

# Evidence Review



## Contents

1	Background and Context	1
2	Households Accessing the Housing Options Service	2
3	Caused of Homelessness	10
4	Rough Sleeping	11
5	Outcome of Homeless Applications	13
6	Tenancy Sustainment	18
7	Foodbank Forum	19
8	Supply of Affordable Homes	20
9	Temporary Accommodation	24

# 1 Background and Context

Stafford Borough is resident to 134,800 people, with the population expected to grow by 3% between 2017 and 2027. Although a relatively affluent area it contains some neighbourhoods experiencing social and economic deprivation. Generally, employment rates in Stafford are high, with around 82% of the adult population in employment, compared to 75% nationally and 79.3% in Staffordshire. However, it is recorded that around 24% (31,900) of the population of Stafford are estimated to be financially stressed, i.e. find it difficult or very difficult to cope on their current income (Source: Stafford District Data Pack, Staffordshire County Council, September 2018).

Stafford Borough Council is not a stock holding authority. In 2007, housing stock was transferred to Stafford and Rural Homes who jointly managed the waiting list for social housing up until 2017.

Historically, levels of homelessness and rough sleeping have been relatively low with resources and facilities able to meet needs. However, a number of programmes were rationalised as part of the process of refocussing public expenditure in the last decade, and this has provided challenges in providing and maintaining appropriate services. The Borough Council worked closely with all providers prior to the reductions and successfully secured the future of Eagle House, a 32 bed unit of supported accommodation for single homeless people. Unfortunately, funding constraints meant that Eagle House was re-designated as accommodation for people with low needs only and therefore was unable to accept individuals with multiple and more complex needs.

A review of the Housing Options Service (undertaken in 2016) recognised that provision of social housing was not the driving force behind homelessness within the Borough, with delivery of affordable homes exceeding targets for 2015 – 2019. Instead, it recognised that households were either losing tenancies, or unable to access accommodation, due to unaddressed support needs. Support needs of households were being assessed as too high for existing accommodation provision (such as Eagle House) or too low to meet the criteria for adult social care or safeguarding resulting in a cohort of individuals unable to access core services. Individuals and households within this cohort were becoming homeless and the housing options service was becoming the safety net catching individuals who had fallen outside the tightened criteria for other services within the Borough. It was becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate individual with unaddressed support needs in social sector housing and was resulting in increased reliance on private rented sector accommodation.

The outcome of the Housing Options Review was to bring the waiting list for social housing back in house to Stafford Borough Council and to permanently fund a Tenancy Sustainment Officer to help those individuals who were struggling to access core services into suitable and sustainable accommodation. This coincided with a successful application for funding for the post of the Community Matron for the Homeless and for eight units of Housing First accommodation.

In 2017, official rough sleeping figures were halved, and the Housing Options Service achieved Gold Standard for Homeless Prevention from the National Practitioners Support Service.

Welfare reform and changes to Government policy and legislation continue to place additional pressures on the role of the Housing Options Team. Homeless legislation has significantly changed in the last two years with additional focus on homeless prevention and providing all eligible households access to homeless advice and assistance, irrespective of priority need or intentionality. The Housing Options Team have embraced such changes and have worked closely with partners in order to achieve positive outcomes. The Housing Options Team have been pragmatic in its approach to these challenges and evolved the way of working in order to meet the needs of vulnerable households within Stafford Borough.

## **2 Households Accessing the Housing Options Service**

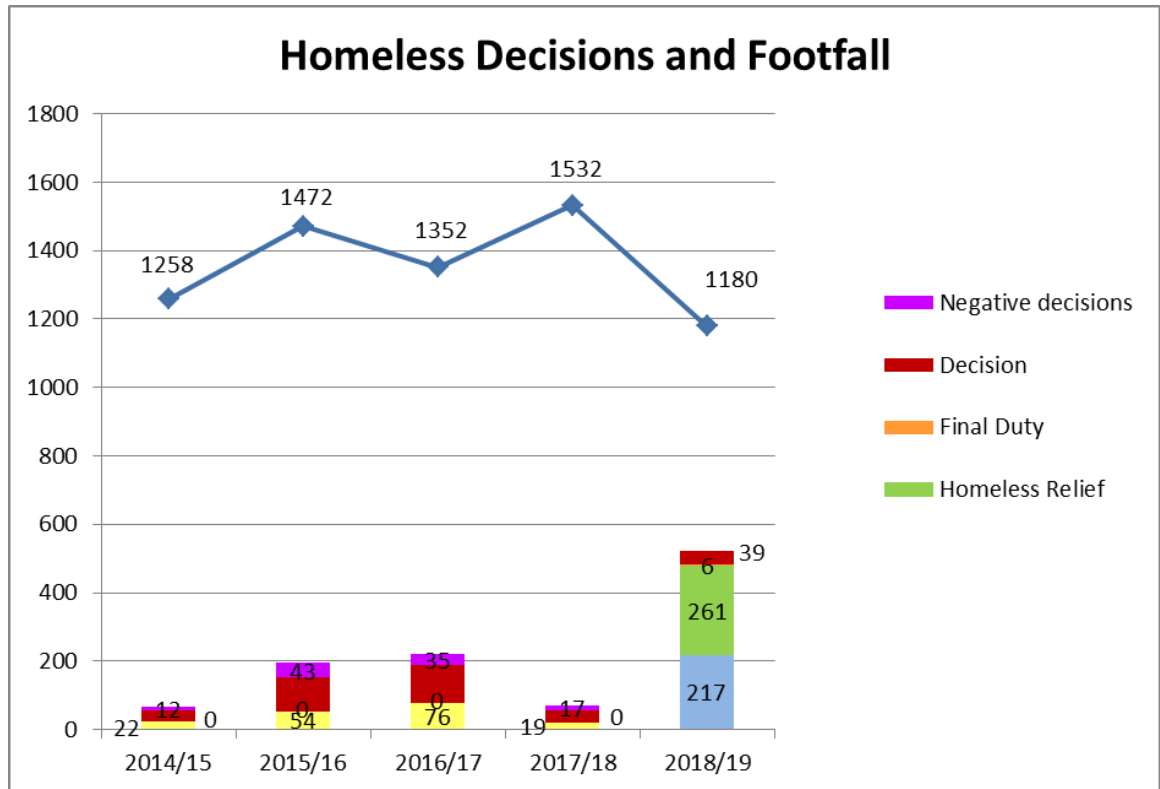
The Housing Options Service provides general housing advice, free of charge to all members of the public. Households who are assessed as eligible for assistance and homeless or threatened with homelessness fall within our statutory function to take reasonable steps to prevent and/or relieve homelessness.

