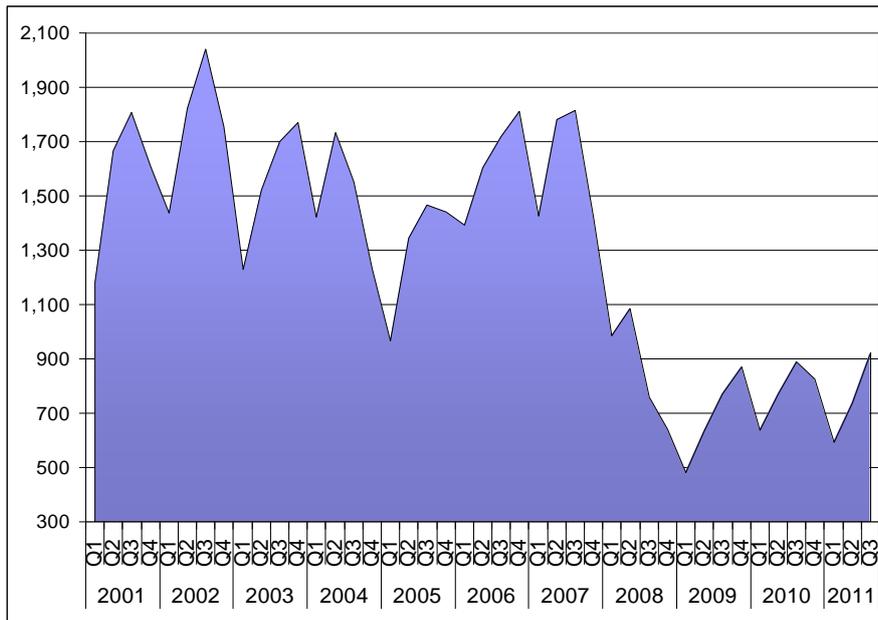
Due to the credit crunch in 2008 and the recession which followed, property prices in Coventry fell, as they did across the country. Average prices have since been unstable and have stayed below the peak average price of £153,149 in quarter 3 of 2007. In addition to lower property values, mortgage lenders have tightened up their lending criteria and buyers require a higher deposit. Together with a general loss of confidence in the market, this has meant that the number of transactions has also dropped.

**Figure 14: Average (mean) and Lower Quartile property prices in Coventry.**



(CLG Live Tables 581 and 583)

**Figure 15: number of property transactions in Coventry.**



(CLG Live Table 584)

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identified five housing sub-markets in Coventry – these are described in more detail above. The SHMA analysed Land Registry data to show the average and entry-level (lower quartile) property prices for these five housing market sub-areas.

**Table 17: Average house prices by Sub-Market in Coventry (Q3 2011)**

Area	Mean Average	Lower Quartile
Lower Value North	£104,014	£82,000
Peripheral Estates	£115,312	£89,250
Mixed Character Inner	£131,104	£107,500
Mixed-Value Suburbs	£155,201	£109,625
Higher-Value South	£216,648	£155,237
Coventry	£137,792	£97,500

(SHMA 2012)

## Social Housing Rents in Coventry

Social rents are regulated by the Government and calculated using a formula which takes into account the location, type and size of the property, and average local earnings.

**Table 18: Monthly average social rent levels**

Property Size	Higher Value South	Mid Value Suburbs	Mixed Character Inner	Peripheral Estates	Lower Value North	City Wide
1 bedroom	£353	£316	£316	£318	£319	£318
2 bedrooms	£394	£377	£365	£354	£347	£356
3 bedrooms	£410	£400	£392	£359	£373	£375
4 bedrooms	-	£422	£448	£423	£412	£423

(SHMA 2012)

## 'Affordable Rents' in Coventry

As part of the Homes and Communities Agency funding programme for 2011-15, a new tenure called 'Affordable Rent' has been developed, allowing Housing Associations to charge rents of up to 80% of market rents on new build properties and a proportion of re-let social housing properties.

As 'Affordable Rent' is based on a % of market rental value, they are subject to greater variation across the city and 'Affordable Rent' properties in high value areas will cost more to rent than those in low value areas. The SHMA contains details of the potential level of 'affordable rents' in the housing market sub-areas of the city.

**Table 19: Potential maximum cost of 'affordable rented' housing by size and sub-area (per month)**

Property Size	Higher Value South	Mid Value Suburbs	Mixed Character Inner	Peripheral Estates	Lower Value North	City Wide
1 bedroom	£320	£302	£312	£300	£280	£296
2 bedrooms	£420	£404	£406	£355	£396	£400
3 bedrooms	£540	£473	£476	£476	£440	£464
4 bedrooms	£800	£720	£777	£520	£640	£716

(SHMA 2012)

## Market (Private Sector) Rents

The SHMA also analysed the cost of renting in the private sector in each of the housing market sub-areas of Coventry.

**Table 20: Market (private sector) rents by size and housing sub-area**

	Higher Value South	Mid Value Suburbs	Mixed Character Inner	Peripheral Estates	Lower Value North	City Wide
1 bedroom	£400	£378	£390	£375	£350	£370
2 bedrooms	£525	£505	£508	£444	£495	£500
3 bedrooms	£675	£591	£595	£595	£550	£580
4 bedrooms	£1,000	£900	£971	£650	£800	£895

(SHMA 2012)

## Affordability analysis

A household is considered able to afford to buy a home if it costs 3.5 times the gross household income (or less); and a household is considered able to afford rented housing in cases where the rent payable would constitute no more than 25% of gross income.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) used entry-level (lower quartile) housing costs to analyse the affordability of different types of housing tenure in Coventry.

**Table 21: City-wide prices and rents used for affordability analysis**

Size	LQ purchase price	LQ private rent (pcm)	'Affordable rent' (pcm)	Social rent (pcm)
1 bedroom	£64,400	£369	£296	£318
2 bedrooms	£85,500	£499	£400	£356
3 bedrooms	£117,600	£578	£464	£375
4 bedrooms	£193,400	£896	£716	£423

(SHMA 2012)

**Table 22: Indicative annual income required to purchase/rent a 2 bedroom property without additional subsidy.**

Sub Area	Income required for purchase/rent			
	Entry level purchase price	Entry level private rent	Affordable rent (80% market )	Average social rent
Higher Value South	£36,600	£25,200	£20,200	£18,900
Mid Value Suburbs	£22,600	£24,200	£19,400	£18,100
Mixed Character Inner	£25,400	£24,400	£19,500	£17,500
Peripheral Estates	£23,400	£21,300	£17,000	£17,000
Lower Value North	£22,900	£23,800	£19,000	£16,600
City Wide	£24,400	£24,000	£19,200	£17,100

(SHMA 2012)

**Table 23: Lower quartile income ratios by sub-area (prices based on 2 bedroom home)**

Sub Area	Entry level purchase price	Lower quartile income per annum	LQ price:Income ratio
Higher Value South	£128,000	£22,029	<b>5.81</b>
Mid Value Suburbs	£79,000	£16,521	<b>4.78</b>
Mixed Character Inner	£89,000	£17,501	<b>5.09</b>
Peripheral Estates	£82,000	£12,875	<b>6.37</b>
Lower Value North	£80,000	£14,399	<b>5.56</b>
City Wide	£85,500	£15,644	<b>5.47</b>

(SHMA 2012)

