

Coventry Homelessness Review 2018

SUMMARY – KEY MESSAGES

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- Homelessness is usually a result of a variety of factors building up until an adverse event results in a person losing their current accommodation and/or being unable to find alternative accommodation for themselves. These include structural factors (such as welfare reform, rising housing costs, reduction in support services) as well as personal factors (such as relationship breakdown, poor mental health etc.).
- Affordability of housing is a particular concern as household budgets are increasingly stretched, with low income and/or insecure employment and welfare reforms.
- There are many households, particularly larger families (with three or more children), whose housing options are severely limited due to a lack of supply and affordability issues.
- The levels of homelessness are likely to increase over the next five years, as external influences (such as welfare reform and affordability) continue to impact on people's ability to sustain their current tenancies or home ownership, whilst also making it more difficult to access alternative accommodation if they do become homeless, meaning that they may require assistance.
- Many people do not approach the council for assistance until they reach a crisis point. The Council services over the past five years were based very much on assessing the Council's statutory duty and did not focus on early identification of problems and early intervention, thereby losing the opportunity to do any meaningful work to prevent homelessness. This has changed with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Some of the reasons for people becoming homeless, or being at risk of homelessness, are personal reasons and with advice and support, people may be able to overcome these issues. Some reasons are influenced by legislation or government policy. It is more difficult to directly influence these factors, but targeted advice and assistance can help people to minimise or navigate through these issues, building resilience.
- People need access to housing but equally there is a requirement for support to sustain their tenancies This includes longer term floating support, 'tenancy ready' training and building resilience.
- Partnership working with other Council services, advice agencies, homelessness organisations and charities, supported accommodation providers, Registered Providers and private sector landlords is essential and needs to be embedded within all homelessness prevention and relief work.

TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE STRATEGY:

- Partnership working is essential and needs to be meaningful and embedded in all service development.
- Services need to focus on preventing homelessness, addressing not just the immediate housing issue, but also putting support in place to address the various challenges that may have led to a greater risk of homelessness, taking a more holistic approach to meeting people's needs. This will help people to demonstrate they are 'tenancy ready' and ensure they have the support and resilience to maintain a tenancy going forward.
- There needs to be a short, medium and long term plan for temporary accommodation – to reduce the need for households to be placed in temporary accommodation and to ensure that when placements do need to be made, the accommodation is suitable and of a decent standard.
- Links with mental health and drug & alcohol services are key for homelessness prevention and to support those who are already homeless.
- For those that do not meet the criteria for mental health services, but where mental health is impacting on their ability to maintain a home (which is therefore a factor in them becoming at risk of homelessness), a bespoke resource and support should be considered by partners.
- There needs to be a specific plan developed for reducing rough sleeping, embedding the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach to removing barriers and changing systems to address the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised people.
- People with lived experience (Experts by Experience) should be involved in future service design and improvements.
- The Homelessness and ex-offender accommodation and support services are due to be re-commissioned (April 2019). The re-commissioning process should take into account the change in the nature and volume of presenting issues since the previous contract was let. It should also address gaps in the current services, including separate accommodation for females, more services for people with multiple complex needs, and more dispersed accommodation for those who cannot cope with large hostel environments.
- This review looks at the data from the last five years, and does not take into account the new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and any changes in trends, issues or volumes that may occur as a result of the new services. A short update of this review should be carried out when data for the year 2018/19 is available

PART 1 – Introduction to the Coventry Homelessness Review 2018

This is the Coventry Homelessness Review 2018, bringing together the information we have about homelessness in the City, trends from the past five years, and any identified issues and gaps in services.

Why carry out a Homelessness Review?

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district.

The purpose of the review is to determine the extent to which the population in the district is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, assess the likely extent in the future, identify what is currently being done and by whom, and identify what resources are available, to prevent and tackle homelessness.

Under section 2(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 a homelessness review means a review by the housing authority of:

- a. The levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness in their district;
- b. The activities which are carried out for any of the following purposes (or which contribute to achieving any of them):
 - I) Preventing homelessness in the housing authority's district
 - II) Securing that accommodation is or will be available for people in the district who may become homeless; and
 - III) Providing support for people in the district who are homeless or who may become at risk of homelessness; or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again;
- c. The resources available to the housing authority, the social services authority for the district, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other persons for the activities outlined in (b) above.

A glossary of terms and list of abbreviations are included at the end of the report.

PART 2 – The National and Local Context

National Context

According to statistics from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), there has been an increase in homelessness across all counts at a national level¹:

- rough sleeping nationally has increased 169% between 2009/10 and 2016/17;
- local authority homelessness cases (annual) has increased 30% in the same period;
- statutory homelessness acceptances has increased 48% in the same period.

The Government has introduced one of the most significant pieces of legislation relating to Homelessness in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which was enacted from 3rd April 2018. This legislation changes the focus of Local Authority responses to homelessness, from an assessment of whether statutory duties are owed, to a collaborative approach to homelessness prevention and relief.

This review looks at information from the last five years (2013/14 to 2017/18), and so cannot include the impacts of the Homelessness Reduction Act, but a further interim review will be recommended to be carried out after 12 months to identify the impacts of the new legislation, any new trends or indicators, early successes and any improvements to services required.

LOCAL CONTEXT – GENERAL INFORMATION

According to the Coventry Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2018², since 2013, Coventry is the fastest-growing city in terms of population outside of London and the South East, with a 2.18% year on year increase in population. Combined with continuing job growth, there is an on-going demand for housing. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)³ identified a need for an additional 42,400 homes by 2031, including a need for 12,000 additional affordable homes.

There has been a significant growth in the proportion of homes in Coventry that are privately rented, from around 11% at the time of the 2001 census, to 20% at the time of the 2011 census, and an estimated 25% by 2017⁴. There has been a corresponding fall in owner-occupation, with the proportion of social housing staying relatively stable at 17%.

In 2017, Coventry was awarded funding and support to become a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) area. Very often, people with multiple complex needs (two or more of: homelessness; mental ill health; drug or alcohol misuse; and offending behaviour) are seen many times by different services, but this contact is often ineffective. MEAM aims to

¹ Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) via the Crisis Homelessness Monitor 2018 (Table 1.0) https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness_monitor_england_2018.pdf

² http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/190/health_and_wellbeing/1878/joint_strategic_needs_assessment_jsna/5

³ http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/19655/lp45_candw_joint_shma_2015_update_-_gl_hearn

⁴ Source: Office for National Statistics, Subnational dwelling stock by tenure estimates (released Dec 2017) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/subnationaldwellingstockbytenureestimates>

introduce systems change to meet the support needs of people with multiple complex needs in a more effective way.

How Homelessness Services are provided in Coventry:

Coventry City Council no longer owns any 'council housing' after the stock was transferred to Whitefriars Housing Group in 2000. However, the Council still has strategic housing responsibilities and duties under homelessness legislation.

The Council's Housing Options Service provides housing advice, administers the 'Coventry Homefinder' choice based lettings register and system (which advertises and prioritises available social housing in the city), and the Homelessness Assessment service. The Homelessness Assessment Service assists people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and assesses what (if any) statutory duties are owed by the Council.

This team now also includes a new Prevention Team of officers to meet the new duties arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (implemented from April 2018). However, the majority of the data in this report relates to the 2013/14 to 2017/18 years, so will not include information about this service.

In addition to the statutory services provided by the Housing Options Team, the Council also commissions accommodation and support services for homeless and ex-offenders in the city, covering some statutory duties but also services for those not owed the main housing duty by the Local Authority. These services are described below.

The Homelessness and Ex-Offenders Accommodation and Support Contract

In April 2014, the Council awarded a 5-year contract to the Salvation Army for Homelessness & Ex-Offenders Accommodation and Support, with an overall contract value of £9.192m. This contract ends on 31st March 2019.

The key elements of the contract include:

- **Rough Sleepers** (*Single homelessness 16+*) – to assist service users with mainstream accommodation and welfare provision that can prevent them from rough sleeping.
- **Direct Access** (*Single Homeless 25+ and Childless Couples 25+*) – to meet the needs of service users who may or may not have a priority need, by providing accommodation and support 24 hours, 7 days a week, throughout the year.
- **Floating Support** (*Single Homeless 25+, Homeless Families 18+ Childless Couples 25+ Ex -Offenders 18+*) aimed at supporting service users with the transition to independent living and prevent future homelessness.
- **Temporary Accommodation** (*Homeless Families 18+*) - homeless families that meet the criteria are provided with interim accommodation for up to 14 days by the City Council Housing Options Team; thereafter, the temporary accommodation is provided by Salvation Army.
- **Ex-Offender Specialist Accommodation and Support** (*Ex-Offenders 18+ on probation*) – includes a number of different schemes to assist service users who have a range of needs and vulnerabilities.

- **Complex Needs** (*Single Homeless and Ex-Offenders 18+*) specialist accommodation based services to meet complex and high level needs.

LOCAL CONTEXT – LOCAL HOUSING SUPPLY

Social and Affordable Housing for Rent

The Coventry Homefinder Register:

Coventry Homefinder is the choice based lettings system through which the majority of social housing in Coventry is let. The Coventry Homefinder Policy sets out how properties are advertised and who is prioritised for social housing, based on their housing needs.

The Register is open – anyone who is eligible can join the register and there are no current restrictions based on how long an applicant has lived in Coventry, or their income and savings (although home owners are only able to register if they have a housing need which means their current home is not suitable).

The Homefinder Policy gives relative priority to applicants with different housing needs using a banding system. Applicants with an assessed housing need under the Policy are placed in Bands 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 2C (depending on the identified need). Applicants without an assessed housing need are placed in Bands 3A and 3B.

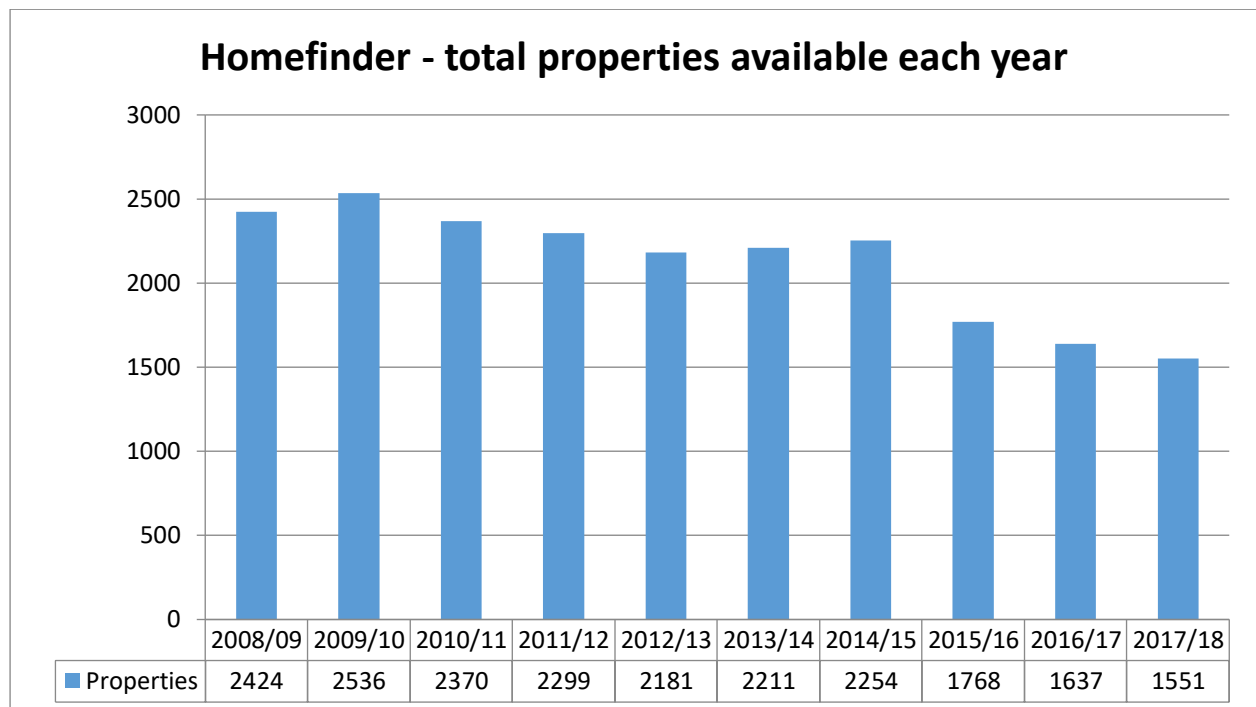
Applicants who are assessed as Statutory Homeless are placed in Band 1A (the highest band), and so have had a greater chance of securing accommodation through Homefinder. Applicants who are eligible, homeless but either not in priority need, or are intentionally homeless, are placed in Band 2C. Applicants who were Statutory Homeless but have refused a suitable offer of accommodation (and so the main housing duty has been discharged) are also placed in Band 2C.

The Homefinder Register has stayed at a relatively stable level for the past five years (around 14,000 applicants at any one time). However, the proportion of applicants with a housing need (Bands 1A to 2C) has increased from around 11% to around 15% of the register.