In April 2018, the Housing Options Team went through substantial change with the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 which significantly extends the statutory function of local housing authorities. The two major changes include; the 'prevention duty' which extends the definition of 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days and requires local authorities to assist all households who are eligible and threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need, intentionality or local connection and; the 'relief duty' that requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to secure accommodation for eligible homeless households, regardless of priority need or intentionality. This means that all homeless, or threatened with homelessness, approaches are now considered as 'homeless applications' and has had a substantial impact on the workload of the housing options team.

## Case Type

In 2018/2019, 1180 individuals approached the Housing Options Team for advice and assistance, with 523 homeless cases opened. Despite a reduction in footfall to the service, there has been a significant increase in homeless application which reflects legislative changes associated with the Homeless Reduction Act 17.

### Homeless Decisions and Footfall



In 2018/2019, 40% of homeless cases were dealt with under the new 'Prevention Duty,' with the remaining 60% being dealt with under the new 'Relief Duty.' This demonstrates that the majority of households accessing the service require crisis based homeless intervention which has resulting impacts on housing outcome and temporary accommodation expenditure as outlined further in the Homeless Evidence Review.

The Housing Options Team also provide general housing advice and assistance for individuals who may have a housing need, which amounts to approximately 60% of the teams workload and is not included in the graph above. In these situations, the Housing Options Team can provide general advice regarding landlord and tenant disputes, accommodation within Stafford and options available to individuals. The Team also manage the waiting list for social housing and may prioritise households for social housing in line with our Allocation Policy. Further information regarding Stafford Borough

Council's waiting list and nomination agreements with other Housing Associations is included below.

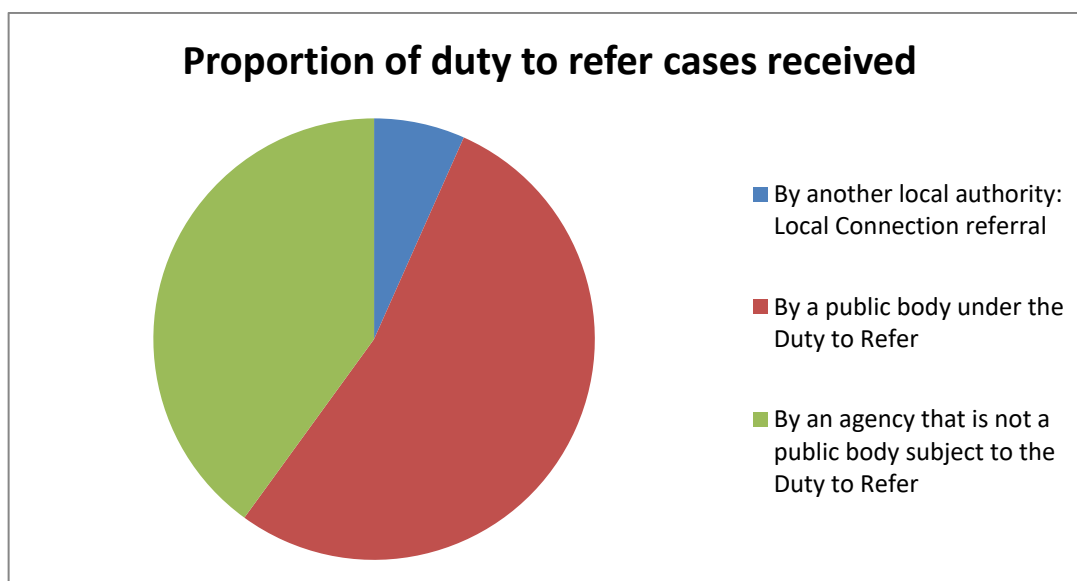
### **Duty to Refer**

In October 2018, the Government introduced a new duty to refer households who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness on public bodies, including prisons, the job centre and adult social services (amongst others). There is a discretion on other agencies to refer into the service and this has been an available option since April 2018.

Between April 2018 and February 2019, the Council received 30 such referrals, with 53% being received from a specified public body under the Duty to Refer.

The main agencies that the Council received referrals from were:

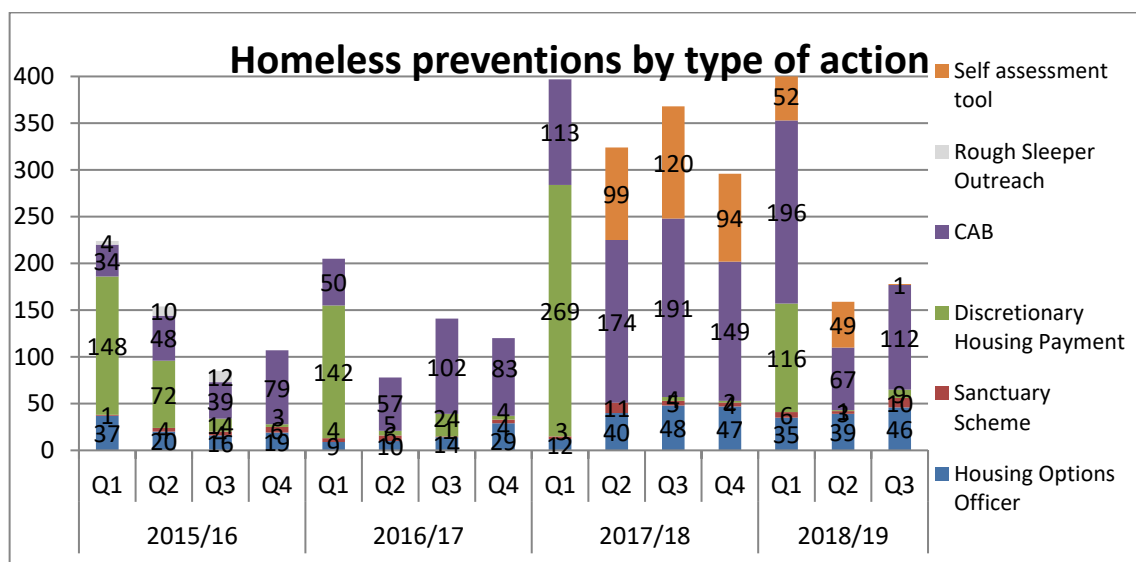
- Citizens Advice Bureau / Debt Advice Agency (13%)
- Community Rehabilitation Company (13%)
- DWP – Jobcentre Plus (10%)
- Adult Social Services (10%)



The overall proportion of referrals is only 7% of homeless applications (417) received since April 2018. The data demonstrates that there needs to be additional focus on encouraging partner agencies to refer cases into the homeless team.