## Registered Providers in Coventry 2012

<b>RSL Code</b>	<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Landlord Type</b>	<b>Total Stock in Coventry</b>
LH3903	Accord Housing Association Limited	Letting/Hostel	299
LH4095	Anchor Trust	Letting/Hostel	225
LH4034	Ashram Housing Association Limited	Letting/Hostel	109
L3534	ASRA Midlands Housing Association Limited	Letting	97
L0020	Bromford Carinthia Housing Association Limited	Letting	13
H1528	Central and Cecil Housing Trust	Hostels	11
H4434	Coventry & Warwickshire YMCA	YMCA/YWCA	47
A0581	Coventry Church (Municipal) Charities	Almshouses	75
LH2270	Dimensions UK Limited	Letting/Hostel	13
L4496	Fry Housing Trust	Letting	15
LH0459	Habinteg Housing Association Limited	Letting/Hostel	2
L4527	Heart Of England Housing Association Limited	Letting	1,515
L3076	Home Group Limited	Letting/Hostel	25
L0055	Housing 21	Letting	19
L0174	Jephson Homes Housing Association Limited	Letting	510
L0289	Jephson Housing Association Limited	Letting	123
H4250	Langley House Trust	Hostels	1
L0942	Mercian Housing Association Limited	Letting	433
L4467	Midland Heart Limited	Letting	3,362
L3833	Nehemiah United Churches Housing Association Ltd	Letting	21
C2731	Starley Housing Co-operative Limited	Co-operatives	125
H1046	The Abbeyfield Society	Abbeyfield	22
LH0037	The Guinness Trust	Letting/Hostel	307
LH4472	Whitefriars Housing Group Limited	Letting/Hostel	16,375

## Further Information

There are many data sets and sources of information for background evidence of other issues identified in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, such as unemployment, community cohesion, deprivation, crime and community safety, vulnerable people etc.

A valuable resource for investigating these issues further is the Facts About Coventry website, set up by the Coventry Partnership and developed by Coventry City Council's Corporate Research Team. On the website it is possible to find the most up to date available information on a range of issues:

- Housing
- Children and Young People
- Community safety
- Health and well-being
- Economy, learning, skills and employment
- People and place
- Climate change and the environment
- Equality and community cohesion
- Culture, sport and physical activity
- Transport.

The website is available from this link: [www.facts-about-coventry.com](http://www.facts-about-coventry.com)

# Homelessness Review

# Homelessness Review

## Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Housing Authorities to carry out and publish a Homelessness Review for their district. Following this the Authority is then required to produce a Homelessness Strategy based on and informed by the review.

## Aims of the Review

In accordance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, the Review must consider:

- The levels and likely future levels of homelessness in the city.
- The activities and services provided, which help to prevent homelessness, help to find accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless people or provide support for them, including support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.
- The resources available to Housing Services and Social Services, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other agencies for providing those services.

## The National Context

### **National Strategies**

National Strategies that have helped shaped the Homelessness Strategy include:

- "Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England" (2011), the Government's National Housing Strategy identified tackling homelessness as a key priority. The Strategy outlines the Government's commitment to homelessness prevention, meeting the needs of the vulnerable, managing the consequences of those made homeless and addressing rough sleeping.
- Homelessness (Suitability of accommodation) Order 2003; states that bed and breakfast accommodation should only be used for households with dependent children or pregnancy in an emergency and then for no longer than six weeks.
- "Sustainable communities; settled homes; changing lives" (2005): included an emphasis on homeless prevention, a target for a 50% reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 2010 and stated that from 2010, B&B would no longer be considered suitable for 16/17 year olds

- "Tackling Homelessness" (2006): recognises the role of Registered Providers in preventing homelessness through partnership working, sustainable communities, allocation and management policies and better use of existing stock.
- "No One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping" (Nov 2008): aimed to end rough sleeping in UK for more than one night by 2012.
- "Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No second Night Out" (July 2011): The focus of this plan is on single homeless people who are not in 'priority need', including those who are living on the streets and those who are at the greatest risk of rough sleeping because they have lived on the streets or are living in insecure accommodation, such as hostels or shelters. Anyone who finds themselves sleeping rough should be quickly helped off the streets so they do not have to spend a second night without a roof and to keep people off the streets, services must address the problems that led to homelessness in the first place.
- "Localism Act 2011" (November 2011): enables local authorities to discharge the main homelessness duty into the Private Rented Sector.
- Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local Housing Authorities in England (June 2012): this new statutory guidance on allocations replaces all previous guidance. Local authorities have more flexibility when deciding who will qualify to apply for the housing register and how applicants are prioritised.
- Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 – (Oct 2012): This document sets out the expected standards for a private sector property/tenancy to be 'suitable' when discharging the main homelessness duty.
- Making every Contact Count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness (Aug 2012): focuses on how services can be managed and work together in a way that prevents households from reaching a crisis point where they are faced with homelessness.

## **Welfare Reforms**

Welfare reform is a major part of the Government's policy agenda. There is an unprecedented amount of change underway that is likely to impact on homelessness over the coming years, both in terms of the demand placed on services and the resources available to tackle it. A summary of the key welfare reforms that will potentially impact on homelessness and homeless prevention is shown below.

### **Measures already implemented**

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is now based on the 30th percentile of local rents in the Broad Market Rental Area (previously it was 50th percentile).
- Local Housing Allowance has been capped at £250 for a one bedroom property, £290 for a two bedroom property, £340 for a three bedroom property and £400 for a four bedroom property (per week).
- The maximum LHA rate has been set at the four-bedroom rate.
- Single adults aged under 35 who claim LHA will now only be eligible for the shared accommodation rate, rather than the one-bedroom self contained accommodation rate (this has increased from under 25).
- Up-rating and increasing the non-dependant deduction rate.

### **Measures still to be implemented (April 2013 onwards)**

- LHA rates from April 2013 will be increased in line with either the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or be based on the 30th percentile of available market rents (whichever is the lower).
- From September 2013, total household benefits will be capped at £500pw (£26,000pa) for couples and families and £350pw (£18,200pa) for single adults. If a household's benefits exceed the cap, the first element to be reduced is the housing element.
- From April 2013, working age social housing tenants who claim Housing Benefit (HB) will be subject to size criteria. If they underoccupy their home by one bedroom according to the Government standards, their HB will be reduced by 14% of the rent amount. If they underoccupy by two or more bedrooms, the reduction will be 25% of the rent amount.
- From October 2013, new benefits claimants will come under the Universal Credit scheme, with existing claimants being moved over to the scheme in stages over the period until the end of 2017. Universal Credit aims to simplify and streamline the benefits system for claimants by bringing together a range of benefits and credits into a single system.
- Universal Credit will be paid monthly to the claimant; the housing element will no longer be paid directly to the landlord.

## Potential Implications of Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowance Changes in Coventry

- The Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) Impact Assessment identified that as a result of the changes to LHA, approximately 33% of private sector tenancies in Coventry would be available within LHA rates (down from 56% previously).
- This Impact Assessment also estimated that the 2011 LHA changes would result in approximately 9,000 households in Coventry losing an average of £11 per week from their benefit.
- Tenants who had existing claims and tenancies may find that the reductions mean that LHA no longer covers their rent payments. They will have to negotiate a lower rent, make up the difference from other income, or move to a cheaper property. There may be an increase in the number of tenants with arrears, and this may lead to an increase in evictions.
- There will be an increase in demand for shared housing from single LHA claimants under 35.
- Depending on the level of CPI and changes in the local rental market, it is possible that actual rents may rise at a faster rate than the LHA, meaning that fewer properties are available to LHA recipients.
- The overall caps on LHA are unlikely to have a significant impact in Coventry, as LHA rates are currently well below these caps.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that private landlords are more reluctant to let their properties to LHA claimants following the changes. Nationally, a survey by the National Landlords Association found that 90% of landlords letting to LHA tenants could not or would not reduce their rent to the new LHA levels, and 58% were planning to reduce the number of properties they let to LHA claimants.
- There may be implications for discharging homelessness duties into the private rented sector if the effective supply of properties available to households in receipt of LHA is reduced – particularly for households who require larger properties.
- Increases in non-dependent deductions may present an increased risk of youth homelessness.
- Tenants affected by the overall cap on benefits may struggle to meet housing payments as housing benefit is the element which is reduced.
- Households affected by the size criteria and HB reductions for under-occupiers in the social housing sector will need to make up the difference from other income or move to a smaller property, putting additional pressure on the housing supply. There may be an increase in the number of tenants with arrears, and this may lead to an

increase in evictions.