Table 1: Applicants on the Homefinder Register

Year	Bands 1A-2C	Bands 3A and 3B	Total	Bands 1A-2C as % of total
2012/13	1,422	10,657	12,079	11.8%
2014/15	1,608	12,443	14,051	11.4%
2015/16	1,542	12,332	13,874	11.1%
2016/17	1,775	12,291	14,066	12.6%
2017/18	2,109	11,523	13,632	15.5%

Chart 1 - Total number of properties that have become available and advertised through Coventry Homefinder each year.



As can be seen from the chart above, the number of properties that become available each year has significantly reduced, most markedly in the last three years, from a peak of just over 2500 properties in 2009/10 to just over 1500 properties during 2017/18.

This means that the opportunity for homeless people, or those at risk of homelessness, to find alternative accommodation in the social housing sector has reduced.

The average number of bids per property has been increasing over this period, as a result of the same number of applicants bidding for a smaller pool of available properties. In 2013/14, each property advertised received an average of 109 bids. In 2017/18, each property advertised received an average of 166 bids. Three bedroomed properties receive an average of 294 bids each.

The table below shows the number of properties of each size that became available throughout the whole of 2017/18 on the left hand side, and a snapshot from one day of the requirements of applicants on the Homefinder Register on the right hand side.

Whilst this is not a direct comparison, it demonstrates the shortage of larger family homes with three, four or more bedrooms, compared to the numbers on the register with those requirements in housing need Bands 1A to 2C.

Table 2: Comparison of register and available properties.

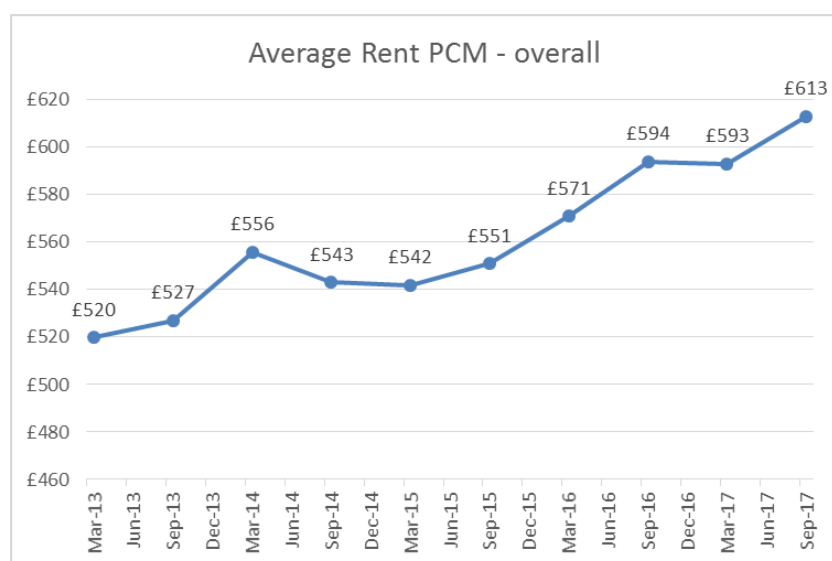
Properties by Bedroom - Advertised during 2017/18		Requirement by minimum bedroom need - Register on 1st April 2018		
Property Size	Number of properties	Bands 1A-2C	Bands 3A+3B	Total
Studio/1 bedroom	811	863	5,220	6,083
2 bedrooms	524	469	3,855	4,324
3 bedrooms	187	532	1,997	2,529
Four+ bedrooms	29	245	451	696
Total	1,551	2,109	11,523	13,632

Private Rented Accommodation

The proportion of properties in Coventry that are in the private rental market has increased over the past ten years. The 2011 census showed that 20% of properties were privately rented, up from 11% in 2001. The Office for National Statistics estimates that by 2015, 25% of properties in Coventry were privately rented⁵.

The Valuation Office Agency also records data on rent levels on various sizes of property⁶. Average rents for Coventry over the past five years have risen from £520 per calendar month (pcm) in 2013 to £613 pcm in 2017. This is a rise of approximately 18%.

Chart 2: Overall average rent in Coventry 2013-2017 (VOA Statistics)



For households that require assistance with their housing costs, Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the form of housing benefit that can be claimed by people living in the private rented sector. The LHA rates were set at the 30th percentile of local rents, but have been frozen at

⁵ Office for National Statistics, Subnational dwelling stock by tenure estimates, Dec 2017. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/subnationaldwellingstockbytenureestimates>

⁶ Valuation Office Agency, Private Rental Market Statistics, Jan 2018 (updated every 6 months). <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/private-rental-market-statistics>

April 2016 levels for four years. The housing element of Universal Credit for people living in the private rented sector will also be calculated using the LHA rates.

Because LHA levels were set at the lower end of the market, and rents have continued to rise over the period that LHA rates have been frozen, there is an increasing gap between the rents being asked for and the amount that can be paid through Local Housing Allowance or Universal Credit. This means it is increasingly difficult for households who need benefits (relating to housing costs) to be able to find rented accommodation that is affordable for them.

This has an effect on homelessness in two ways – households may lose a tenancy if they cannot afford to pay the rent and fall into arrears, but also it becomes a barrier to finding alternative accommodation if they do become homeless, as it is difficult to find accommodation that is affordable.

To illustrate, the table below shows the lower quartile rents (25th percentile) and average rents for properties in Coventry during the year to September 2017, compared to the LHA rates available during 2017.

Table 3: Local Housing Allowance compared to lower quartile and average rents in Coventry, September 2017 (VOA statistics)

LHA bedroom entitlement	LHA-weekly rate	LHA - Monthly equivalent	Lower Quartile rent	Average Rent	Difference between LHA and LQ rent	Difference between LHA and Average rent
Room in shared accommodation	£65.65	£284.48	£338.00	£353.00	£53.52	£68.52
One bedroom	£92.05	£398.88	£475.00	£565.00	£76.12	£166.12
Two bedrooms	£111.48	£483.08	£550.00	£644.00	£66.92	£160.92
Three bedrooms	£128.19	£555.49	£650.00	£725.00	£94.51	£169.51
Four or more bedrooms	£170.67	£739.57	£850.00	£1,188.00	£110.43	£448.43

Affordability of Home Ownership

The Office for National Statistics publishes data on housing affordability by comparing property prices with annual workplace-based earnings in an area⁷.

The data for the last ten years shows that despite an improvement in affordability following the 2008 housing market downturn, in the past five years affordability has been worsening and it has become more difficult for lower income or average (mean) income households to be able to afford to purchase property.

⁷ Office for National Statistics Housing Affordability in England and Wales 2017, released April 2018
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2017>

Table 4: ONS Ratio of House Prices to Annual Income for Coventry 2013-2017⁸

Year	Ratio - Lower Quartile prices to LQ earnings	Ration – Median prices to Median earnings
2013	5.48	4.80
2014	5.89	5.28
2015	6.06	5.28
2016	6.49	5.47
2017	6.78	5.73

⁸ Office for National Statistics, Housing Affordability in England and Wales 2017 (April 2018)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2017>

PART 3 – A picture of homelessness: Local Authority Data

LOCAL AUTHORITY - CUSTOMER SERVICES DATA

From 2015 the Housing Options Service (including housing advice, homelessness assessment and Coventry Homefinder) has been delivered within the Customer Services team at Broadgate House.

Telephone contact

The first contact that a homeless household is likely to have with the Council services will be either by phoning the Council's contact centre or attending the Customer Service Centre in the City Centre shopping area. The Contact Centre received almost **16,500** phone calls regarding homelessness during 2017/18.

Homeless 'on the Night'

When someone approaches Housing Options because they are homeless or threatened with homelessness, the team identifies whether they have somewhere to stay for that night, or whether they are 'homeless on the night'. An assessment is then made as to whether they may be owed an interim duty for the Council to provide accommodation whilst the full homelessness assessment is carried out. This includes determining whether the Officer has 'reason to believe' that the applicant is eligible, homeless and has a priority need.

People who approach the council as 'homeless on the night' believe that they are roofless, and have nowhere to stay on that night. They will be seen promptly by a Duty Officer and their circumstances assessed.

During 2017/18, there were **3570** contacts made with the duty team by people who claimed to be homeless on the night, made by **2292** different individuals/households (some contacted multiple times).

Homeless on the night outcomes:

It may be, with advice or officer intervention, that they can return to their current home (if safe and legal to do so) or arrange to stay with friends or family until a homelessness assessment can be carried out. In 823 cases the person was able to return to their property (at least temporarily until further assessments could be made). In 461 cases the person was able to stay with family or friends.

If this is not possible, the Duty Team will make an initial assessment whether they believe the household is owed the Interim Housing Duty (section 188) – that there is reason to believe that they are eligible, homeless and have a priority need.

If this is the case, emergency accommodation will be arranged for the household. If the household is single or a couple without dependent children, they are referred to the Salvation Army services. In 775 cases, interim accommodation was arranged.

If the Interim housing duty is not owed, the person would be advised of the services commissioned by the Council with the Salvation Army and how to access them, as well as information about other organisations offering housing support. This was the outcome for 896 cases.

Advice and Prevention

There are 1610 instances where advice has been provided, supporting 1366 households (as some households have received this support on more than one occasion).

Some of these households will have gone on to have a full homelessness assessment, others may have been able to resolve their situation with advice, or find alternative accommodation for themselves.

The main reasons why people required advice correlate with the reasons for homelessness recorded through the statutory process – the ending of a private sector tenancy; parents, family or friends cannot accommodate; and breakdown of relationships.

Table 5: Advice and prevention records for 2017/18 – reasons why advice was sought

Reason advice sought	Count
End AST	353
Eviction by parents	276
Eviction by friends	132
Relationship breakdown - violent	124
Loss of insecure accommodation	105
Eviction by relative	93
Relationship breakdown - non-violent	86
Violence other	74
Other (specify in note)	72
Harassment - other	36
Leaving NASS	30
Sleeping rough	29
Hostel eviction	24
Discharge from prison	23
Rent arrears - loss of tenancy PS	21
Harassment - landlord	18
Loss of tenancy - LA	16
Discharge from hospital/instit care	14
Rent arrears - loss of tenancy HA	13
Emergency (fire/flood/storm)	10
Loss of tenancy - rent arrears	10
Refugee/Asylum seeker	9
Disrepair	7
Overcrowding	7
Loss of tied/service tenancy	6
Arrears due to Housing Benefit	5
Leaving HM forces	4
Mortgage arrears	3
Rent arrears - loss of tenancy LA	3
Return from abroad	3
Violence - Racially motivated	2

Illegal eviction/harassment	1
Split household	1
Grand Total	1610

LOCAL AUTHORITY - HOMELESSNESS ASSESSMENT DATA (P1E)

The local authority reports each quarter to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG - formerly the Department for Communities and Local Government) on the homelessness assessments it has carried out and the decisions it has made. This is known as the P1E return.

The figures below are the figures reported to MHCLG through the P1E return for the five years 2013/14 to 2017/18 (the period since the last Housing & Homelessness Strategy was adopted).⁹

For definitions of terms such as Statutory Homeless and Intentionally Homeless, please see the glossary at the end of this document.

Overall numbers of Homelessness Assessments, and those found to be Statutory Homeless:

The overall numbers of assessments and decisions over the past ten years has fallen, whilst the number of households assessed as Statutory Homeless and owed the Main Housing Duty has fluctuated, but stayed mainly in the 550-640 range.

As can be seen in the tables below, the majority of decisions made result in the applicant being found to be statutory homeless and owed the main housing duty. The proportion who are found to be eligible, homeless but not in priority need has decreased, possibly as a result of the commissioned services and support for non-priority homeless households (particularly single people) meaning that fewer want to go through the homelessness assessment process.

The proportion found to be intentionally homeless, and the proportion found to be ineligible, are both relatively small (4% and 1% respectively for 2017/18)

⁹ P1E data is published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on their website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

Chart 3: Number of homelessness decisions made, and statutory homeless decisions made, 2008-2018.