## Homeless Prevention by Type of Action

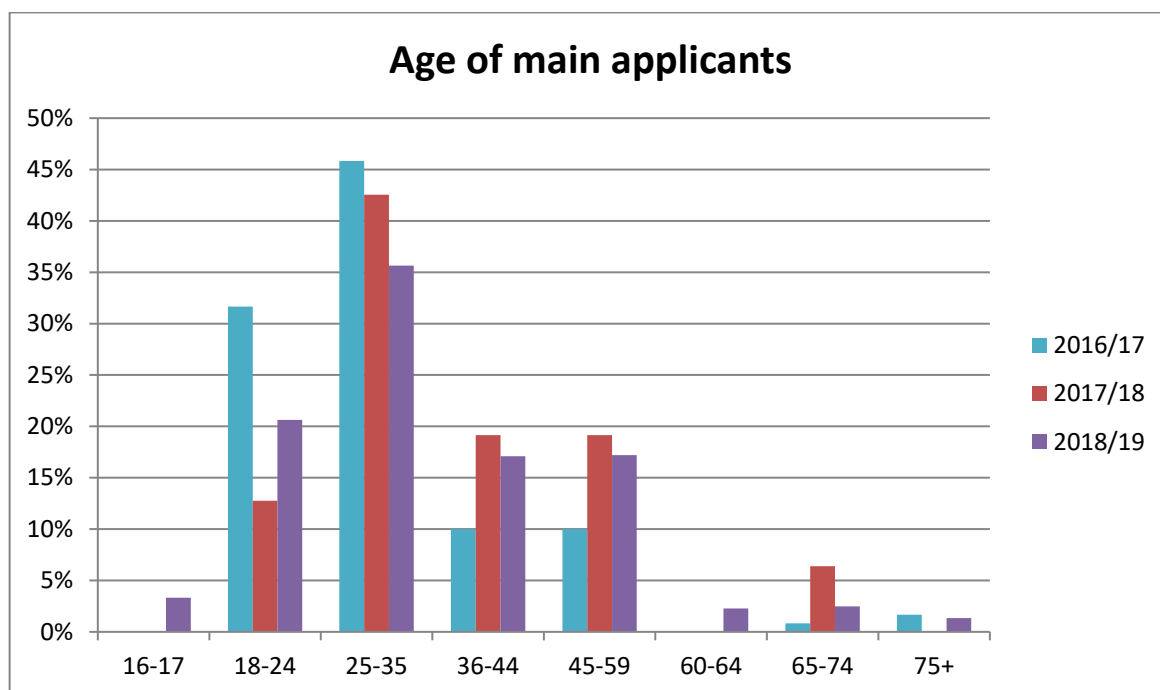
The Housing Options Team has a long-standing focus on homeless prevention and continues to collect data from numerous sources within the Borough to demonstrate the wide-reaching impact of homeless prevention. The below table demonstrates homeless prevention across various services in Stafford Borough.



Prevention figures by the Housing Options Team for 2018/2019 remain similar to the previous year demonstrating Stafford Borough Council's commitment to homeless prevention before the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act. The graph also demonstrates the importance of third parties, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Benefit Service in preventing homelessness through other measures such as debt advice and discretionary housing payment.

## Breakdown of Individuals approaching the Housing Options Service

Between April 2018 and February 2019, 965 individuals approached our service, 57% of individuals approaching the housing options service are aged between 18 and 35. Out of this figure, 21% are aged between 18 and 24. This figure reflects trends pre-Homeless Reduction Act as demonstrated by the graph below.



Within our largest age band of 25-35 year olds, 55% are female and 44% are male. 1% of individuals approaching our service identified themselves as transgender.

Sexual orientation of individuals approaching the housing options service, during the same period, is outlined below:

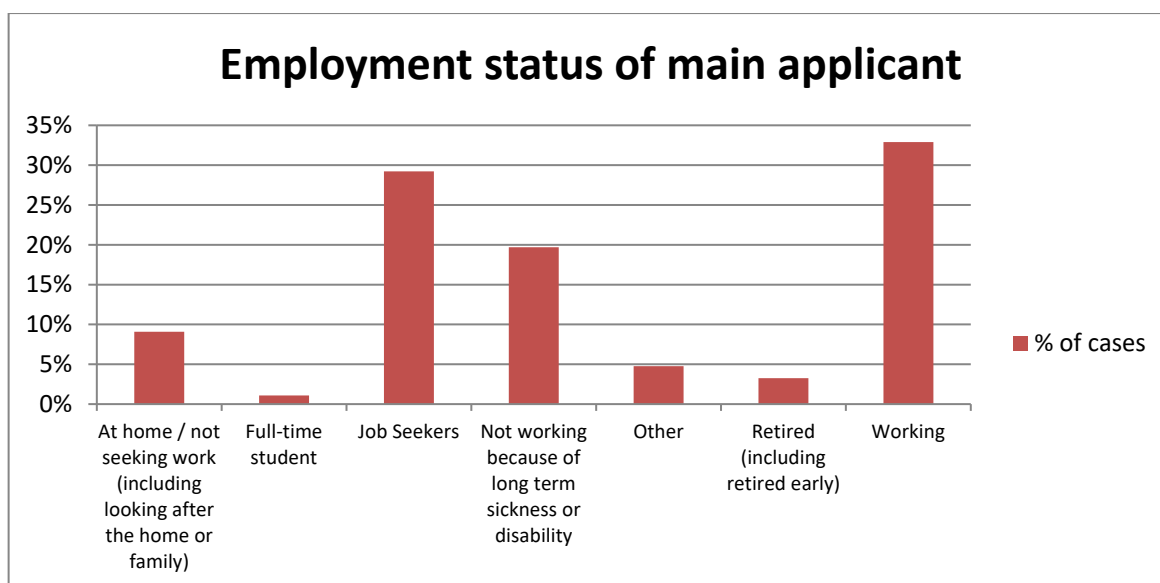
	Gay / Lesbian	Heterosexual	Other	Prefer not to say
% of Applicants April 2018 – February 2019	1%	92%	3%	5%

The largest ethnicity groups in the Borough are:

- White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British (90%)
- Any other White background (3%)
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: African (2%)
- Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean (2%)

The employment status of individuals approaching our service is demonstrated by the graph below:





49% of individuals were in receipt of an income- based benefit, with 29% assessed as capable of work and 20% on a long- term sickness related benefit. 33% of individuals were employed at the time of approaching our service.