- It is estimated that in the West Midlands, 33% of working aged tenants who receive HB, will be affected by the size criteria for social housing, losing an average of £14 per week (source: DWP). In Coventry it is estimated that 3180 working aged tenants will be affected (source: CCC Housing Benefit Team) including approximately 2400 Whitefriars tenants.

### **The Localism Act 2011 and changes to the Social Housing Regulatory Standards**

The Localism Act is one of the Coalition Government's flagship acts designed to devolve power from all levels of government towards the citizen. The act includes unprecedented changes to local government and covers a wide range of services and policy areas including: finance, planning, governance and housing. It also includes key social housing and homelessness legislation reforms. The proposals with direct relevance to homelessness are:

- Changes to the homelessness duty – local authorities will be able to fully discharge their duty to secure accommodation by arranging an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector, without requiring the applicant's agreement. Where applicants become homeless again within two years, the duty will be retained by the original authority.
- Changes to housing allocations – local authorities will have more freedom to determine who can qualify to apply for their housing register (however, the rules on eligibility continue to be governed by legislation). Tenants of social housing providers who wish to transfer to a new social home but who have no housing need under the 'reasonable preference' categories will no longer be subject to Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.
- New forms of tenure – the Localism Act adds a new Fixed Term Tenancy for local authority landlords. In addition, changes to the social housing regulations mean that Registered Providers can also use Fixed Term Tenancies of a minimum 5 years duration (2 years in exceptional circumstances), rather than 'lifetime' tenancies.
- Affordable Rents – Registered Providers can charge 'Affordable Rents' (of up to 80% of the open market value) on new build housing and convert a proportion of relets to Affordable Rent, if they have a funding contract with the Homes and Communities Agency to develop new housing.

## **Tenancy Strategy**

In response to the Localism Act the Council will also be publishing a Tenancy Strategy that provides a framework for social landlords when formulating policies relating to:

- The types of tenancy granted
- The circumstances in which a particular type of tenancy is granted
- The length and terms of tenancies
- The circumstances for granting a further tenancy when an existing tenancy ends.

The key issue for homelessness is the manner in which Fixed Term Tenancies are brought to an end. It is expected that where tenancies are not being renewed, landlords will need to provide households with early and robust housing options advice to avoid homeless presentations. Coventry's Tenancy Strategy also sets out the intention to use the new power to discharge the main homelessness duty with an offer of a suitable private rented property, without requiring the consent of the applicant.

## **The Local Context**

The Homelessness Strategy contributes to the delivery of the City's Sustainable Community Strategy and is also integral to the delivery of the Housing Strategy 2013-2018.

## **Fundamental Service Review**

A fundamental service review of the Housing Service was undertaken during 2010-12 and implemented in April 2012. This involved restructuring the Housing Options Team to enable resources to be refocused towards the customer together with a greater emphasis on the customer being self-sufficient. The review identified the following specific roles:

- First Response – This is the first point of contact for enquiries and involves experienced and knowledgeable officers who are able to assess cases and provide proactive advice.
- Homeless Prevention & Assessment - The aim is to change from reactive, crisis management approaches to homelessness to delivering effective homeless prevention services that focus on early intervention. If prevention is not feasible to provide an efficient homelessness assessment service.

- Access to Private Rented Properties – This team facilitates access to the private rented sector for households in need, to prevent homelessness and discharge the main homelessness duty.
- Coventry Homefinder - The aim is to deliver a Choice Based Lettings service with increased customer self service and to assist people in housing need.

### **Homelessness - Commissioned Services**

Currently, seven commissioned homelessness organisations provide additional services through thirteen separate contracts. Each contract is administered separately with their own assessment system, client record keeping and monitoring processes. Through consultation with the providers and their clients it has been established that there is duplication of processes, assessment and administration between the various contracts. Providers have differing assessment criteria and client records are unable to be shared between services. Homeless clients of the commissioned services have talked of 'revolving door' process between services, where clients have experienced moving between commissioned services and ended up back at the original starting point. As each customer is presently only able to be supported under one contract, this can often mean that not all individual needs can be entirely met.

### **Achievements of the Previous Homelessness Strategy**

The main achievements of the previous Homelessness Strategy include:

#### ***– Development of the new Salvation Army Lifehouse on Harnall Lane***

The Lifehouse provides direct access accommodation mainly for single homeless men but also some accommodation for women. There are 80 rooms in 'clusters' of five sharing a kitchen/lounge area but with each room having a small ensuite shower room.

The communal facilities include:

- A community café with links to the City College and their catering training courses.
- A community meeting room.
- Areas for advice agencies, health agencies etc to hold sessions with residents.
- An IT suite used for training, helping to find employment and permanent housing etc.
- The £9m scheme received significant funding from the HCA and some funding from the Council.

– ***Provision of a new homelessness centre***

Whitefriars Housing Group has been successful in obtaining £2.1m of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency's Homelessness Change Programme 2011-15 for the development of a new homelessness centre for the single and street homeless to supersede the existing Chace Hostel.

– ***The introduction of Coventry Homefinder***

In September 2007, Coventry Homefinder was launched as the new choice based lettings scheme for allocating social housing in the City. Applicants now only have to make one application to access social housing from 12 housing association partners. Applicants are placed in bands based on their relative housing needs. Available properties are advertised each week, and applicants have the opportunity to 'bid' on (express and interest in) the properties they would consider. At the end of the week's bidding period, the 'bids' are prioritised based on the band of the applicant or registration date.

– ***Closer working with Private Sector Landlords***

HPPR (Homeless People into Private Rented) provided a bond guarantee to landlords in place of a cash deposit, enabling people in housing need and homeless households to access the private rented sector. As part of the Fundamental Service Review a new team of three officers has been set up to expand and provide an improved service called 'Access to Private Rented Properties' (APRP).

– ***Improved temporary accommodation through partnership with Whitefriars***

In order to provide more suitable temporary accommodation for homeless families, the Council has developed a scheme in partnership with Whitefriars Housing Group to provide ten self contained properties in the City, owned and managed by Whitefriars, to be used as temporary accommodation by families with dependent children.

– ***Additional Affordable Housing development***

Through the Homes and Communities Agency and developers' planning obligations, development has averaged at 335 additional affordable units each year over the past five years.

## Homelessness in Coventry – Services Provided by the City Council

### Statutory Services

Coventry City Council no longer owns or manages any social housing following the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) of the housing stock to Whitefriars Housing Group in 2000. The Council still has a range of statutory duties as the Local Housing Authority. These are summarised below:

#### *Housing Allocations Function:*

- Under Part 6 of The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002), all housing authorities must have an allocation scheme.
- In discharging Part 6 obligations, housing authorities must have regard to the Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities (ODPM 2002).