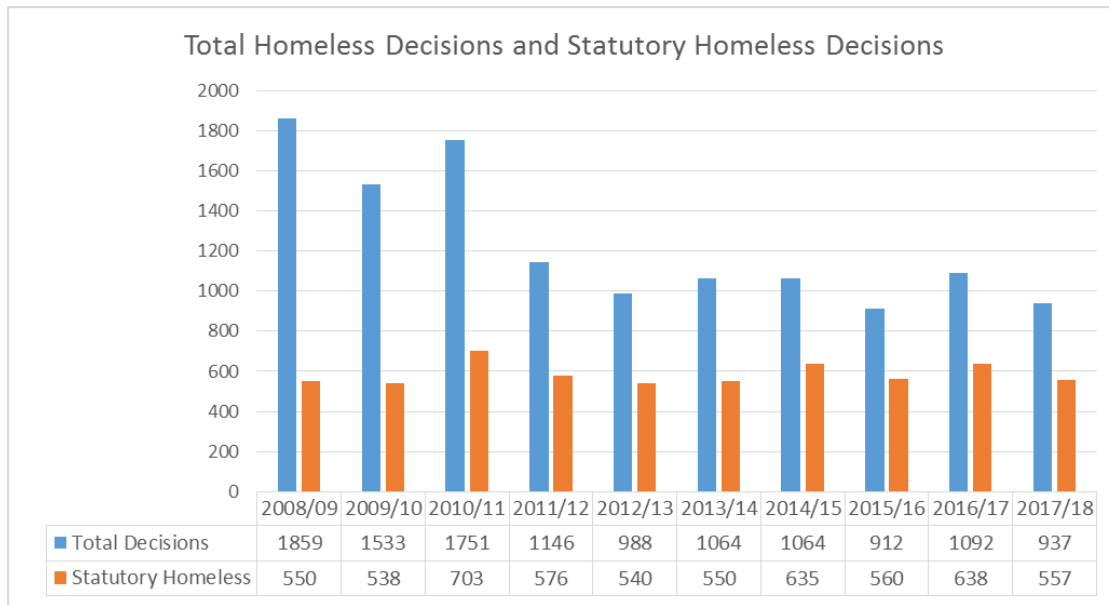


Chart 4: Homelessness assessment decisions 2017/18

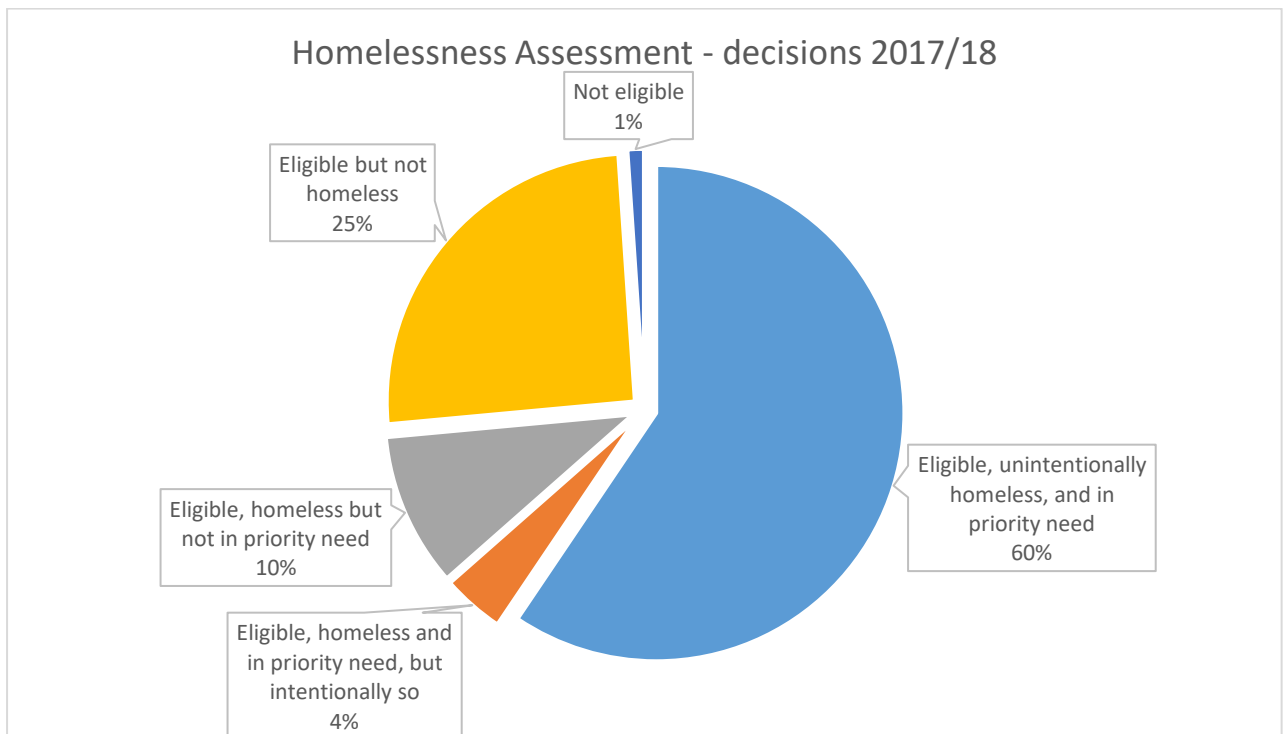


Table 6: All homelessness assessment decision outcomes, last five years (numerical)

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need	550	635	560	638	557
Eligible, homeless and in priority need, but intentionally so	42	28	40	45	38
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	263	208	102	139	94
Eligible but not homeless	168	150	180	243	238
Not eligible	43	43	30	27	10
Total decisions	1063	1064	912	1092	937

Table 7: All homelessness assessment decision outcomes, last five years (percentages)

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need	52%	60%	61%	58%	59%
Eligible, homeless and in priority need, but intentionally so	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	25%	20%	11%	13%	10%
Eligible but not homeless	16%	14%	20%	22%	25%
Not eligible	4%	4%	3%	2%	1%
Total decisions	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Statutory Homeless Decisions – Reason for loss of last home

Consistently over the past five years, the most common reasons for statutory homeless households losing their last home have been: Loss of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST), parents/other relatives/friends no longer willing or able to accommodate, and violent breakdown of relationship with a partner.

Looking back over longer term trends, the loss of an AST has increased to an average of 32% of cases over the last 5 years, up from an average of around 20% of cases in the 5 years before that (2008/09 to 2012/13).

This increase in homelessness due to the ending of an AST is also seen in national figures.

Chart 5: Statutory homeless – reason for loss of last home 2017/18

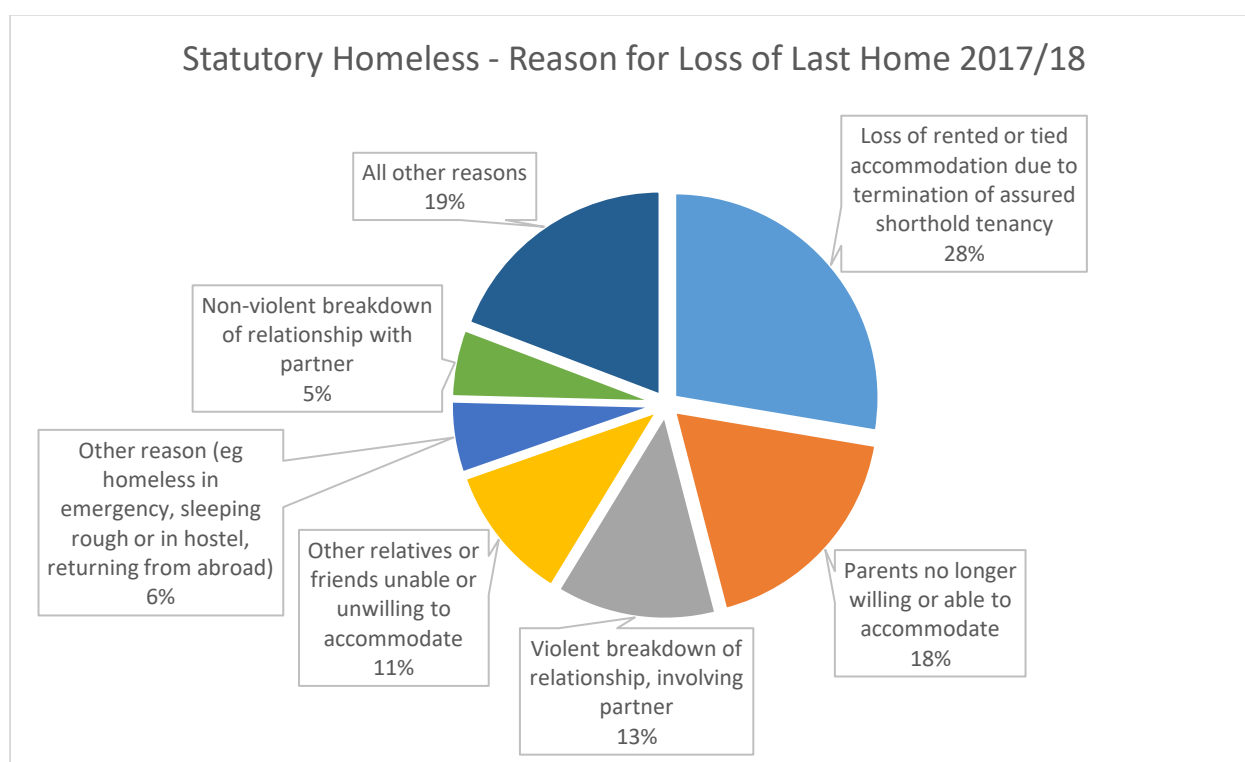


Table 8: Statutory Homeless – Reason for loss of last home – last five years (numerical)

Reason for loss of last home	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
1. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	68	64	68	76	102
2. Other relatives or friends unable or unwilling to accommodate	50	50	52	100	61
3. Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	15	32	25	35	30
4a. Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	102	120	97	73	71
4b. Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons	4	11	2	7	5
4c. Racially motivated violence	0	1	1	0	0
4d. Other forms of violence	14	15	9	9	9
5a. Racially motivated harassment	1	0	1	4	0
5b. Other forms of harassment	3	12	7	2	8
6. Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	13	8	2	5	2
7a. Rent arrears on LA or other public sector dwellings	1	4	5	3	0
7b. Rent arrears on RSL or other housing association dwellings	0	1	0	0	10
7c. Rent arrears on private sector dwellings	12	7	4	18	19
8a. Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy	176	213	191	224	154

8b. Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy	30	35	30	22	24
9. Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	33	33	30	22	15
10a. Left prison/on remand	3	3	3	3	0
10b. Left hospital	0	3	3	1	4
10c. Left other institution or LA care	13	8	9	6	11
11a. Other - Left HM forces	0	2	1	2	0
11b. Other reason (eg homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returning from abroad)	12	13	20	26	32
12. Total	550	635	560	638	557

Table 9: Statutory homeless – Reason for loss of last home – last five years (percentages)

Reason for loss of last home	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
1. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	12%	10%	12%	12%	18%
2. Other relatives or friends unable or unwilling to accommodate	9%	8%	9%	16%	11%
3. Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	3%	5%	4%	5%	5%
4a. Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	19%	19%	17%	11%	13%
4b. Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%
4c. Racially motivated violence	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4d. Other forms of violence	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%
5a. Racially motivated harassment	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
5b. Other forms of harassment	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
6. Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%
7a. Rent arrears on LA or other public sector dwellings	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
7b. Rent arrears on RSL or other housing association dwellings	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
7c. Rent arrears on private sector dwellings	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%
8a. Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy	32%	34%	34%	35%	28%
8b. Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy	6%	6%	5%	3%	4%
9. Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	6%	5%	5%	3%	3%
10a. Left prison/on remand	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
10b. Left hospital	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
10c. Left other institution or LA care	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
11a. Other - Left HM forces	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
11b. Other reason (eg homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returning from abroad)	2%	2%	4%	4%	6%
12. Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Statutory Homeless Decisions – Reason for Priority Need

The highest category of reason for 'priority need' for statutory homeless applicants is that the household includes dependent children. There has been a small increase in the proportion of people who have a priority need due to vulnerability as a result of mental illness or physical disability, and the number with priority need due to fleeing domestic violence has fluctuated.

However, the P1E return only records the primary reason for priority need, meaning that individual applicants may have a range of vulnerabilities (for example, a woman with a mental illness who is fleeing domestic violence with young children, would have her 'priority need' recorded as dependent children, hiding the other vulnerabilities from these particular figures).