The roll out of full digital service for Universal Credit took place in Stafford on 21 November 2018. The impact was that qualifying households would transfer onto Universal Credit upon reporting a change of circumstances, which includes putting in a new claim for Housing Benefit. The impact since 21 November 2019 has been relatively minor with 26 applicants who are on Universal Credit as Benefits towards housing costs. The Housing Options Team are continuing to work closely with the Job Centre Plus, Benefits Team and Citizens Advice Bureau (along with voluntary groups and housing associations) in order to monitor the impact of Universal Credit and promote clear pathways of support for vulnerable households, particularly those who may be at risk of homelessness.

### Support Needs of Homeless Applicants

The table of data below compares the support needs of Stafford homeless applicants between April 2018 and February 2019 and homeless applicants across England between April 2018 and June 2018.

During the period of Stafford applications:

- 965 individuals approaching the service in Stafford
- 417 homeless applications
- 213 of these applicants had no support needs

204 applicants had at least 1 support need (49%). The figures for each support need (see table below) relates to the proportion of homeless

applicants having each support need. Therefore, the percentages don't add up to 49% for Stafford or 47% for England. An applicant may have more than 1 support need so be included in multiple support needs.

Overall, the table shows that the support needs of homeless applicants in Stafford are similar to support needs across England overall. However, the percentage of applicants with alcohol dependency, drug dependency and an offending history are slightly higher in Stafford than across England. The number of applicants with physical ill health or disability is significantly lower in Stafford than throughout England.

<b>Support Need</b>	<b>Access to education, employment or training</b>	<b>Alcohol dependency needs</b>	<b>At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic)</b>	<b>At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse</b>	<b>At risk of/has experienced sexual abuse/exploitation</b>	<b>Care leaver aged 18-20 years</b>	<b>Care leaver aged 21+ years</b>	<b>Drug dependency needs</b>	<b>Former asylum seeker</b>
Count - Stafford	3	24	12	32	6	6	6	29	0
Stafford % of Applicants	1%	6%	3%	8%	1%	1%	1%	7%	0%
England % of Applicants	4%	4%	3%	9%	2%	1%	1%	5%	1%

<b>Support Need continued</b>	<b>History of rough sleeping</b>	<b>Learning disability</b>	<b>No support needs</b>	<b>Offending history</b>	<b>Old age</b>	<b>Physical ill health and disability</b>	<b>Served in HM forces</b>	<b>Young parent requiring support to manage independently</b>	<b>Young person aged 16-17 years</b>	<b>History of mental health problems</b>	<b>History of repeat homelessness</b>
Count – Stafford	32	12	213	38	11	30	2	3	1	71	36
Stafford % of Applicants	8%	3%	51%	9%	3%	7%	0%	1%	0%	17%	9%
England % of Applicants	6%	4%	52%	7%	1%	14%	1%	1%	1%	22%	7%

In January 2019, we circulated a survey to partner agencies requesting their views on homelessness within Stafford Borough. Twelve agencies responded (outlined below).

The partner agencies were:

<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Type of organisation</b>
Rethink Mental Illness	Supported Housing
Staffordshire County Council	Local Authority
Wrekin Housing Trust	Housing Association
Stafford & Cannock League of Hospital Friends	Housing Charity
MPFT	Mental Health Trust
Citizens Advice Bureau – Staffordshire South West	Advice Charity
22 Signal Regiment	Military Establishment
Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company	Probation Service
Stafford and Rural Homes	Housing Association
Midland Heart	Housing Association
iMOVEHOME	Letting Agent

The response we received is outlined below:

Partner agencies were asked to provide the top 3 support needs in ranked order.

The top needs identified by partner agencies are:

- (1) Drug and alcohol dependency
- (2) Budgeting
- (3) Physical illness or disability

Additional comments from organisations stated that “mental health needs are often present”, but that they also “work with a number of adults who have multiple and complex needs”, and the “majority of homeless may be dual diagnosis or have tri-morbidity issues”, as well as clients having “no concept of making sure they have money to pay their bills and keep their tenancies safe”.

10 out of the 12 partner agencies said that their agency or service was impacted by homelessness

### 3 Caused of Homelessness

Homeless households access the Housing Options Service are mostly living with family and friend (42% of applicants) and being asked to leave, whereas 15% are currently in private rented sector properties and 10% in social sector properties.

Last settled address reflects the causes of homelessness in Stafford with the three main reasons being:

- End of private rented tenancy (17%)
- Family no longer willing or able to accommodate (17%)
- Domestic Abuse (10%)

As demonstrated in previous years, end of private rent tenancy and domestic abuse have consistently been the main reasons for loss of settled home; however, family no longer willing or able to accommodate has seen a sudden spike in 2018/19 (however this is in line with national trends).

#### **Repeat Homelessness**

Between April 2018 and February 2019, there were 49 cases recorded repeated homelessness, which equates to 21% of relief cases during this period. Repeated homelessness cases are individuals or households who have accessed our services on more than one occasion within the last year.

The main causes of repeat homelessness are:

- End of private rented tenancy (14%)
- Eviction from supported housing (12%)
- End of social rented tenancy (10%)

In February 2019, Stafford Borough Council conducted a survey with partner agencies, of which 12 responded. We asked 'do you think repeat homelessness is an issue in Stafford?' 100% of respondents answered "Yes" to this question.