#### *Advice about Applying for an Allocation:*

- Housing authorities have a duty to people in their district to ensure that:
- Advice and information about the right to make an application is available free of charge;
- Assistance is given free of charge to those who are likely to have difficulty in making an application for housing without such assistance.

#### *Homelessness Function:*

- The homelessness legislation (Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) provides a safety net for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days.
- Authorities must ensure that accommodation is available for applicants who have become homeless through no fault of their own and who have a priority need for accommodation (the main homeless duty).
- Under homeless legislation, authorities are required to provide advice to individual applicants who are owed certain homeless duties.
- In discharging its Part 7 obligations, a housing authority must have regard to the Homeless Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (CLG 2006).

#### *Housing Advice:*

- Housing authorities also have a general duty to ensure that advice about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness is available to everyone free of charge.

*Homelessness Reviews and Strategies:*

- All housing authorities are required to carry out a periodic review of homelessness in their district and to adopt and publish a homelessness prevention strategy.

**Homelessness Applications made to Coventry City Council**

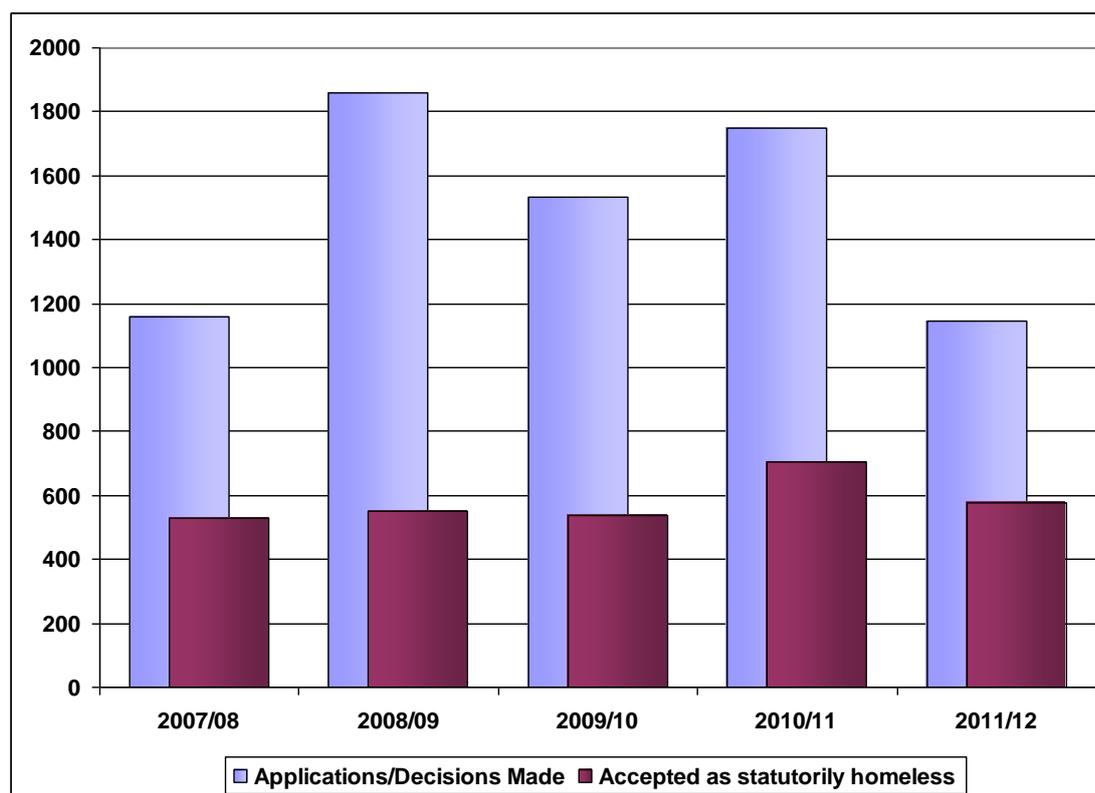
During the year 2011/12, 1146 households approached the Council for assistance and completed a homelessness application. After assessment, 576 were found to be homeless, eligible, in priority need and not intentionally homeless (known as 'statutorily homeless' or 'acceptances', and owed the main homelessness duty).

This represented a fall in acceptances from the previous year (2010/11 – 703 acceptances), but came very close to the five-year average of 579 acceptances per year. The general trend over the last five years has been an increase in applicants accepted as statutorily homeless.

**Table 1 - Homelessness Applications - Decisions Made**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Applications/ Decisions Made</b>	<b>Accepted as Statutorily Homeless</b>	<b>% of Applications Accepted as Statutorily Homeless</b>
<b>2007/08</b>	1159	528	46%
<b>2008/09</b>	1859	550	30%
<b>2009/10</b>	1533	538	35%
<b>2010/11</b>	1751	703	40%
<b>2011/12</b>	1146	576	50%

**Figure 1 – Homelessness Applications - Decisions Made**



The table below shows in more detail the outcomes of the homeless decisions made in Coventry over the past three years. The proportion of applications where the applicant is found to be eligible, homeless, in priority need but intentionally homeless has increased from 4% to 8% over the past three years. The number of decisions where the applicant was assessed as eligible, homeless but not in priority need has fallen.

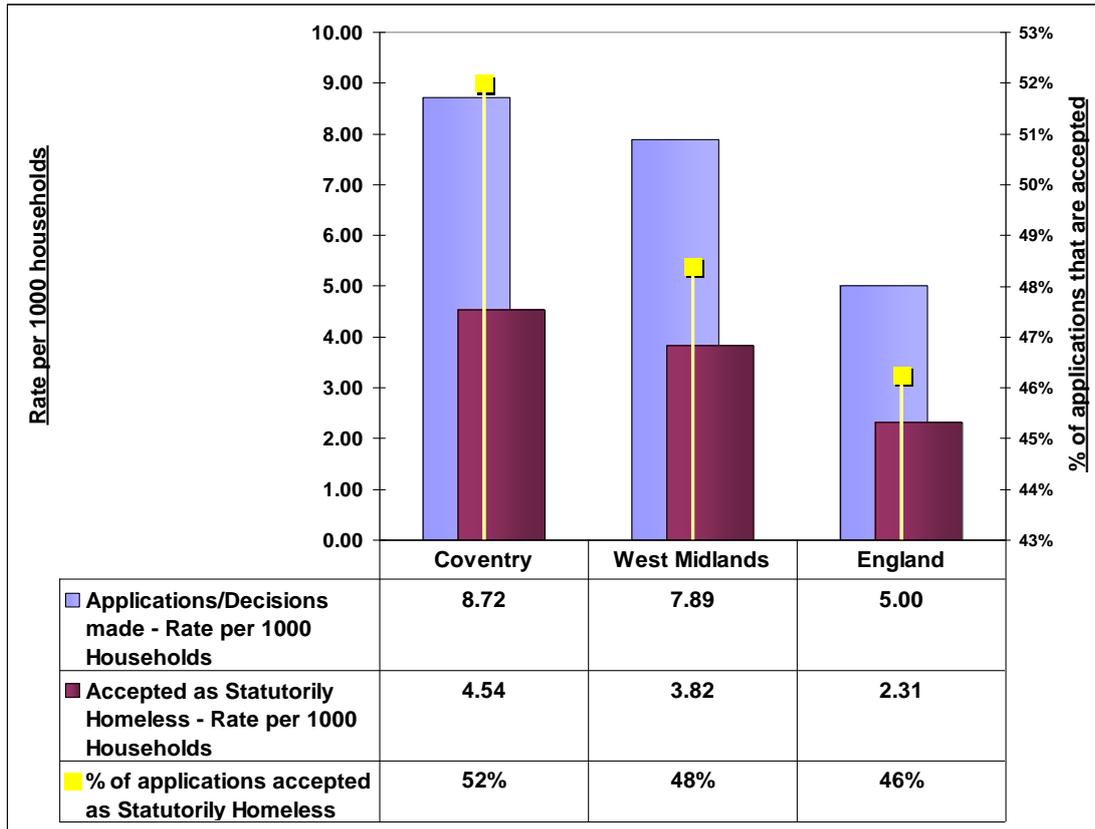
**Table 2: Outcomes of Homelessness Decisions made by Coventry City Council 2009/10 to 2011/12**