Chart 6: Statutory Homeless – Reason for Priority need, 2017/18 figures

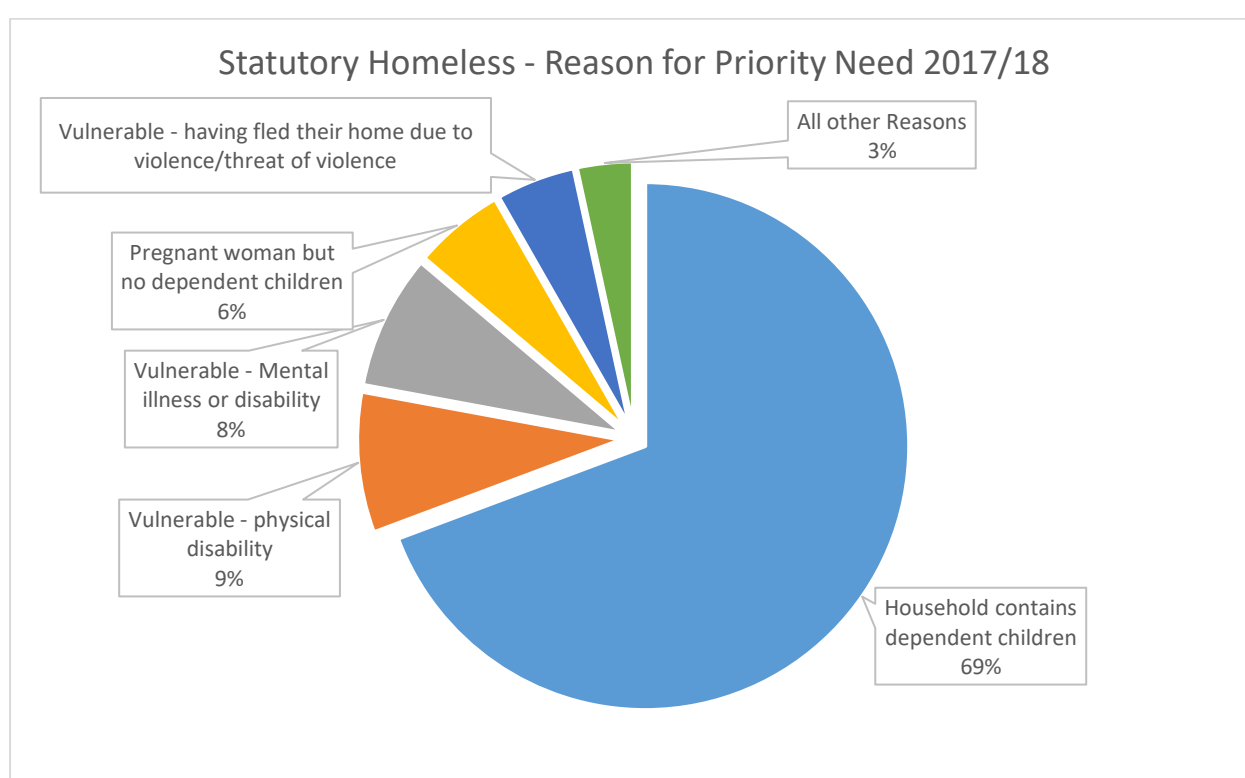


Table 10: Statutory homeless – reason for priority need – last five years (numerical)

Primary Reason for Priority Need	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
1. Homeless because of emergency	1	3	2	2	2
2. Household contains dependent children	396	444	409	486	386
3. Pregnant woman but no dependent children	32	41	30	36	31
4. Aged 16 or 17 years old	0	0	0	1	0
5. Applicant formerly in care and aged 18 to 21 yrs	14	12	15	10	12
6. Vulnerable - Old age	4	3	3	3	3
7. Vulnerable - physical disability	37	45	40	49	48
8. Vulnerable - Mental illness or disability	28	40	38	34	46

9a. Other - drug dependency	0	0	0	0	0
9b. Other - alcohol dependency	1	1	0	0	0
9c. Other - former asylum seeker	1	0	0	0	0
9d. Other - Other	2	2	0	0	0
10. Vulnerable as a result of having been 'in care'	6	3	5	3	2
11. Vulnerable - Having served in Armed Forces	0	1	0	0	0
12. Vulnerable - having been in custody/on remand	1	1	0	0	0
13. Vulnerable - having fled their home due to violence/threat of violence	27	39	18	14	27
13a. Of which - domestic violence	16	20	8	6	17
14. Total	552	635	560	638	557

Table 11: Statutory homeless – reason for priority need – last five years (percentages)

Primary Reason for Priority Need	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
1. Homeless because of emergency	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2. Household contains dependent children	72%	70%	73%	76%	69%
3. Pregnant woman but no dependent children	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%
4. Aged 16 or 17 years old	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
5. Applicant formerly in care and aged 18 to 21 yrs	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%
6. Vulnerable - Old age	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
7. Vulnerable - physical disability	7%	7%	7%	8%	9%
8. Vulnerable - Mental illness or disability	5%	6%	7%	5%	8%
9a. Other - drug dependency	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9b. Other - alcohol dependency	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9c. Other - former asylum seeker	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9d. Other - Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
10. Vulnerable as a result of having been 'in care'	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
11. Vulnerable - Having served in Armed Forces	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
12. Vulnerable - having been in custody/on remand	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
13. Vulnerable - having fled their home due to violence/threat of violence	5%	6%	3%	2%	5%
13a. Of which - domestic violence	3%	3%	1%	1%	3%
14. Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The profile of statutory homeless households:

As the chart and tables below show, the majority of statutory homeless households are either couples with dependent children (21%) or lone female parents with dependent children (50%).

The proportions of households in each household type has stayed relatively stable for the last five years.

Chart 7: Household composition of those assessed as Statutory Homeless 2017/18

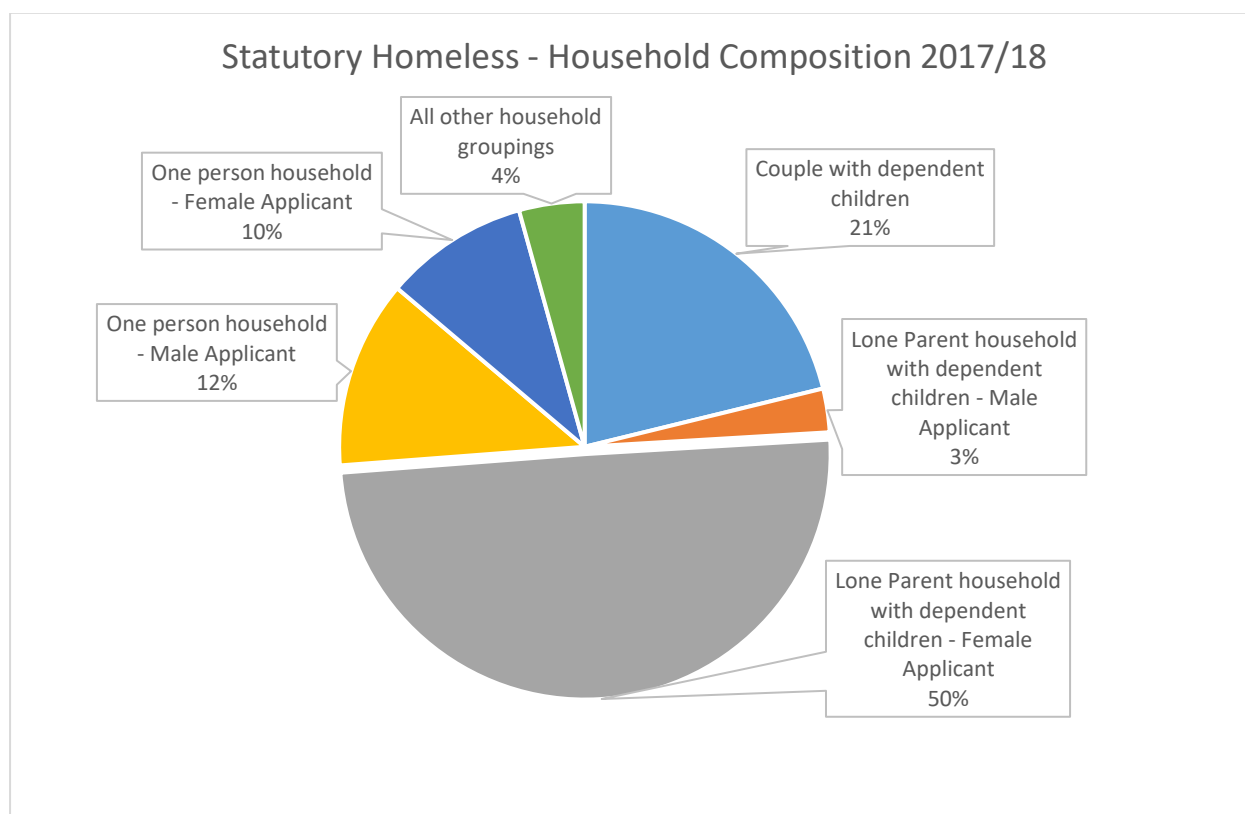


Table 12: Household composition of those assessed as Statutory Homeless – last five years (numerical)

Household composition	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Couple with dependent children	117	144	142	158	118
Lone Parent household with dependent children - Male Applicant	21	21	18	28	16
Lone Parent household with dependent children - Female Applicant	287	318	275	317	277
One person household - Male Applicant	44	68	68	66	69
One person household - Female Applicant	61	69	46	44	53
All other household groupings	20	15	11	25	24
Total	550	635	560	638	557

Table 13: Household composition of those assessed as Statutory Homeless – last five years (percentages)

Household composition	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Couple with dependent children	21%	23%	25%	25%	21%
Lone Parent household with dependent children - Male Applicant	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Lone Parent household with dependent children - Female Applicant	52%	50%	49%	50%	50%

One person household - Male Applicant	8%	11%	12%	10%	12%
One person household - Female Applicant	11%	11%	8%	7%	10%
All other household groupings	4%	2%	2%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The most common age group of statutory homeless applicants is within the 25-44 year age group (56%). This accords with the information that the majority of statutory homeless households are families/parents with dependent children. However, there is also a significant proportion of households (26%) in the younger 16-24 year age group.

As with the figures on household composition, the proportions of each age group has stayed relatively stable over the past five years.

Chart 8: Statutory Homeless 2017/18 – Age of applicant

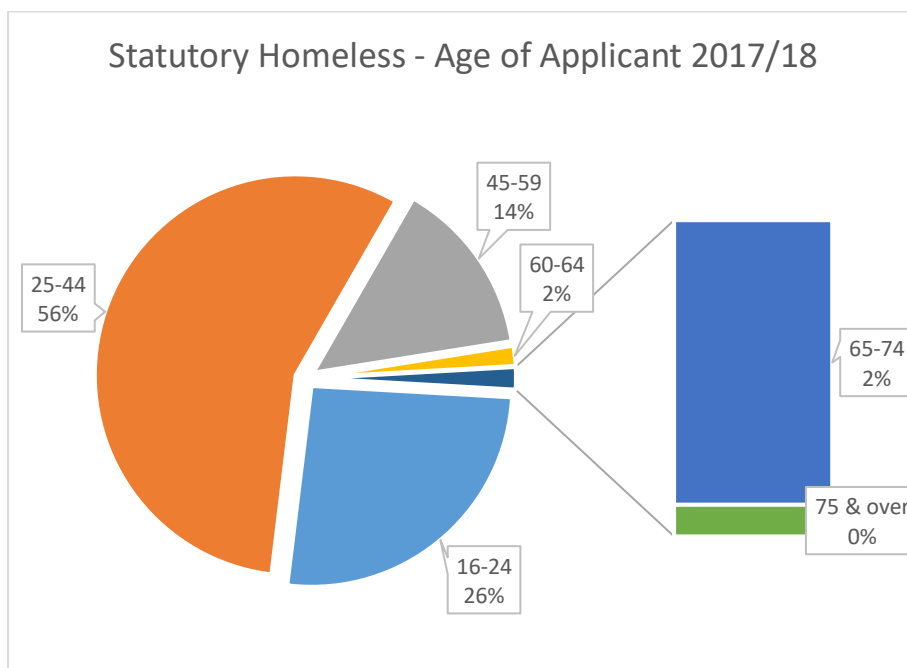


Table 14: Age of applicant of those assessed as Statutory Homeless – last five years (numerical)

Age of Applicant	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
16-24	134	176	137	139	145
25-44	338	373	343	392	314
45-59	68	78	67	87	79
60-64	4	2	5	12	9
65-74	6	4	6	6	9
75 & over	0	2	2	2	1
Total	550	635	560	638	557

Table 15: Age of applicant of those assessed as Statutory Homeless – last five years (percentages)

Age of Applicant	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
16-24	24%	28%	24%	22%	26%
25-44	61%	59%	61%	61%	56%
45-59	12%	12%	12%	14%	14%
60-64	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%
65-74	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
75 & over	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In 2013/14, the P1E data requirement for ethnicity of the applicant changed. Rather than recording the detailed groups as found in the census (i.e. White-British, White-Irish, White-Other etc.) the P1E now only records the broad ethnicity groups (White, Black, Asian etc.).

The analysis in the previous Homelessness Review (of data from 2008-2013) showed that within each of these broad groups, there was considerable variation. This more nuanced analysis is not possible with the current P1E figures.

The proportion of statutory homeless households recorded as 'White' has varied slightly between 62% and 67% over the past five years. The other groups have fluctuated as well, however the proportion of applicants recorded as Black (15%-23%) is consistently higher than the proportion of the overall Coventry population who are Black (5.5% in the 2011 Census). Conversely, the proportion of Asian applicants (4%-7%) is consistently lower than the proportion of the overall population who are Asian (15.1% in the 2011 Census). This is a long term trend.