Reasons for this response included "individuals not having outreach support or the skills to live independently", "repeat offenders who struggle to maintain accommodation" and "clients with complex needs require high levels of support to be able to maintain independent living" and "because we see customers coming through our service many times" as they have "lost their accommodation due to non-payment of rent, anti-social behaviour etc."

We also asked, 'what do you think are the main causes of repeat homelessness in Stafford?' Partner agencies were asked to provide their top 3 causes of repeat homelessness in ranked order.

The main causes identified were:

- Inappropriate offers of accommodation (2.67)
- Low income (2.67)
- Drug use (2.6)

Despite repeat homelessness amounting to only 8% of total homeless application, there is still a perception amongst partners that it is an issue in Stafford. The perceived causes of repeat homelessness from partner agencies demonstrates the importance of holistic housing and suitability of accommodation assessments in order to promote tenancy sustainment.

## **4 Rough Sleeping**

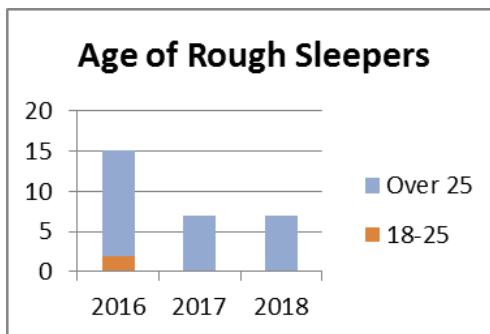
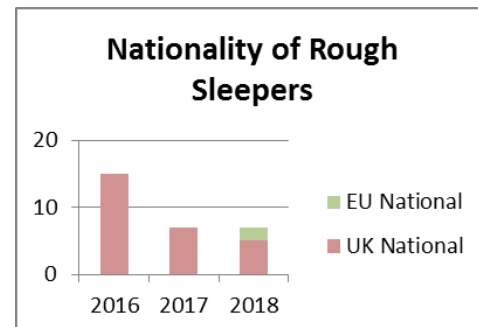
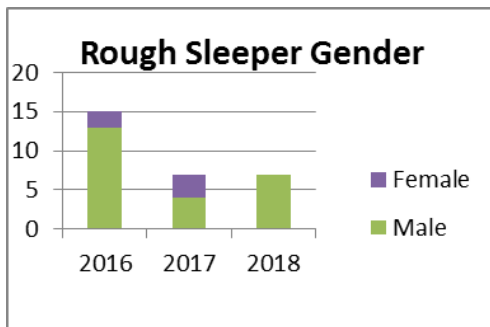
### **Rough Sleeper Estimate**

Rough Sleeping is the most acute form of housing need and is used to describe individuals who are roofless and bedding down without adequate shelter. Stafford Borough Council takes a proactive approach to rough sleeping with various interventions in place to provide options into long-term sustainable accommodation, including the Community Matron for the Homeless and a Dual Diagnosis Worker. Through the use of various interventions, Stafford have reduced the number of individuals rough sleeping by half since 2016 and have sustained this reduction into 2019.

The Housing Options Team collect weekly estimates on rough sleepers within the Borough through the Vulnerabilities HUB which includes feedback from various partner agencies. This detailed approach has allowed us to maintain a named list of rough sleeper and gain a detailed understanding of their support needs which has been used to tailor the above mentioned interventions.

The Housing Options Team submits an official rough sleeper estimate on an annual basis to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The most recent count, in November 2018, was 7 individuals rough sleeping in Stafford Borough. The data shows that the majority of our rough sleepers are consistently male. In 2018, for our most recent reporting, there were no female rough sleepers although we are now seeing an increase in female rough sleepers being reported weekly. All reported rough sleepers have been aged over 25.

In the latest report, we had 2 individuals who were EU nationals with no recourse to public funds. Previously, all rough sleepers were UK nationals only. This has presented new challenges to the housing options team who worked closely with adult social care and safeguarding in order to address the needs of vulnerable rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds.



Between April 2018 and February 2019, there were 13 homeless applicants whose accommodation at time of application was listed as rough sleeping (in the judgement of the assessor).

Out of the 13 approaches, the main reasons for loss of settled home for rough sleepers are:

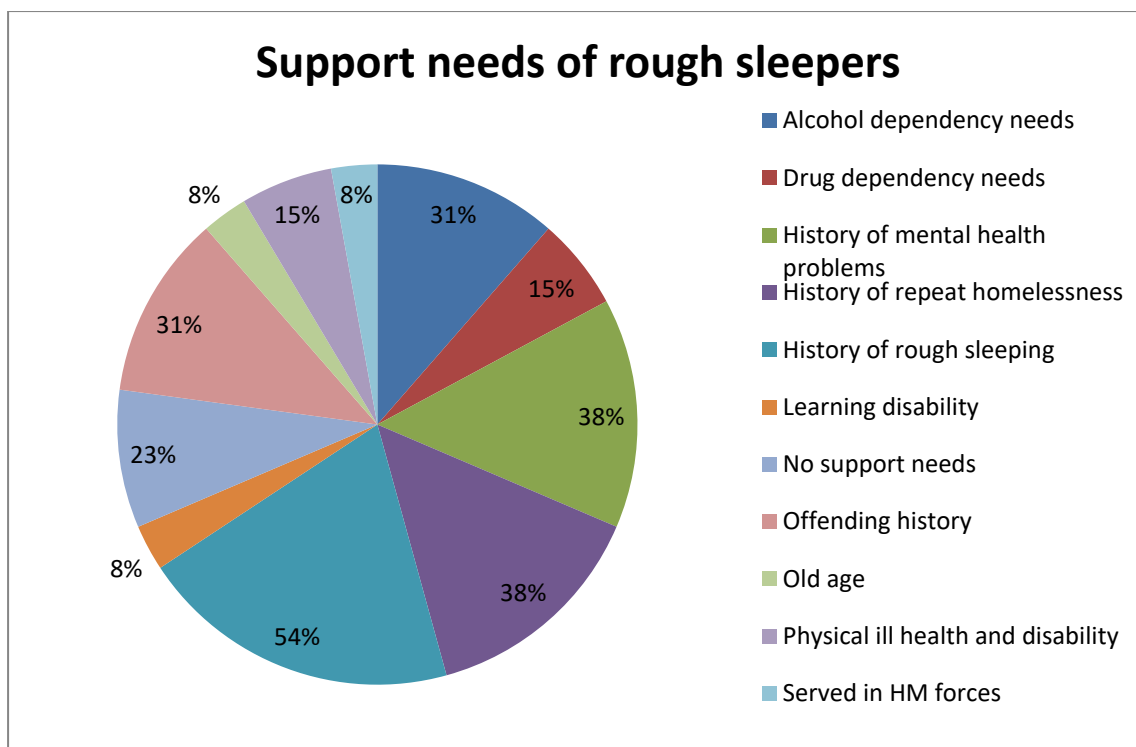
- Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown) (31%)
- End of social rented tenancy (15%)
- Eviction from supported housing (15%)
- Left institution with no accommodation available (15%)

In addition to the above, 97 applicants (23% of all applicants) were recorded as having no fixed abode or sofa surfing with family or friends. There were also 5 applicants (1%) who were recorded as becoming homeless on departure from an institution – custody or hospital.