Decision	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need	538	703	576	35%	40%	50%
Eligible, homeless and in priority need, but intentionally so	68	117	86	4%	7%	8%
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	513	552	265	33%	32%	23%
Eligible but not homeless	361	346	181	24%	20%	16%
Not eligible	53	33	38	3%	2%	3%
Total decisions	1533	1751	1146	100%	100%	100%

### Comparison with Other Local Authorities

In comparison to other West Midlands authorities and England as a whole, Coventry has a relatively high rate (per 1000 households) of both homelessness applications and applications accepted as statutorily homeless.

**Figure 2 – Homelessness Rates per 1000 Households 2011/12**



**Table 3 – Homelessness Rates per 1000 Households: Comparison with other West Midlands Local Authorities 2011/12.**

	Total Applications/ Decisions	Decisions - Rate per 1000 Households	Accepted as Statutorily Homeless	Statutorily Homeless - Rate per 1000 Households
Birmingham	6,878	16.94	3,929	9.68
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>8.72</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>4.54</b>
Dudley	1,944	15.31	158	1.24
Sandwell	866	7.34	514	4.36
Solihull	491	5.85	330	3.93
Stoke-on-Trent	405	3.89	260	2.50
Walsall	194	1.88	127	1.23
Wolverhampton	754	7.62	363	3.67

## Statutory Homelessness in Coventry

As shown above, 576 households were accepted as being homeless, eligible, in priority need and not intentionally homeless during 2011/12. The most significant reason for these households becoming homeless was the loss of rented/tied accommodation following the termination of an assured shorthold tenancy (27%). The proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless and who are homeless for this reason has risen over the last 3 years, from 20% in 2009/10.

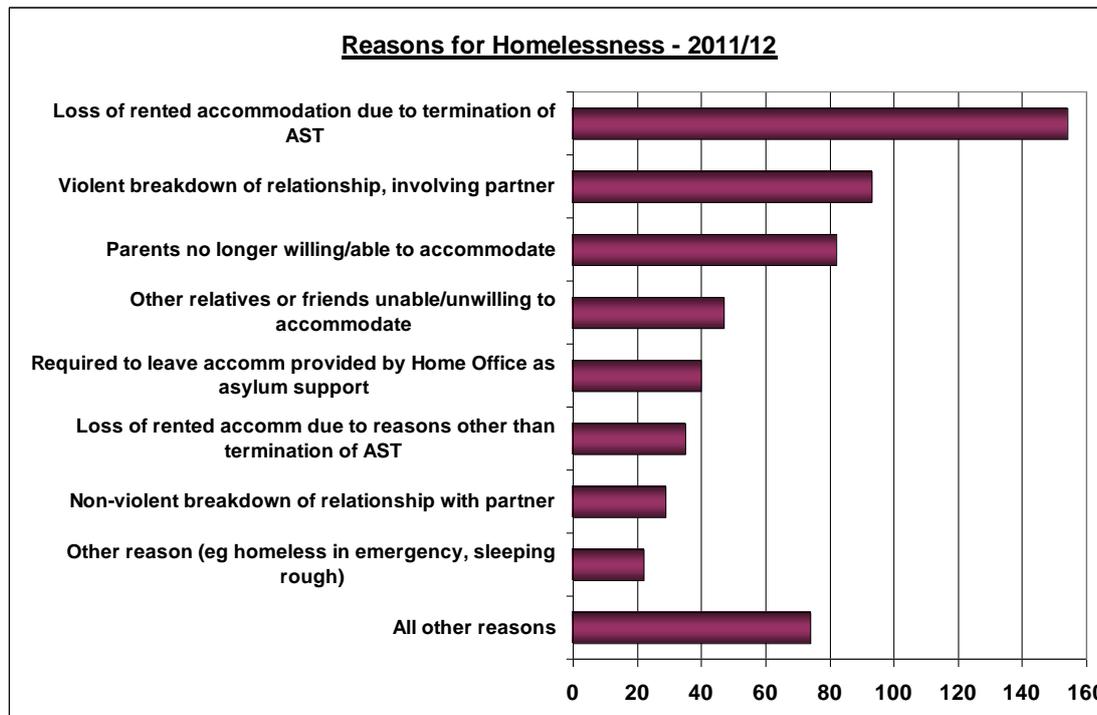
Other significant reasons for homelessness included: the violent breakdown of a relationship with a partner (16%); parents no longer willing or able to accommodate (14%); and friends/other relatives no longer willing or able to accommodate (8%).

**Table 4 – Reasons for Homelessness (Statutory Homeless)**

Reason for Homelessness	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Parents unable/unwilling to accommodate	84	97	82	16%	14%	14%
Others unable/unwilling to accommodate	67	98	47	12%	14%	8%
Non-violent relationship breakdown - partner	29	32	29	5%	5%	5%
Violent relationship breakdown - partner	101	112	93	19%	16%	16%
Violent relationship breakdown - other	13	4	9	2%	1%	2%
Racially motivated violence	0	0	1	0%	0%	0%
Other forms of violence	6	13	7	1%	2%	1%
Racially motivated harassment	0	3	2	0%	0%	0%
Other forms of harassment	7	11	5	1%	2%	1%
Mortgage arrears (repossession/loss)	9	13	13	2%	2%	2%
Rent arrears - LA	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - RSL	3	2	1	1%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - Private rented sector	4	11	15	1%	2%	3%
Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	105	139	154	20%	20%	27%
Reasons other than termination of AST	24	46	35	4%	7%	6%
Required to leave NASS accommodation	55	66	40	10%	9%	7%
Left prison/on remand	0	0	1	0%	0%	0%
Left hospital	0	4	4	0%	1%	1%
Left other institution or LA care	8	10	13	1%	1%	2%
Other - Left HM forces	0	5	3	0%	1%	1%

Reason for Homelessness	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Other reason (eg emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returning from abroad)	23	37	22	4%	5%	4%
Total	538	703	576	100%	100%	100%

Figure 3 – Reasons for Homelessness 2011/12 (Statutory Homeless)