Chart 9: Statutory Homeless 2017/18 – ethnicity of applicant

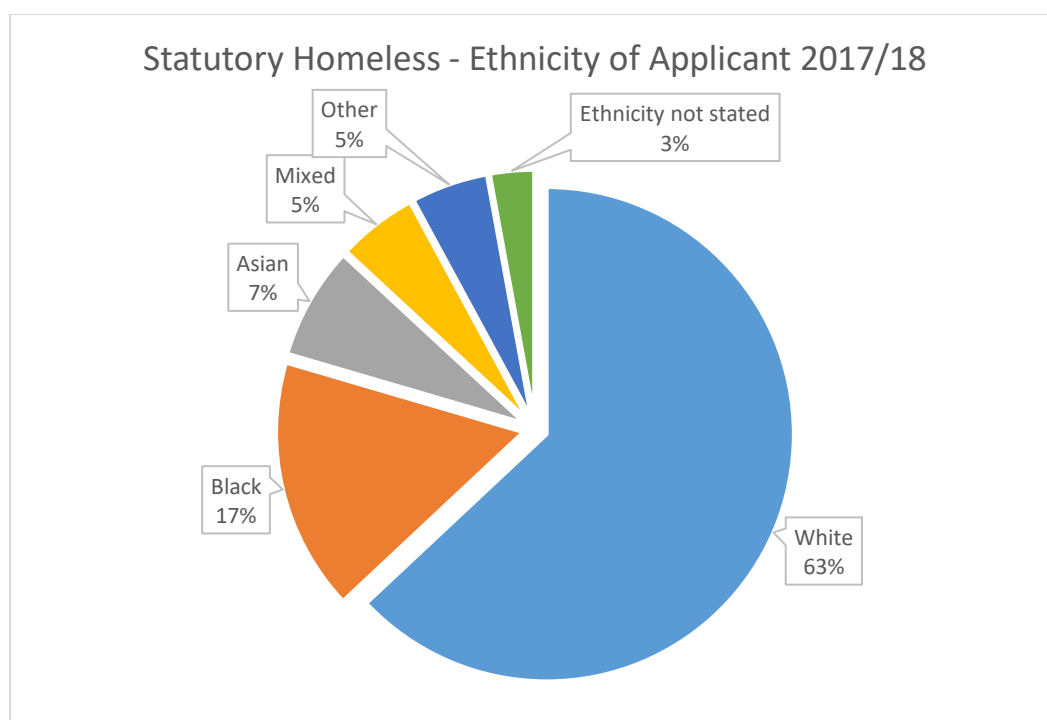


Table 16: Statutory homeless – ethnicity of applicant – last five years (numerical)

Ethnicity	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
White	338	425	338	400	351
Black	95	96	101	147	92
Asian	53	56	69	52	41
Mixed	25	29	39	27	29
Other	21	22	8	8	28
Ethnicity not stated	18	7	5	4	16
Total	550	635	560	638	557

Table 17: Statutory homeless – ethnicity of applicant – last five years (percentages)

Ethnicity	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
White	61.5%	66.9%	60.4%	62.7%	63.0%
Black	17.3%	15.1%	18.0%	23.0%	16.5%
Asian	9.6%	8.8%	12.3%	8.2%	7.4%
Mixed	4.5%	4.6%	7.0%	4.2%	5.2%
Other	3.8%	3.5%	1.4%	1.3%	5.0%
Ethnicity not stated	3.3%	1.1%	0.9%	0.6%	2.9%

Statutory Homelessness – Outcomes

The main housing duty can be discharged in a number of ways, most usually by either a suitable offer of a social or private rented property.

In 2017/18, the main housing duty was discharged by the applicant accepting a Part 6 offer of social housing in 75% of cases. 20% of cases refused a Part 6 offer of social housing (5% other outcomes).

Rough Sleepers

Each year an annual ‘snapshot’ count of rough sleepers on one night is carried out in the autumn, with the results reported to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government¹⁰.

Rough Sleepers are defined as follows for the purposes of rough sleeping counts and estimates: People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes” which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2017>

Table 18: The rough sleeper figures for the last five years for Coventry are:

Year	Count of Rough Sleepers
2013	26
2014	6
2015	9
2016	13
2017	8

Homelessness Rate and Comparison with West Midlands and England

The number of statutory homeless decisions per 1000 population (the 'rate' of homelessness) is a measure that can be used to compare the amount of homelessness in different areas.

The table below shows the rate of homelessness in Coventry compared to the other West Midlands authorities, the Warwickshire geographical neighbours, and the national picture.

Table 19: Rate of Homelessness per 1000 population, West Midlands and Geographical Neighbours 2016/17

Local Authority	Number of decisions	Number of Stat Homeless decisions	Rate of stat hless per 1000 population
Coventry	1065	638	4.51
Birmingham	5473	3479	8.07
Dudley	1725	59	0.45
Sandwell	786	551	4.32
Solihull	783	418	4.71
Walsall	373	304	2.72
Wolverhampton	835	412	3.91
North Warwickshire	142	85	3.21
Nuneaton & Bedworth	173	128	2.36
Rugby	233	168	3.82
Warwick	552	136	2.24
Stratford-on-Avon	259	142	2.64
England	115550	59100	2.54

PART 4 – A picture of homelessness: information from other organisations

Much of the data that we have as a Local Authority on homelessness refers to the formal homelessness application and decision process. Whilst this will change with the introduction of H-Clic reporting, the information that has been shared by other organisations is valuable to build up a picture of the wider issues of homelessness in Coventry.

There are some households who do not approach the council or its commissioned services as they may assume they will not get assistance (for example, single people) and some who do not want to go through the assessment process.

There is also the issue of 'hidden homelessness' which is, as the name suggests, very difficult to quantify at a local or a national level. This can include people 'sofa surfing' by staying informally and on a short-term basis with various friends or relatives, as well as rough sleepers in hidden places, people living in squats, young families unable to move out of the parental home etc.

In order to build up the picture of wider issues of homelessness in Coventry, a variety of organisations that work with homeless and vulnerably housed people were contacted for information.

Ministry of Justice Repossession Action Statistics

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on repossession claims, orders, warrants and repossessions by Private Landlords, Social Landlords and Mortgage lenders.

This shows a large increase in accelerated possession action as well as 'ordinary' private landlord action over the past five years, but a reduction in action by social landlords and mortgage lenders.

Table 20: MoJ Repossession Action Statistics for Coventry 2013-2017¹¹

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Accelerated Landlord					
Claims	78	94	126	166	188
Outright Orders	42	70	73	112	145
Suspended Orders	0	0	0	0	0
Warrants	19	32	39	55	66
Repossessions	13	25	31	45	47
Private Landlord					
Claims	133	155	149	180	172
Outright Orders	85	108	99	129	128
Suspended Orders	3	3	3	2	4
Warrants	33	50	39	77	79
Repossessions	23	29	36	40	73
Social Landlord					
Claims	725	835	791	670	518

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-repossession-activity>

Outright Orders	217	230	238	234	138
Suspended Orders	427	438	400	367	273
Warrants	323	412	368	326	231
Repossessions	169	207	224	178	104
Mortgage					
Claims	346	282	127	126	119
Outright Orders	129	98	58	35	43
Suspended Orders	140	107	43	33	34
Warrants	374	276	193	135	106
Repossessions	109	70	36	30	19

INFORMATION FROM COMMISSIONED SERVICES

Homelessness and Ex-Offenders accommodation and support (The Salvation Army Contract)

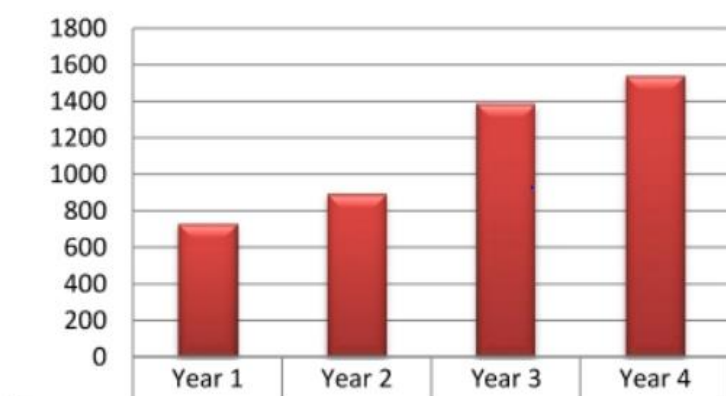
The Council carries out homelessness assessments but many of the homelessness services are commissioned out, including services for those that are not 'statutory homeless'.

Since April 2014, these services have been provided under a single contract with the Salvation Army, as described in the 'Local Context' section, with some services being sub-contracted out by them to other specialist providers.

Over the first four years of the contract (2014/15 to 2017/18) there has been a significant increase in the number of clients that have accessed their services, and changes in the nature of those clients.

Chart 10: Number of clients accessing Salvation Army Contracted Services

Count of Clients Admitted Annually.



For the latest year, 2017/18, there has been an increase in the number of clients with complex needs, and an increase in the number of families requiring emergency/temporary accommodation and floating support.

Emergency and Temporary Accommodation and floating support for families

Coventry City Council does not retain ownership of any emergency or temporary accommodation for families or single people. This has meant in the past that we have relied on B&B and Hotel type establishments for people who are owed the interim or main housing duties.

The commissioned contract with the Salvation Army requires the Council to provide accommodation for families owed the interim housing duty for 14 nights, with the Salvation Army providing accommodation after that. The Salvation Army has agreements with some private landlords and an organisation called Cornerstones to provide self-contained temporary accommodation, however the volumes requiring accommodation has meant that the use of B&B and Hotel type establishments has not been avoided.

From 2016 the Council has had a contract with the Beechwood Hotel to provide 12 self-contained serviced apartments for homeless families.

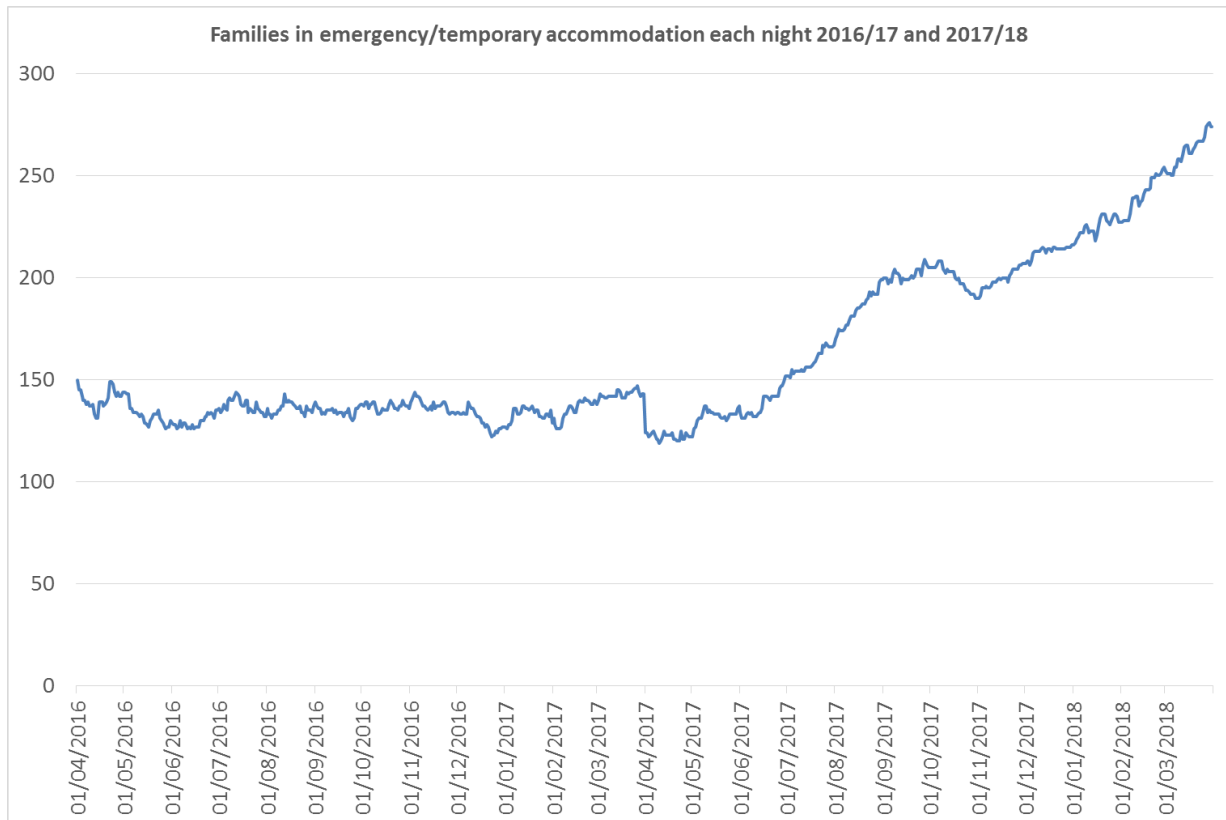
There has been a dramatic increase in the number of families that have to be accommodated in emergency and temporary accommodation over the past five years.

During 2013/14, the number of households recorded on P1E as being in emergency/temporary accommodation were between 35 and 39 at the end of each quarter. From 2015/16 this started to rise, with an average of 93 families in accommodation at any one time, to 134 average at any one time in 2016/17 and 190 average at any one time in 2017/18 (although numbers continued to rise during 2017/18 and ended with around 250 families at any one time).

This rise is due to a combination of factors, including an increase in the number of families approaching for assistance when they are at crisis point and have nowhere to stay, and a lengthening of the time taken to move families out of emergency/temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation. This increasing length of time is a result of assessments taking longer to carry out, and then a shortage of suitable and affordable housing to offer to discharge the main housing duty.

As families stay in emergency/temporary accommodation for longer, the numbers accommodated at any one time have risen.