### Support Needs of Rough Sleepers

77% of rough sleepers have at least 1 support need with 46% presenting with support needs relating to substance misuse and 38% presenting with a history of mental health problems. Out of the 13 rough sleepers who approached the service between April 2018 and February 2019, 46% were recorded as having multiple and complex needs as they approached with both substance misuse and a history of mental health problems.

When we consider data collected from the Community Matron for the Homeless, this figure increases to 71% of entrenched rough sleepers who present with both substance misuse and mental health related support needs.



## 5 Outcome of Homeless Applications

In 2018/2019, there were 633 closed cases, of which 120 were Prevention cases and 129 were Relief cases.

70% of Prevention cases were considered to be a “successful” outcome – identified as the first 4 reasons in the Prevention table below.

56% of Relief cases were considered to be a “successful” outcome – identified as the first 3 reasons in the Prevention table below.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> column in the table below identifies the % of cases out of all prevention or relief cases. The 3<sup>rd</sup> column identifies the proportion the associated reason has as a % of all closed cases, for example 9% of all closed cases secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months as a prevention case, and 5% of all closed cases secured accommodation for 12 months as a relief case.

Out of the closed prevention cases, 70% secure some form of accommodation for at least 6 months.

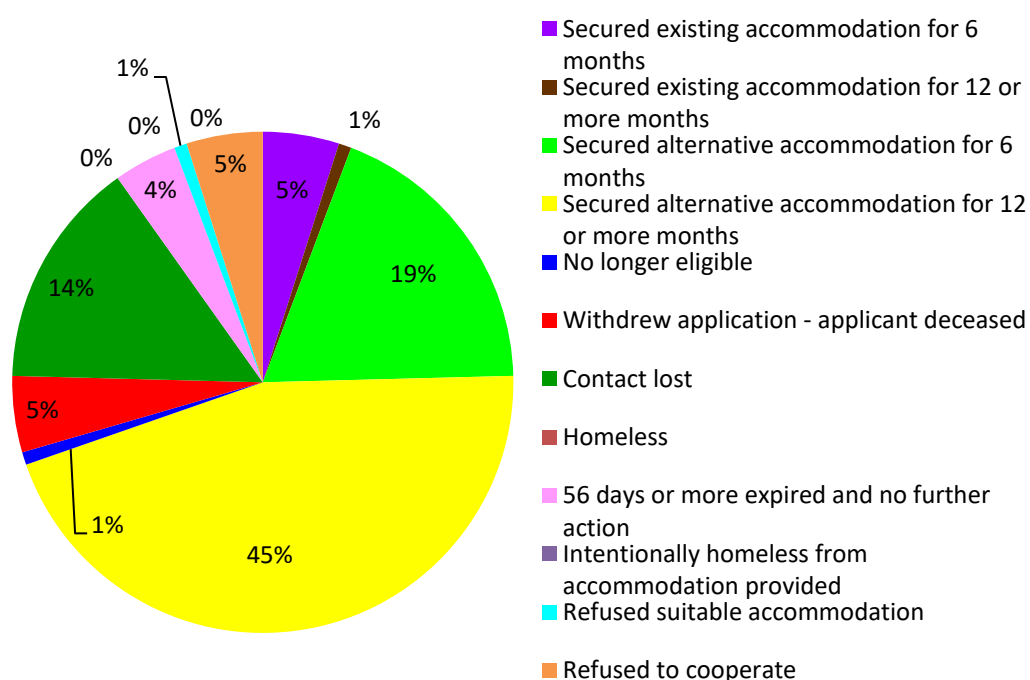
Out of the relief cases, 53% secured some form of accommodation for at least 6 months.

Unfortunately, contact lost is a common reason for prevention or relief duty to end. For relief cases, 27% of closed cases ended due to contact being lost.