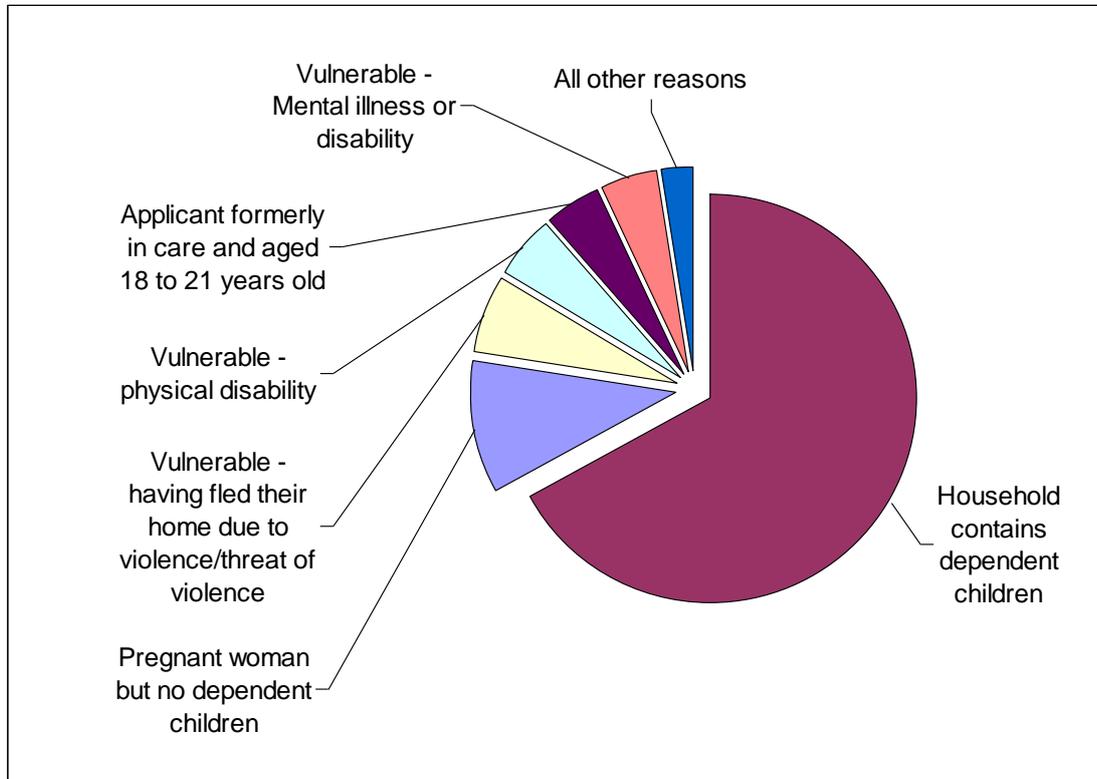
To be assessed as statutorily homeless, the applicant must be in a priority need group. For 2011/12, the highest (primary) reason for applicants being in priority need was dependent children in the household. This accounted for 67% of all households accepted in 2011/12. Other significant reasons include: pregnancy (10.4%); fleeing due to violence/threat of violence (6.1%); physical disability (5.2%); mental illness (4.3%) and former care-leavers (4.3%).

Table 5 – Reason for Vulnerability/Priority Need (Statutory Homeless)

Reason for Priority Need	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Homeless because of emergency	5	6	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.2%
Household contains dependent children	332	475	386	61.7%	67.6%	67.0%
Pregnant woman but no dependent children	56	59	60	10.4%	8.4%	10.4%
Aged 16 or 17 years old	11	8	1	2.0%	1.1%	0.2%

Reason for Priority Need	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Applicant formerly in care and aged 18 to 21 years old	18	18	25	3.3%	2.6%	4.3%
Vulnerable - Old age	2	8	2	0.4%	1.1%	0.3%
Vulnerable - physical disability	33	30	30	6.1%	4.3%	5.2%
Vulnerable - Mental illness or disability	15	30	25	2.8%	4.3%	4.3%
Other - drug dependency	0	0	1	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Other - alcohol dependency	0	1	0	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Other - former asylum seeker	4	2	5	0.7%	0.3%	0.9%
Other - Other	7	12	2	1.3%	1.7%	0.3%
Vulnerable as a result of having been 'in care'	1	7	3	0.2%	1.0%	0.5%
Vulnerable - Having served in Armed Forces	0	2	0	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Vulnerable - having been in custody/on remand	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Vulnerable - having fled their home due to violence/threat of violence	54	45	35	10.0%	6.4%	6.1%
<i>(Of which - domestic violence)</i>	<i>(25)</i>	<i>(15)</i>	<i>(17)</i>	<i>(4.6%)</i>	<i>(2.1%)</i>	<i>(3.0%)</i>
Total	538	703	576	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 4 - Reason for Vulnerability/Priority Need 2011/12 (Statutory Homeless)

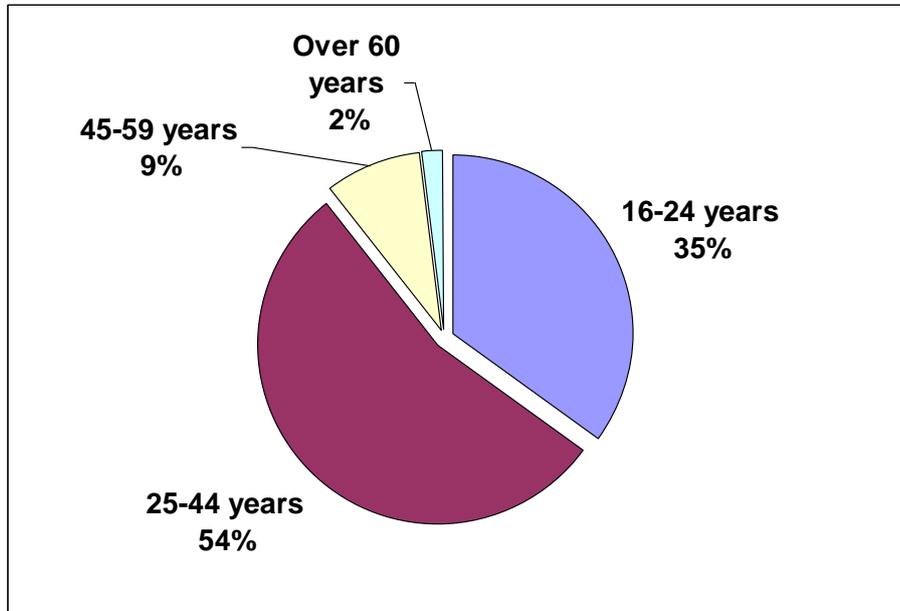


The age profile of households that are homeless and in priority need has remained consistent over the past three years. The majority of statutorily homeless households are in the age range 25-44 years (54%) and 16-24 years (35% - together making up 89% of all acceptances).

**Table 6 – Age Profile (Statutory Homeless)**

Age of Applicant	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
16-24 years	192	249	202	36%	35%	35%
25-44 years	286	374	313	53%	53%	54%
45-59 years	50	62	50	9%	9%	9%
Over 60 years	10	18	11	2%	3%	2%
Total	538	703	576	100%	100%	100%