Chart 11: Families in emergency or temporary accommodation each night during 2016/17 and 2017/18



The majority of families that require emergency/temporary accommodation are smaller families with one or two children (69% of the total in 2017/18). Therefore, the greatest number of units required are smaller units suitable for small families.

There are also a number of very large families in emergency/temporary accommodation. Whilst there are not many of these families, they stay in emergency/temporary accommodation for a disproportionately long amount of time, as there are very few housing options for permanent housing. 29% of families in emergency/temporary accommodation in 2017/18 had three, four or five children. 2% had six or more children.

Emergency and Temporary Accommodation for single people without dependents

The Salvation Army contract also requires them to provide accommodation for single people and couples without dependent children aged 25+ who are owed an interim/main housing duty – whilst the majority of these are accommodated within the hostels (see below), if there are no vacancies or the hostel is not suitable for the individual’s needs, they may be accommodated in B&B type accommodation instead.

For single people who are eligible, homeless and have a priority need and are therefore owed the Section 188 interim accommodation duty, the contract provides that the Salvation Army have responsibility to provide that accommodation, and the applicant cannot be turned away. Sometimes this means that single people are placed in B&B or hotel type

accommodation, when there are no vacancies in the Lifehouses or if the Lifehouse environment is not suitable for them.

Hostel Accommodation

From April 2014, the Salvation Army has been contracted to provide direct access hostel accommodation for homeless single people and couples without dependent children aged 25+. This includes:

- 80 units at Harnall Lifehouse. These rooms are based in clusters, with 6 rooms (each with their own shower room) sharing a living area and kitchen. There are communal areas and rooms for IT use, training, laundry, and an on-site café where guests can volunteer. **256 people** entered the Harnall Lifehouse services during 2017/18.
- 63 units at the Gateway. This hostel is owned and managed by Whitefriars with support being provided by the Salvation Army. All units are self-contained studio style rooms with a kitchenette and shower room. There are communal areas and rooms for support workers to meet with the clients. **91 people** entered the Gateway service during 2017/18
- 32 units at Axholme House. This is a more communal building, with separate bedrooms but shared bathrooms and kitchens, various communal spaces and rooms for support workers to meet with clients. **81 people** entered the Axholme House service during 2017/18
- 12 units at the Complex Needs scheme – longer term (up to 2 years) supported accommodation for people with multiple and complex needs. **12 people** entered the service during 2017/18

Rough Sleepers

The Salvation Army carry out a minimum of three walks per week, to identify rough sleepers and offer accommodation and support. There are a number of emergency beds within the communal area at Harnall Lifehouse that rough sleepers can access in an emergency, or if they are awaiting a vacancy to become available in the hostel services.

230 contacts were made through the Rough Sleeper services during 2017/18.

Reasons for loss of last home

For the people who accessed the Salvation Army services during 2017/18, the reasons they lost their last home were similar to those approaching the council for assistance. However, there is a larger number of people who were discharged from prison or another institution. This is due to the commissioned services also including accommodation for ex-offenders.

Table 21: Reason for loss of home for people accessing the commissioned services, 2017/18

Reason for loss of home	Number
Asked to leave by family or friends	311
Other	252
Discharged from prison or from longstay hospital or other institution	180
End of Assured Shorthold or Fixed Term Tenancy - eviction; tenant at fault	121
Don't know	109
End of Assured Shorthold or Fixed Term Tenancy - on a no-fault basis	102
Domestic Abuse	77
(Non-violent) relationship breakdown with partner	62
I do not wish to disclose	19
Property unsuitable because of poor condition	17
To move to accommodation with support	17
Repossession	13
To move to independent accommodation	12
Couldn't afford rent or mortgage - other	11
Loss or tied accommodation	11
Property unsuitable because of ill Health/disability	10
Other problems with neighbours	9
Property unsuitable because of overcrowding	9
Couldn't afford rent or mortgage - employment	8
Couldn't afford the increase in rent	7
Hate Crime	7
To move nearer to family/friends/school	4
Left home country as refugee	3
Permanently decanted from another property owned by this Landlord	3
Couldn't afford fees attached to renewing the tenancy	1
Couldn't afford rent or mortgage - welfare reforms	1
Racial harassment	1
Under occupation - no incentive	1
Total	1378

The Profile of people accessing commissioned services:

The age profile of people accessing the commissioned services is similar to that of people who access the council assessment, with the majority of clients in the 25-44 age range. However, there is a smaller proportion of households in the 18-24 age range. This is because the majority of the commissioned services are for people aged 25+ (with the exception of the rough sleeper service, ex-offenders and the family services)

Table 22: Age range of people accessing the commissioned services, 2017/18

Age Range	Number	Percentage
18 to 24	148	11%
25 to 44	908	66%
45 to 59	257	19%
60 to 64	27	2%
65 to 74	13	1%
75 & over	7	1%
Blank	18	1%
Total	1378	100%

The sex/gender profile of clients in the commissioned services is notably different to the profile of statutory homeless, with a majority of clients in the commissioned services being men (64% overall).

This difference is even more evident when looking at each individual project - 87% of rough sleeper contacts were male, and 82% of clients entering the hostels were male. However, 73% of families receiving floating support/temporary accommodation were headed by female clients.

Table 23: Sex of people accessing the commissioned services 2017/18

Sex	Number	Percentage
Female	490	36%
Male	887	64%
(blank)	1	0%
Grand Total	1378	100%

The data on ethnicity is collected differently than for statutory homeless households but there are some clear differences that can be seen. For example, 72% of people accessing the commissioned services report themselves as White (White-British, Irish and White-Other) compared to 63% of statutory homeless households.

265 service users who entered the commissioned services reported that they had a disability. The most commonly reported conditions were mental health (in 70% of those reporting a disability), difficulty with mobility (%) and a progressive disability/chronic illness (23%).

Table 24: Disability type reported by clients of the commissioned services 2017/18 (note – many clients reported multiple conditions/disabilities, so the % do not add up to 100%)

Disability	Percentage of people reporting a disability
Autistic Spectrum Condition	6%
Hearing Impairment	5%
I do not wish to disclose	0%
Learning Disability	12%

Mental Health	70%
Mobility	31%
Other	19%
Progressive disability/Chronic illness	23%
Visual impairment	8%

Information from Commissioned Services – Floating support for young adults (18-24)

From April 2014 to April 2018, commissioned services for young adults aged 18-24 years old (without dependent children) have been commissioned by the Children's Commissioning Team. St Basil's, a charity specialising in providing support to young adults, were commissioned to provide floating support.

During 2017/18, St Basils supported a total of **206** young adults.

38 were previously under a Childrens' Social Care duty (eg child in need, eligible or former relevant child) and **180** were supported due to housing legislation duties but were not formerly under childrens' social care.

62 were assessed as having low support needs, **118** had medium support needs, and **59** had high support needs (note – these figures do not total 206 as a young person may be assessed as having different levels of need at different times during their support).

Information from Commissioned Services – Supported Housing for Young Adults (18-24)

The Childrens' Commissioning Team also commissioned supported housing for young adults aged 18-24 years old (without dependent children). This supported accommodation is provided by a range of different providers.

During 2017/18, a total of **344** young people were accommodated in supported housing.

INFORMATION FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS WORKING IN COVENTRY

There are many agencies and organisations in Coventry that provide services for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Some have provided data about their work for inclusion in this review below (the examples below are indicative of the work being carried out by other organisations, it is not an exhaustive account):

Coventry Citizens Advice (CCA)

Coventry Citizens Advice (CCA) offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice face to face, online and by phone, as well as running specialist projects to address specific issues and campaign using their research to contribute to policy debates on housing, homelessness and related issues. Advice is available on a very wide range of issues, including any housing and homelessness issues faced.

During 2017/18, Coventry Citizens Advice assisted **3125** individual households with **4560** housing/ homelessness-related enquiries.

25% of housing-related enquiries related to Council Tax arrears, 19% related to Housing Benefit, and 10% related to rent arrears in housing association homes. 13% related directly to homelessness (actual or threatened homelessness, assistance with the LA homelessness service, and access to accommodation).

Coventry Citizens Advice also has a project called 'Rooted' in partnership with Valley House. Rooted is a project that has been set up to help homeless and vulnerably housed individuals and families. The service is tailored to meet the individual needs of the client and take a holistic approach to deal with all issues.

The project aims to achieve the following objectives:

- People who have experienced housing crisis are better able to improve their circumstances
- People who are at high risk of experiencing housing crisis are better able to plan for the future
- Organisations are able to support people effectively using shared learning and evidence
- People experiencing crisis have a stronger more collective voice

The CCA has led on setting up a Coventry Frontline Network – a forum for frontline housing and homelessness workers to come together to share their experience and expertise, highlight best practice and ensure that the voices of frontline workers are heard by funders and decision makers.

Coventry Winter Night Shelter

The Coventry Winter Night Shelter provides 20 emergency shelter beds each night over the winter period, between 1st December and 31st March. Established in 2013, it has now operated for five winters. The project is co-ordinated by HOPE Coventry and operates in seven churches, a different one each night of the week. A hot evening meal and simple breakfast are also provided.

The aim of the project is to provide shelter and a hot meal for rough sleepers during the coldest months of the year in a safe, welcoming and encouraging environment.

During the winter of 2017/18, the Night Shelter assisting **43 guests** in total after 63 enquiries. We have given **1,928 bed nights** over 116 days in 7 different venues, with a capacity of 20 beds per night. The majority of guests were male (92%).

By the end of the project **24 guests** found accommodation and **6 more** connected back with friends and relatives after the shelter closed. The feedback from guests and volunteers has been consistently positive. The shelter has been a safe space where guests interacted with volunteers and were helped with their physical, financial, emotional, social and spiritual needs.

A project co-ordinator and deputy project co-ordinator are employed by HOPE Coventry, but the majority of the people who work in the night shelter are volunteers. Over 2017/18, more than 250 people directly volunteered with the project, and additional contributions of food provision and donations were received.

Many of the guests had no recourse to public funds, or were not entitled to benefits, and were not eligible for other services (including Local Authority services and the services commissioned by the LA).

The project also has a 'move-on' fund where small amounts can be given to guests where this will help them to access long term accommodation. The three biggest uses of the fund were for rental deposits, first month rent in advance and bus passes. Other uses included passports, phones and work clothes.

Coventry Cyrenians

Coventry Cyrenians was established in 1973 and has a mission statement to 'provide individualised support to promote and enhance the life chances of people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, and empower them to live as independently as possible'.

The Coventry Supported Accommodation Service provides supported accommodation for single men and women aged 16 and over who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This accommodation is usually provided in small domestic shared houses located across Coventry.

The 2017/18 impact report¹² shows that there were 131 units of accommodation in management at the end of 2017/18, and 133 people had left the service during the year (so approx. 260 people accessing the accommodation at some point during the year).

The most common support needs identified at admission were: mental ill-health (68%); drug misuse (30%); alcohol misuse (23%) and rough sleeping immediately prior to admission (23%). 25% of people experienced multiple (three or more) needs.

Health (NHS Coventry and Rugby CCG; Public Health, Coventry City Council)

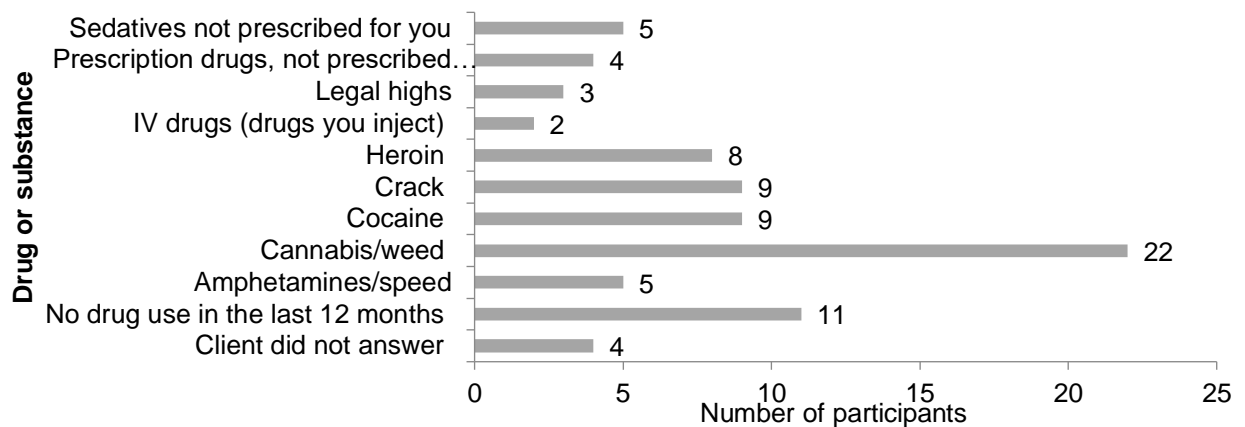
The health of the cohort of the homeless population is among the poorest in our communities. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that homelessness, especially rough sleeping, has significant and negative consequences for an individual's health. There are strong correlations between homelessness and a multiplicity, and heightened severity, of both physical and mental health conditions. National and local research has demonstrated that many homeless people are not registered with a GP and they access secondary care services at a higher level of severity resulting in longer stays.