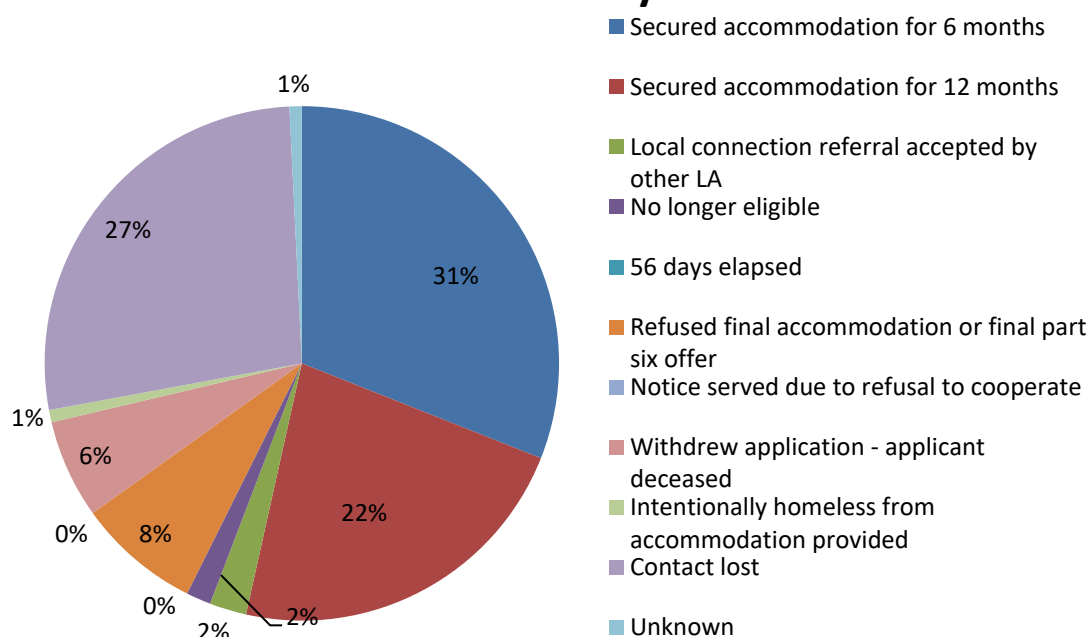
Reason prevention duty ended	% of all Prevention cases	% of all closed cases
<b>Secured existing accommodation for 6 months</b>	5%	1%
<b>Secured existing accommodation for 12 or more months</b>	1%	0%
<b>Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months</b>	19%	4%
<b>Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months</b>	45%	9%
<b>No longer eligible</b>	1%	0%
<b>Withdrew application - applicant deceased</b>	5%	1%
<b>Contact lost</b>	15%	3%
<b>Homeless</b>	0%	0%
<b>56 days or more expired and no further action</b>	4%	1%
<b>Intentionally homeless from accommodation provided</b>	0%	0%
<b>Refused suitable accommodation</b>	1%	0%
<b>Refused to cooperate</b>	0%	0%
<b>Unknown</b>	5%	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Reason relief duty ended	% of all Relief cases	% of all closed cases
<b>Secured accommodation for 6 months</b>	31%	6%
<b>Secured accommodation for 12 months</b>	22%	5%
<b>Local connection referral accepted by other LA</b>	2%	0%
<b>No longer eligible</b>	2%	0%
<b>56 days elapsed</b>	0%	0%
<b>Refused final accommodation or final part six offer</b>	8%	2%
<b>Notice served due to refusal to cooperate</b>	0%	0%
<b>Withdrew application - applicant deceased</b>	6%	1%
<b>Intentionally homeless from accommodation provided</b>	1%	0%
<b>Contact lost</b>	27%	6%
<b>Unknown</b>	1%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>20%</b>



## Reason prevention duty ended



## Reason relief duty ended



The above demonstrates how early intervention impacts on the ability to provide successful outcomes for households. Early intervention allows Officer more time to undertake detailed assessments regarding suitability of accommodation and avoid appropriate partner agencies in the process.

It also reduces reliance on temporary accommodation which is outlined in detail below.

### **Accommodation Outcome**

A review of closed cases for Stafford Borough Council was also conducted, for the period between 3 April 2018 and 26 July 2019, to identify households that had previously been on the Waiting List, but their cases had since closed. 457 closed cases were identified with an accommodation outcome, shown in the table below.

Since April 2018, 60% of households who have approached the service have obtained alternative accommodation as a result of the work undertaken by the Housing Options Team.

- 143 households (31% of all closed cases) gaining Registered Provider tenancies
- 54 households (12% of all closed cases) obtaining a tenancy in the Private Rented sector in a self-contained property
- 47 households (10% of closed cases) gaining a tenancy in social rented supported housing or hostel

However, 70 households (16%) have an unstable accommodation outcome, including:

- 36 households (8% of closed cases) were staying with family or friends when their cases were closed
- 18 households (4% of closed cases) were in a no fixed abode at the time of their case being closed
- 8 households (2% of cases) were still rough sleeping when their case was closed

Accommodation outcome for 111 households (24% of closed cases) was not known when their case was closed. This is most commonly due to a lack of contact with the applicants. 8 households are listed as 'Other' for their accommodation outcome. The accommodation outcome of these households is therefore unclear and so it is not known if these households are still in need of stable accommodation.

### **Lack of Engagement with Services**

There has been an increasing trend of individuals who are difficult to engage and often do not want to work with the Housing Options Team. Lack of engagement can be for a variety of different reasons that relate to both support needs and previous experiences with public services, particularly for those leaving institutions.

As demonstrated by the outcome of cases above, lack of engagement is a particular issue for applicants who are already homeless with 27% of homeless relief cases closed due to lost contact and 15% of prevention cases closed for the same reason.

The Housing Options Team recognise that that is a barrier to preventing and relieving homelessness for vulnerable groups, so we asked partner agencies 'what do you consider are the main reasons for individual's lack of engagement with services?' As with previous questions, partner agencies were asked to provide the top 3 reasons in ranked order.

The most common reasons for individuals' lack of engagement with services were:

- Mental illness or disability (2.5)
- Mistrust for services (2.4)
- Inflexible working commitment from professionals (2)
- Complicated pathways into services (2)

We asked, 'Why do you think these are the main reasons?' Partner agencies were asked to provide additional information to support their answers to the previous question.

Responses stated that support services teaching life skills and tackling substance addiction "is failing", and pathways / barriers to mental health support is making it "difficult for lower level needs to be treated", as well as there being a "minimal understanding of the root causes of homelessness" and "judgemental attitudes".

Another response suggested that homeless individuals find it difficult to "trust anyone, let alone those that are trying to help them" and that "this trust needs to be built up over time".

Another response acknowledged that agencies are "working really hard to provide services" and that they "don't see a lack of compassion".

They also acknowledged that services can stop working with individuals if they are seen as difficult or not engaging. This lack of engagement means the individuals misses opportunities for support and then they become lost from services. This can lead to a deterioration of an individual's physical and mental health and the person will continue to be homeless, which may eventually progress to entrenched homelessness.

Partner agencies suggested the following ideas for tackling a lack of engagement:

- Keep trying to arrange visits / appointments with the individual / offering drop-in sessions that do not require a booked in appointment and visiting the individual in a place that they choose
- Focus on achieving small goals and praising individuals for these achievements e.g. attendance at a support visit
- Spending time to build a relationship with the individual to encourage engagement
- Work with people and organisations who the individual does successfully engage with, is familiar and comfortable with
- Working with other partner agencies to establish a joint engagement strategy

## **6 Tenancy Sustainment**

Stafford Borough Council employed a Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO) in June 2017.

The role of the TSO involves assisting vulnerable individuals with high support needs through engaging with mental health services to work towards individuals' mental health stability, ensuring benefits are maximised e.g. PIP, ESA, setting up payment plans, securing white goods and pulling in other services such as Social Care, Occupational Health in order to support individuals' as best as possible in order that they sustain their tenancies.