**Figure 5 – Age Profile 2011/12 (Statutory Homeless)**

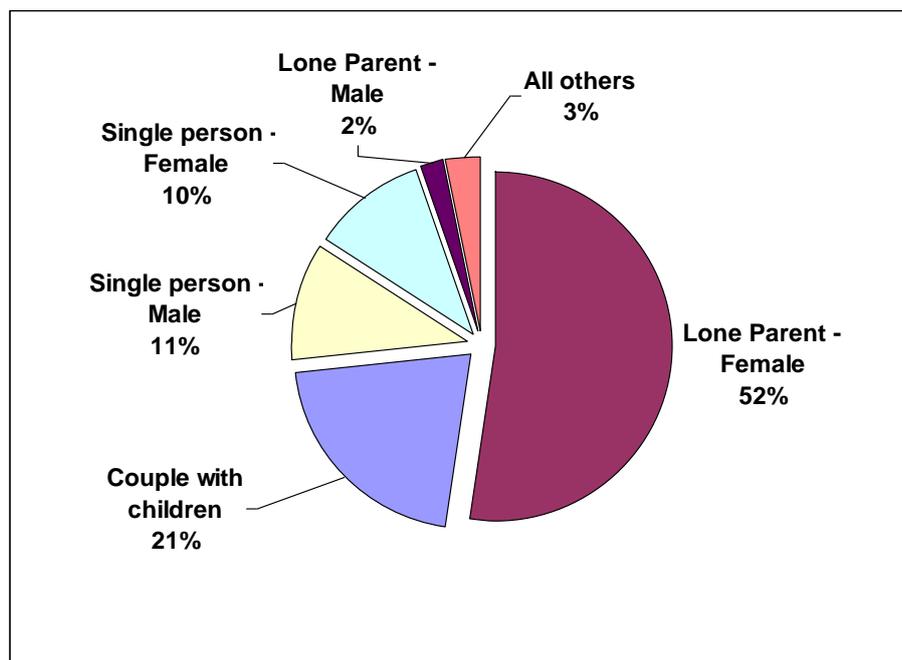


In 2011/12, over half of homeless households accepted as statutorily homeless were lone parent households (54% - 52% lone mothers and 2% lone fathers). 21% were couples with dependent children, and a further 21% were single people (11% single males and 10% single females). The profile of household composition has remained relatively consistent over the past three years, although there has been a decrease in the proportion of acceptances that are single females and an increase in the proportion of lone parent (female) households.

**Table 7 – Household Types (Statutory Homeless)**

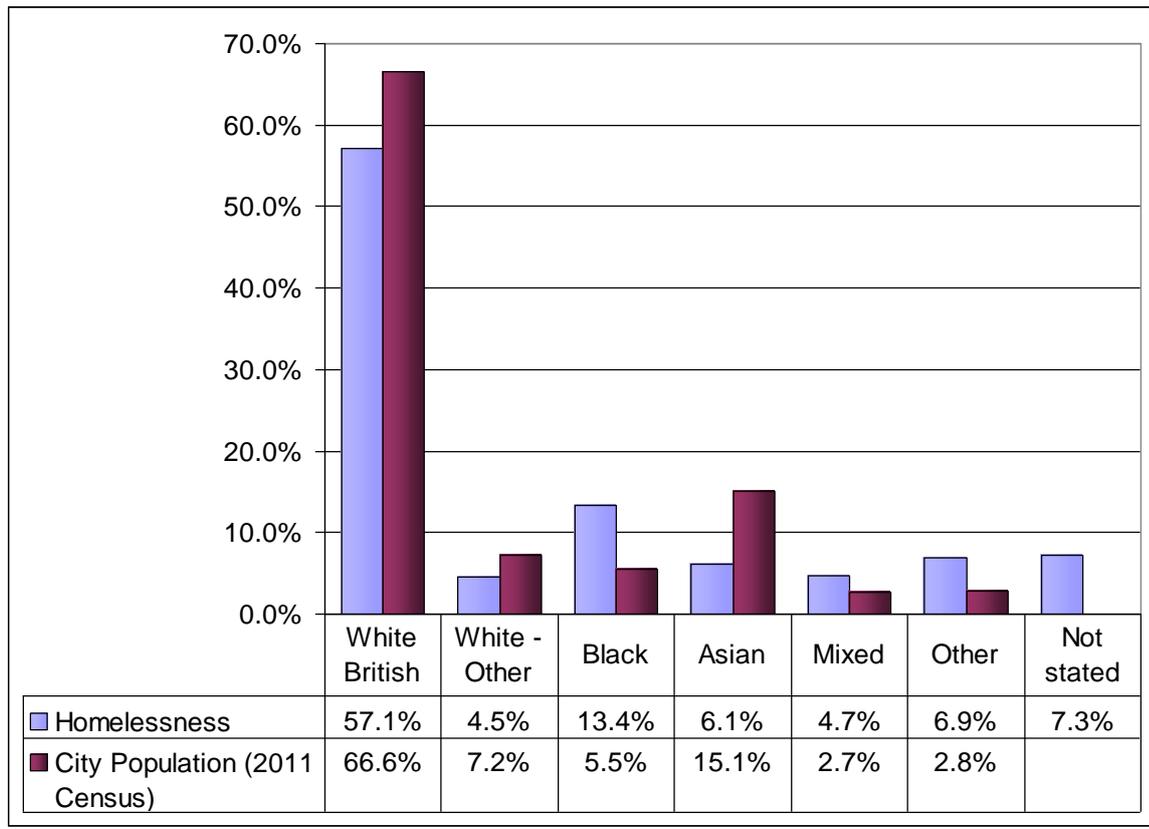
Household composition	Number			Percentage		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Couple with children	113	145	122	21%	21%	21%
Lone Parent - Female	243	358	301	45%	51%	52%
Lone Parent - Male	19	30	14	4%	4%	2%
Single person - Male	58	80	62	11%	11%	11%
Single person - Female	76	69	60	14%	10%	10%
All others	29	21	17	5%	3%	3%
Total	538	703	576	100%	100%	100%

**Figure 6 – Household Types 2011/12 (Statutory Homeless)**



The ethnicity profile of households accepted as statutorily homeless during 2011/12 shows that although White British is the majority group (at 57.1% of acceptances), Black and Minority Ethnic groups show disproportionately high levels of homelessness. Overall, 35.6% of statutorily homeless households in 2011/12 were not White British, compared to an estimated 33.4% of the overall population of the city in these ethnicity groups. Of particular note is the high proportion of Black/Black British homeless households – 13.4% of statutory homeless households, but only 5.5% of the population of the city. Conversely, Asian households make up 15.1% of the city population, but only 6.1% of statutorily homeless households in 2011/12. (2011 Census)

**Figure 7 – Ethnicity Profile (Statutory Homeless) 2011/12 – comparison with City Population**



**Rough Sleeping**

The Department for Communities and Local Government issued new guidance in September 2010 regarding the methodology for carrying out a rough sleeper count, which changed the definition of what constitutes 'bedding down'. In addition to this, all local authorities are now required to report either a count or an estimate of rough sleepers in their district.

Coventry reported an estimate of 5 rough sleepers in the City in Autumn 2010, and an estimate of 8 rough sleepers in Autumn 2011.

**Temporary and Emergency Accommodation**

523 households were accommodated by the Council in 2011/12 in Bed and Breakfast or self-contained accommodation, whilst their homelessness applications were assessed and following the decision until permanent accommodation was found. The average length of stay was 29.5 days.

45% of households accommodated in 2011/12 were single adults or couples. 53% were families with children and 2% were single adults/couples with a pregnancy.

**Table 8 –Types of Households Accommodated in 2011/12**

Household Type	Number	Percentage
Adult only	234	45%
Adult - Pregnancy	8	2%
Family one child	147	28%
Family two children	71	14%
Family three children	39	7%
Family four or more children	23	4%
Other	1	0%
Total	523	100%

In addition to this, a project in partnership with Whitefriars Housing Group has meant that from October 2011, ten properties have been made available for families as temporary accommodation – these are two-bedroom self contained units and more suitable than B&B accommodation for those households with children that may require a longer stay. From the start of the project to the end of the 2011/12 year, 21 families were temporarily housed in these properties.

### Homelessness Prevention

The Council was successful in preventing homelessness for 1055 households in 2010/11 and for 914 households in 2011/12. This was as a result of services provided by the Housing Options Team including advice and advocacy, mediation, enabling access to the private rented sector and enabling moves in the social housing sector.