Substance misuse

Substance misuse is both a mental and physical health issue. Many substance misusing homeless people present with potentially serious neurological, gastroenterological, cardiovascular or psychosocial complications. It can be associated with the breakdown of relationships and unemployment and can lead to homelessness. As with mental ill health substance misuse can be a cause and consequence of homelessness.

¹² <http://www.coventrycyrenians.co.uk/release-of-impact-report-for-201718>

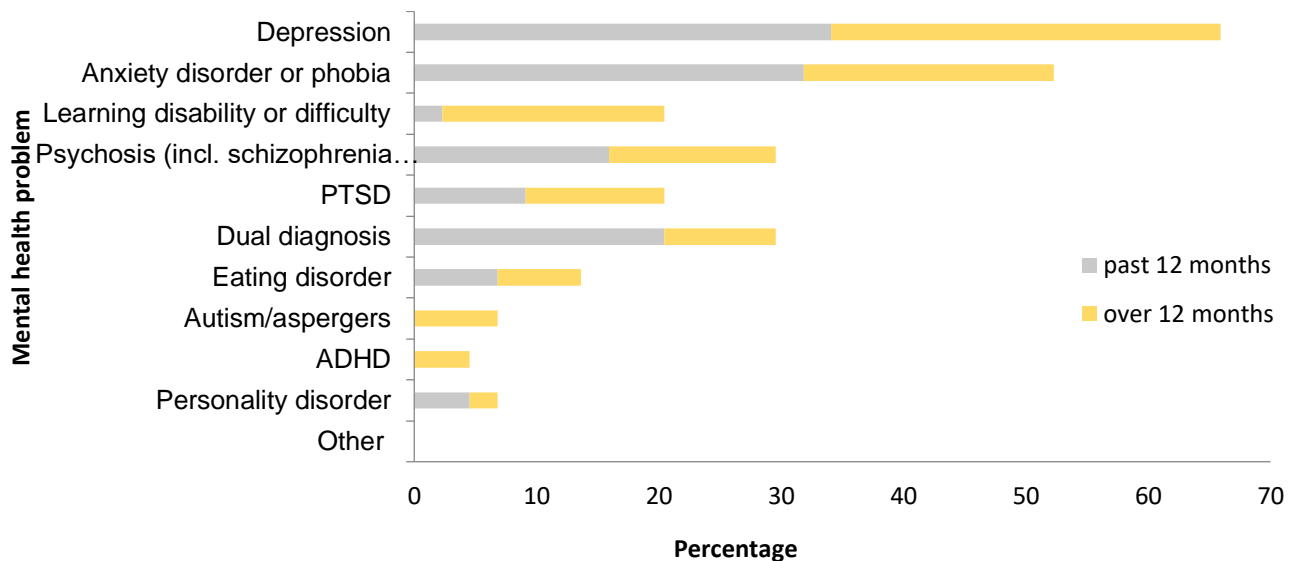
Chart 12: Coventry Health Link audit participant's drug use (n=44)



Mental health

Coventry Health Link Audit (HLA) demonstrated that 84% of participants self-declared a mental health issue. The most common being depression (66%) and anxiety (52%). Depression was the most common mental health problem diagnosed in participants both in the past 12 months and over 12 months ago, whereas a larger proportion of those with anxiety had been experiencing problems within the past 12 months. Nearly 30% of participants had a dual diagnosis of a mental health problem alongside drug and alcohol use.

Chart 13: Mental health issues reported in the Coventry HLA (2016)



Physical Health

Research evidence (*Wright NMJ. (2006) How can health services effectively meet the health needs of homeless people? British Journal of General Practitioners*) suggests that two thirds of serious chronic health problems amongst the homeless pre-exist before they become homeless (and may be part of the cause of the transition to homeless), which may then be exacerbated by their homelessness.

Coventry HLA demonstrated that oral health was the most common long term problem.

Complex health issues

There is a growing understanding that chronic homelessness is an associated marker for trimorbidity, complex health needs and premature death, compounded by the fact they often have problems obtaining suitable health care. Trimorbidity is the combination of physical ill health with mental illness and substance misuse, associated with advanced illness at presentation. Research by the homelessness charity St. Mungo's found that approximately half of their residents had mental health problems, 32% had an alcohol dependency and 63% had a drugs problem. The research also found that 43% of the residents had a physical illness. One in three had a condition for which they were not being treated and half of these could deteriorate to the point where they would require urgent medical attention. This is further evidenced by the fact that the majority of their ambulance call-outs were for pre-existing conditions that had reached emergency status.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS – COMMENTS ON HOMELESSNESS

Through various channels (including meetings with individual providers, a survey and a workshop discussion at the Homelessness Forum), we have engaged with a range of agencies and organisations to understand: what they offer (advice, accommodation etc), what are the main issues they come across in terms of the reasons people become homeless, what they believe the main challenges will be in the future, where are the gaps in current services and what improvements could be made to services.

Particular issues that were highlighted regarding the reason people become homeless or are at risk of homelessness included:

- Mental health issues (both in the sense that mental ill health may contribute to the risk of homelessness, but also that homelessness or the threat of homelessness can cause or exacerbate mental ill health conditions).
- Welfare reform and changes to benefits, particularly the freeze on Local Housing Allowance rates and the introduction of Universal Credit.
- A shortage of accommodation in the social housing sector.
- Eviction from the Private Rented Sector, and the lack of affordable alternative accommodation in the PRS (especially noting that many private landlords will not accept tenants on Local Housing Allowance or Universal Credit, and that up-front fees and deposits are a particular barrier).
- Relationship breakdown.
- Difficulty managing debts.
- Alcohol and/or drug misuse.

Most organisations made the point that it is very rarely one issue or event that causes someone to be homeless or at risk of losing their home – it can be a whole range of things that build up until the person is 'tipped over' into homelessness, perhaps with one particular event being the catalyst.

These issues can be personal (for example, a relationship breakdown or unmanageable debt) or they can be structural (for example, national changes to benefits or a lack of affordable housing in the local area).

The most common support and assistance that people require from organisations includes:

- Budgeting advice and income maximisation (including help to apply for benefits).
- Tenancy sustainment advice and 'tenancy-ready' training
- Help to access mental health services
- Help to access Council support through the homelessness assessment process
- Advice about their legal rights
- Help to find accommodation in the private rented sector.

The biggest challenges identified for the next five years were:

- Further changes to the welfare system, especially the full roll-out of Universal Credit and the continued freeze on working age benefits (including Local Housing Allowance).
- The general shortage of housing which is affordable to people on irregular or low incomes.
- The (un)willingness of the Private Rented Sector to accept households on benefits.
- Increasing housing costs in the private rented sector.

These things were identified as working well in the current homelessness services:

- There are a range of charities and other organisations working within the city offering practical help as well as empathy and emotional support. The range of organisations provides for the wide range of people's needs.
- There is information sharing and joint initiatives through an existing forum (the Homelessness Faith Forum was referenced here)
- People are generally housed within the city, not sent to other areas.
- The Customer Service Centre provides a 'one stop shop' for council services which is easily accessible.
- There is a good network and positive inter-agency liaison between front line workers at an operational level.
- Relationships with Whitefriars in terms of the provision of move-on accommodation is positive.
- Closer working relationships with the DWP/Job Centre have enabled us to achieve better outcomes for clients.
- Good pathway through hostels to settled accommodation for those that can comply or cope with hostel accommodation in the first place.

These things were identified as gaps or things that were not working well in the current homelessness services, and how they could be improved:

- There needs to be improved co-ordination, communication and joint working – both within the Council (eg between Housing Options, Social Services, Education etc) and between the Council and other agencies/organisations.
- There needs to be more information sharing about what each agency/organisation provides, any criteria, how to make referrals, where vacancies are etc. Suggested a central directory or database.
- People need support to sustain their tenancies, not just to access housing in the first place. This includes longer term floating support, 'tenancy ready' training and building resilience.
- Temporary accommodation for families needs to be improved.
- Lack of services and options for people with No Recourse to Public Funds

- Access to mental health services, especially for those with a dual diagnosis. More provision needed for people with complex needs.
- One organisation delivering all commissioned homelessness services in the city – works for some, but it is a barrier for a number of people who are not able or willing to engage with these services or access the accommodation available. Large hostels not suitable for everyone.
- Gaps in current services – especially female specific accommodation, a wet facility, and direct access services/accommodation for young adults (18-24).
- A more flexible approach is needed to respond to people's needs and complex issues. This includes other ways to access services and advice – not just using the internet.
- General shortage of housing and lack of affordable housing in the private rented sector. Reluctance of PRS landlords to let to people on benefits.

PART 5 – Reviewing current activities and resources

The preceding chapters have described the profile of homelessness in Coventry, with some detail about the services that are in place to assist homeless people in the city.

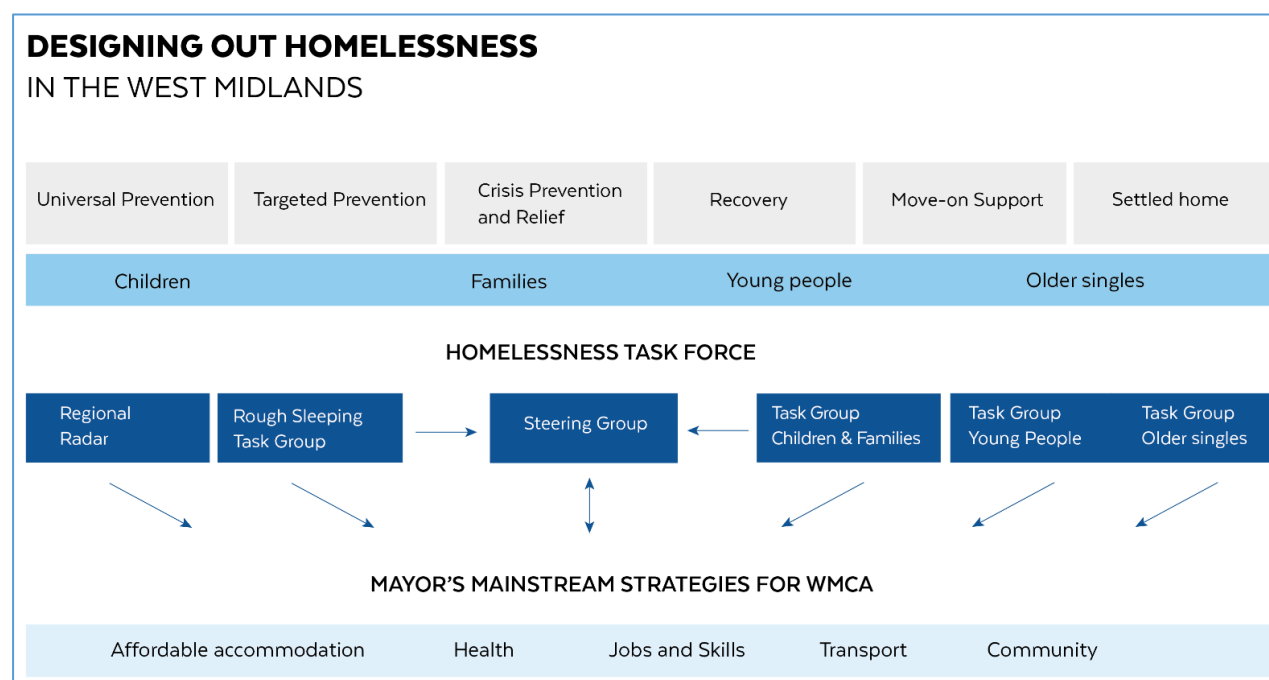
WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY – HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

The Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority has set up a ‘Homelessness Task Force’ to address the issue of homelessness in the wider West Midlands area, with the aim to ‘design out homelessness’.

Coventry City Council is committed to working with the Combined Authority and Partners on designing out homelessness, and the Homelessness Strategy will take the agreed approach of using the Positive Pathways model, first developed by St Basil’s and now adapted by the WMCA.

This model includes: universal prevention; targeted prevention: crisis prevention and relief; recovery; move-on support and settled homes.

The Homelessness Task force model is:



MAPPING CURRENT ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE PATHWAYS MODEL

A mapping of current services against these pathway categories has identified some good practice already existing within the city, but also some significant gaps that the Homelessness Strategy will need to address.

Table 25: The table below shows the outcome of the mapping exercise:

Pathway	Current Activities – CCC and Commissioned Services	Current Activity – other organisations (not exhaustive – illustrative list)	What is missing?
<p>Universal Prevention</p> <p>Information and advice available to all about their housing options and rights/responsibilities, to prevent issues which may lead to homelessness.</p>	<p>General advice on the website.</p> <p>Signposting to other agencies (links on website).</p> <p>Social Care - Early Intervention Team</p> <p>Housing options wizard available on Homefinder website (BUT very out of date – not actually useful in current form)</p> <p>Enforcement – advice etc on rights/responsibilities/harassment /eviction etc -</p>	<p>Social landlords – tenancy sustainment, money advice etc available to their tenants</p> <p>Advice agencies providing information and advice on a wide range of issues which may be interlinked with an increased risk of homelessness (eg CAB, Cov Independent Advice Service etc)</p>	<p>Housing advice line (or web chat type contact)</p> <p>Up to date housing options wizard (or similar in new IT system)</p> <p>Drop in session in family hubs (and other locations?)</p> <p>Training and awareness for other services on homelessness/ housing advice services and duties – esp social care/childrens. (and other agencies?)</p> <p>Early identification – using data to identify, profile and target groups or households before issues put people at risk of homelessness</p>
<p>Targeted Prevention</p> <p>Specific prevention advice and assistance for groups and</p>	<p>Calls into the service are now taken by Prevention Officers rather than the generic advisors in the contact centre.</p>	<p>Advice agencies (CAB, CIA etc) give advice online, by phone, appointment and drop in</p> <p>Specific projects set up by advice agencies to assist people who are</p>	<p>Triage advice at first point of contact.</p> <p>Housing advice line (or web chat type contact)</p>

<p>individuals who are at risk of homelessness</p>	<p>Prevention 'pot' available to fund creative interventions to prevent homelessness (where other sources such as DHP are not available)</p> <p>Prevention team – develop personal housing plan and make referral to relevant agencies for support.</p> <p>Social Care Early Intervention</p>	<p>vulnerably housed or at risk of homelessness (eg CAB and Valley House – Rooted project)</p>	<p>Up to date housing options wizard (or similar in new IT system)</p> <p>Drop in session in family hubs (and other locations?)</p> <p>Closer liaison with resettlement officers in prisons</p> <p>Improved pathway for care leavers (and improved process for 16-17yo)</p> <p>Written protocols with hospitals and other health services – early identification, referral process.</p> <p>Duty to refer process.</p>
<p>Crisis Prevention and Relief</p> <p>Advice and assistance to people who are homeless or there is an imminent threat of homelessness. Help given in an emergency or crisis situation.</p>	<p>Prevention Team – relief stage, assessment and PHP</p> <p>Prevention 'pot' available to fund creative interventions to prevent homelessness (where other sources such as DHP are not available)</p> <p>Discretionary Housing Payment policy covers measures to prevent and relieve homelessness</p> <p>Main duty assessment</p> <p>Homeless on the night – duty team to assist those without a place to stay that night.</p>	<p>Advice agencies (CAB, CIA etc) give advice online, by phone, appointment and drop in</p> <p>Specific projects set up by advice agencies to assist people who are vulnerably housed or at risk of homelessness (eg CAB and Valley House – Rooted project)</p> <p>Partnerships such as Steps for change which works with the most vulnerable and marginalised</p> <p>Other commissioned services such as drug & alcohol services (CGL) and domestic violence and</p>	<p>More help to assist people to access the PRS (including a 'package' for landlords)</p> <p>Improve quality and suitability of emergency/temp accommodation.</p> <p>Increase the amount of suitable permanent homes available.</p> <p>Monitor whether prevention measures reduce the number of people requiring main duty, and which measures are most effective</p>

	<p>Provision of emergency/temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Referral paths to other agencies and advice (eg Salvation Army)</p> <p>Referral paths for specific age groups (eg CSC, St Basils etc)</p> <p>Priority on Homefinder – assistance to access social housing.</p> <p>Some assistance to access PRS (but few landlords willing to participate in the current scheme).</p> <p>Commissioned services – hostels and rough sleeper service</p>	<p>abuse services (CDVASS – to be re-commissioned in 2018)</p> <p>Coventry Winter Night Shelter provision over the winter months for rough sleepers.</p> <p>Wider initiatives such as food bank provision</p>	<p>Work with Registered Providers to increase the number of homes available.</p>
<p>Recovery and move-on support</p> <p>Support for people who are or have experienced homelessness, responding to the impact that homelessness can have on families and individuals</p> <p>Advice and assistance for people who have become homeless to find alternative housing, with support to set up the home.</p>	<p>All Housing Ops – part of the service to have early conversations around arrears, DHP, payment plans etc to ensure access to housing and longer term sustainability.</p> <p>Realistic conversations with people from the prevention and relief stage – realistic housing options looking at affordability and availability, maintaining home, utilities etc</p> <p>Referral to advice/support agencies</p>	<p>Advice agencies (CAB, CIA etc) give advice online, by phone, appointment and drop in</p> <p>Specific projects set up by advice agencies to assist people who are vulnerably housed or at risk of homelessness (eg CAB and Valley House – Rooted project)</p> <p>Partnerships such as Steps for change which works with the most vulnerable and marginalised</p> <p>Other commissioned services such as drug & alcohol services</p>	<p>Pre-tenancy/tenancy-ready work to get people ready for RP or PRS tenancy.</p> <p>Need to embed early and continuing conversations with households – realistic housing options looking at affordability and availability, maintaining home, utilities etc</p> <p>Need to embed early support to address barriers to move-on such as arrears.</p> <p>Floating support for people who access PRS – setting up tenancy,</p>

	<p>Assistance to apply for Community support grant and Discretionary Housing Payments</p>	<p>(CGL) and domestic violence and abuse services (CDVASS – to be re-commisioned in 2018)</p> <p>Wider initiatives such as food bank provision</p>	<p>and longer term support for those that need it.</p> <p>Better joint working with RPs on tenancy sustainment.</p> <p>Housing advice line for general ongoing advice</p> <p>Furniture packages/setting up home kit</p>
<p>Settled Home</p> <p>Longer term support and advice to ensure that people who have experienced homelessness are more resilient, are able to sustain their accommodation and avoid repeat homelessness.</p>	<p>In addition to the above:</p> <p>Little long term support currently provided.</p>	<p>In addition to the above:</p> <p>Registered Providers - tenancy sustainment support, money advice etc available to their tenants</p> <p>Advice agencies (CAB, CIA etc) give advice online, by phone, appointment and drop in</p> <p>Specific projects set up by advice agencies to assist people who are vulnerably housed or at risk of homelessness (eg CAB and Valley House – Rooted project)</p>	<p>Better joint working with RPs on tenancy sustainment.</p> <p>Floating support for people who access PRS – setting up tenancy, and longer term support for those that need it.</p> <p>Housing advice line for general ongoing advice</p> <p>Furniture packages/setting up home kits</p>

Other linked prevention services – Poverty Reduction Measures:

A Welfare Reform Working Together Planning Group meets to ensure local services work together to mitigate the impact of welfare reform. There are concerns that Universal Credit, which rolled out in Coventry in July 2018, may lead to further indebtedness and destitution. The group's universal credit communication strategy helps ensure housing tenants are prepared for the change.

The city's Feeding Coventry programme is an independent charity working towards a hunger-free Coventry by 2020 as well as the development of sustainable and just food policies.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Government has provided funding to Local Authorities to meet the new burdens costs associated with the additional duties contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. There was also a one-off grant of just over £9,000 to meet the costs of new IT requirements.

The Government has also provided more flexibility by changing the previous funding associated with management costs of temporary accommodation, which is now allocated as the 'Flexible Homelessness Support Grant', which can be used for a wider range of prevention and relief measures.

Table 26: The table below shows the funding allocated to Coventry City Council over the new few years:

Funding source	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020 onwards
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	£471,057	£516,336	£738,555	To be reviewed
HRA New Burdens Funding	£128,130	£117,367	£166,981	To be reviewed

The Government also provides funding for Local Authorities to distribute in the form of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). DHP is available to eligible households in receipt of Housing Benefit, or the housing element of Universal Credit, and can be used cover necessary housing costs in order to prevent or relieve homelessness (amongst other objectives). This can include reducing arrears, providing a deposit or rent in advance, providing a time-limited top-up to benefits to meet rent payments etc.

The Discretionary Housing Payment fund is administered by the Benefits Team, and whilst the full amount may not be allocated to direct homelessness prevention and relief activities, the table below shows the allocated amount that will be received by Coventry City Council:

Table 27:

Funding source	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020 onwards
Discretionary Housing Payment	£1,236,832	£1,006,037	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

FACTORS AFFECTING FUTURE LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS

Over 70% of organisations working with homeless people in Coventry, who responded to our survey, reported an increase in demand for their services (just over 20% reported demand had stayed the same, under 10% reported a decrease).

They reported a wide range of types of households where there has been an increase in demand – from single middle-aged men to families affected by the benefit cap. Also highlighted was an increase in young people needing help, an increase in people with no recourse to public funds, and an increase in people with multiple complex needs.

The new Prevention Services in Housing Options has been modelled on an assumption of approx. 2,300 individual households approaching in a year (based on customer services data), with a 25% uplift (based on estimates of the effect of the Homelessness Reduction Act changes) to **2875 households**.

Early indication from the first three months of operation under the new duties suggests this may be an underestimate, with over 1000 households approaching the service for assistance during the three months April-June 2018.

Other national policies and local circumstances that may affect the levels of homelessness in the city include:

- Benefit Cap
- Local Housing Allowance Rates
- Universal Credit
- Other ongoing welfare reform
- Housing Market Conditions
- Changing economic circumstances

GAPS IN THE INFORMATION RECORDED

The information recorded by the Council relating to homelessness has been very much focussed on the statutory assessment process and the outcomes of this process. There is less information available about the 'non-statutory' homeless households and little regular data gathering/sharing in conjunction with other agencies.

From April 2018, local authorities must report case-level data to MHCLG through the H-Clic and a new It system, Jigsaw, has been purchased to collect the data as part of the case management of the prevention, relief and main housing duty process. This will provide much more detailed information about all households that approach the council for assistance (not just 'statutory homeless').

It is proposed that a review of this information is carried out after 12 months of implementation (ie after April 2019). This will be an action point in the Housing & Homelessness Strategy.

There is also little data on LGBT+ clients accessing services. LGBT+ people may be more at risk of homelessness (for example, if they are asked to leave the family home) and may face additional barriers in accessing services. However, we currently have little evidence of the scale or nature of these barriers in Coventry (research has been carried out on a national level).

PART 6 – What is this information telling us? Key messages and recommendations.

KEY MESSAGES

- Homelessness is usually a result of a variety of factors building up until an adverse event results in a person losing their current accommodation and/or being unable to find alternative accommodation for themselves. These include structural factors (such as welfare reform, rising housing costs, reduction in support services) as well as personal factors (such as relationship breakdown, poor mental health etc).
- Affordability of housing is a particular concern as household budgets are increasingly stretched, with low income and/or insecure employment and welfare reforms.
- There are many households, particularly larger families (with three or more children), whose housing options are severely limited (due to a lack of supply and affordability issues)
- The levels of homelessness are likely to increase over the next five years, as structural issues (such as welfare reform and affordability) continue to impact on people's ability to sustain their current tenancies or home ownership, whilst also making it more difficult to access alternative accommodation if they do become homeless, meaning that they may require assistance.
- Many people do not approach the council for assistance until they reach a crisis point. The Council services over the past five years were based very much on assessing the Council's statutory duty did not encourage early identification of problems and early intervention, thereby losing the opportunity to do any meaningful work to prevent homelessness. This will change with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Some of the reasons for people becoming homeless, or being at risk of homelessness, are personal reasons and with advice and support, people may be able to overcome these issues. Some reasons are structural and influenced by legislation or government policy. It is more difficult to directly change these factors, but targeted advice and assistance can help people to minimise or navigate through these issues, building resilience.
- People need support to sustain their tenancies, not just to access housing in the first place. This includes longer term floating support, 'tenancy ready' training and building resilience.
- Partnership working with other Council services, advice agencies, homelessness organisations and charities, supported accommodation providers, Registered Providers and private sector landlords is essential and needs to be embedded within all homelessness prevention and relief work.

TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE STRATEGY:

- Partnership working is essential and needs to be meaningful and embedded in all service development.

- Services need to focus on preventing homelessness, addressing not just the immediate housing issue, but also putting support in place to address the various issues that may have led to a greater risk of homelessness, with a more holistic approach to meeting people's needs.
- There needs to be a short, medium and long term plan for temporary accommodation – to reduce the need for households to be placed in temporary accommodation and to ensure that where they are placed, the accommodation is suitable and of a decent standard.
- Links with mental health and drug & alcohol services are key for homelessness prevention and those that are homelessness.
- For those that do not meet criteria for mental health services, but where mental health is impacting on their ability to maintain a home (which is therefore a factor in them becoming at risk of homelessness), a bespoke resource and support should be considered by partners.
- There needs to be a specific plan for reducing rough sleeping, embedding the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach to removing barriers and changing systems to address the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised.
- People with lived experience (Experts by Experience) should be involved in future service design and improvements.
- The Homelessness and ex-offender accommodation and support service are due to be re-commissioned (April 2019). The re-commissioning process should take into account the change in the nature and volume of presenting issues since the previous contract was let. It should also address gaps in the current services, including separate accommodation for females and smaller, more services for people with multiple complex needs, and more dispersed accommodation for those who cannot cope with large hostel environments.
- This review looks at the data from the last five years, and does not take into account the new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and any changes in trends, issues or volumes that may occur as a result of the new services. A short update of this review should be carried out when data for the year 2018/19 is available.