The Council also funds debt advice for households at risk of homelessness in partnership with the CAB. This is recognised as an important issue and the Housing Options Team is working closely with Coventry CAB to develop debt advice skills within the Housing Options team by seconding a CAB officer. In 2011, 184 households were referred to the CAB officer by the Housing Options Team as they were at risk of homelessness due to debt issues. 154 of these clients attended appointments and their debts were successfully managed whilst the CAB were involved. 80 households were able to stay in their homes, and the others were successful in obtaining alternative accommodation.

## Homelessness in Coventry – Commissioned Services

The former Supporting People programme funds a range of projects providing housing related support to vulnerable people, aiming to prevent difficulties that can lead to hospitalisation, institutional care or homelessness. This support may include the provision of home visits, on site or visiting wardens and/or delivery of a range of eligible tasks. Amongst other things, the former Supporting People programme funds non-statutory homeless services in Coventry.

Non-statutory homeless is where people do not fit into the criteria for statutory homelessness, for example, if they are not eligible, not in 'priority need', said to be 'intentionally' homeless, or simply haven't approached the local authority for housing.

### The Commissioned Services

Coventry City Council supports provision for these groups by commissioning accommodation and/or floating support through a range of third sector organisations.

The former Supporting People funding which is granted to the local authority by the Government is no longer ring-fenced, so the Council can prioritise how it spends this funding. The Council is currently maintaining the level of funding for homelessness commissioned services, which is just under £1.4m per year.

This provides 230 units of accommodation and 263 units of floating support with seven different providers. Table 9 below shows the services provided in more detail.

**Table 9 – Current Commissioned Services for Homelessness**

Provider	Name of service	Type	Number of units
Central & Cecil	Tullamore House, Stratford Street	Accommodation	5
Coventry Cyrenians	Single Homeless Accommodation - Female	Accommodation	16
Coventry Cyrenians	Single Homeless Accommodation - Male	Accommodation	25
The Salvation Army	Lincoln Street	Accommodation	80
Whitefriars Housing Group	The Chace - Short Stay	Accommodation	94

Provider	Name of service	Type	Number of units
Whitefriars Housing Group	Homes Emergency B&B	Accommodation	10
Central & Cecil	Homeless Floating Support	Floating Support	5
Coventry Cyrenians	Mental Health Floating Support	Floating Support	30
Coventry Cyrenians	Floating Support for Rough Sleepers	Floating Support	20
Coventry Cyrenians	Floating Support for Single Homeless	Floating Support	20
Coventry Cyrenians	Mediation Scheme for Young People	Floating Support	7
Coventry Jesus Centre	Bond Scheme for Single Homeless	Floating Support	30
Coventry Jesus Centre	Storage for recycled Furniture & Equip	Floating Support	52
Stonham Housing Association	Move On	Floating Support	30
Valley House	Floating Support for Homeless Families	Floating Support	13
Whitefriars Housing Group	Floating Support	Floating Support	56

### Who uses the Commissioned Services?

Throughout the 2011/12 financial year, 1,603 clients used the commissioned services with the number of visits at 1,796.

This is the total number of clients for the services but given the transient nature of the client group, individual service providers may have dealt with the same individual a number of times.

For 2011/12, the client data shows that service users range in age from 16 to 89 (age was calculated at time of admission). The age profile of the people using the commissioned homelessness services is dominated by the 18-44 age group – in fact over three quarters (76%) are between the ages of 18 to 44. Of these, 388 clients were aged under 24, whilst 1,402 clients were aged 25 and above. There were 4 client records where the age was unknown.

In terms of ethnicity, the 2011/12 records show that the majority of users were from a White background (74.2%), whilst the second highest ethnic group to feature in this cohort is Black (13.8%).

**Table 10 – Ethnic Origin of Non-Statutorily Homeless Clients using Commissioned Services in 2011/12**

Ethnic Origin of Client	%
Asian	7.5%
Black	13.8%
Chinese/Other	0.2%
Mixed	2.8%
White	74.2%
Unknown	1.5%

321 people (17.9%) using the services during the 2011/12 financial year indicated that they had a disability. This compares to 18.6% of people in Coventry who declared that they had a limiting long term illness. Of those who declared they had a disability, 154 (48%) stated that their disability was a mental health issue. For those that declared they had a disability' the majority were in the 35-44 age group.

In 2011/12 there were 1,248 clients who had 'completed' a stay with the average length of stay being 84 days.

As part of the data review, the duration of stay for those clients who were still accessing a service was analysed. For 2011/12, there were 548 clients still receiving a service at the end of March 2012 and at that point, their average length of stay was 265 days.

## What Service Users and Providers have told us about the Services

A review of the commissioned services for homelessness has been carried out and as part of this process, the views of service users and providers have been sought through a range of methods.

### **Users**

A number of user focus groups were held to understand their experiences of the services they had used. The key points of feedback were as follows:

Most clients didn't know where to go/who to approach upon becoming homeless.

There was a lack of transparency/awareness of criteria for being accepted into hostels.

Issues with rent arrears.

Clients felt as if they were stuck – the current system doesn't encourage clients to get out.

There are no post-tenancy support services. Some floating support services do provide support to users to help them maintain their tenancies, but more is needed.

Clients found it difficult to find private sector accommodation.

Clients do not receive a holistic support service - there are not always clear links between support services/agencies.

### **Providers**

We also undertook interviews with providers and held a provider event to identify what currently works well with the service and what are the issues and gaps. The key points raised by providers were:

Clients are risk assessed a number of times by more than one organisation before they can access services and each organisation has its own risk assessment form.

Access to support services, eg. mental health is not always easy for clients.

Services are expected to help clients to make significant progress very quickly as part of Supporting People funding criteria. This isn't easy with clients who have complex needs and imposing an arbitrary maximum amount of time clients are permitted to remain in a service is unhelpful. A one-size-fits-all approach is not appropriate for all client groups.

Providers also proposed a number of solutions which would address the issues raised.

These suggestions include:

Developing a multi-agency single point of access for services.

Having a robust referral process between the council and all agencies involved.

Put in place a single risk assessment process and share data.

Have a consistent set of service standards in place.

Update the homeless directory with all the agency information so that clients and providers know who is doing what.

Create a recycle hub to help homeless clients with furnishing their homes.

## Gaps identified in the provision of commissioned services

Using the analysis of the available data and in collaboration with homelessness service providers, we have identified three major gaps in services:

Temporary Accommodation – a significant proportion of households who are placed in temporary accommodation receive no specialist support, even though they can be some of the most vulnerable households. This is a clear gap in service provision.

Services for Women – In reviewing the gender mix of the provision of commissioned services, there is a clear imbalance and few services for women. The majority of direct access places are for males. There is also anecdotal evidence from service providers that the current level of accommodation and support available to women is insufficient.

High/Complex needs –there is acknowledgement that the current service provision does not meet the needs of homeless people with high or complex needs, which can lead to a 'revolving door' situation.

In addition, the range of homelessness prevention measures employed by the Housing Options Team could be widened and improved in line with the particular emphasis on prevention measures in Making every Contact Count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness (Aug 2012).

## Future Service Requirements

This Review has identified key gaps in services particularly around support for those in temporary accommodation, complex needs and sufficient provision for women. Future service provision must address these gaps.

A redesign of homelessness support services when the current contracts come to an end should enable Coventry City Council to reduce duplication, provide efficiencies and better meet the needs of homeless people. This should include ensuring that there is a single point of access for service users, with more robust monitoring of services. One potential high-level design of this new structure is described in figure 8 below.

Figure 8 – Process graph of single point of access design