Since the beginning of this post, the TSO has:

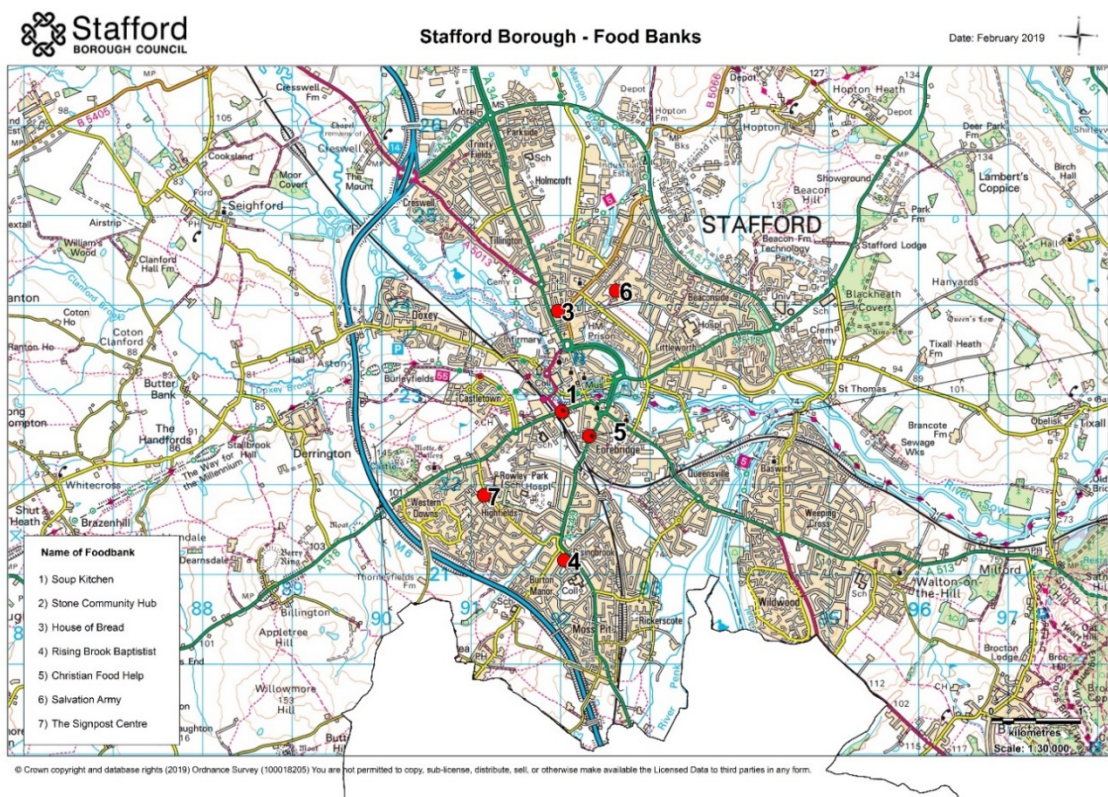
- Supported 14 single people and 13 families
- Sustained 35 tenancies
- Secured in excess of £8,500 grants, in addition to £1,700 carpet grants and £100 grant for children's furniture
- Purchased £7000 worth of white goods
- Obtained 20 cookers with fitting, 7 fridge freezers, 3 washing machines, 10 single beds and mattresses
- Housed 7 rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs who had previously been refused access to accommodation.

## 7 Foodbank Forum

There are 7 identified foodbanks across Stafford Borough that operate independently, most through faith based organisations. Opening times of the foodbanks show that, although the majority of foodbanks are open in the morning, only one remains open past 2:30pm. Foodbanks in Stafford are open access and do not operate referral process.

Stafford Borough Council currently chairs a Foodbank Forum which looks to coordinate foodbanks within the Borough.

The maps below show the location of the 6 foodbanks within Stafford Town Centre. One additional foodbank is located in the market town of Stone.



## 8 Supply of Affordable Homes

### Social Housing Stock Numbers

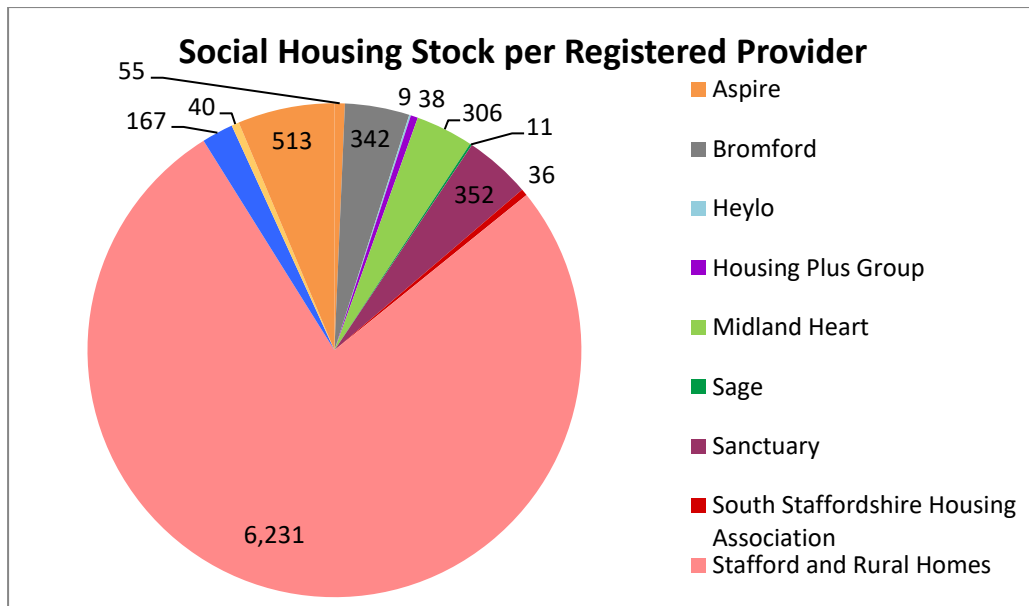
There are 8100 recorded social housing properties across Stafford Borough (May 2019). Stafford and Rural Homes is the largest housing provider owning 77% of social housing stock within Stafford Borough. A breakdown of other housing providers is in the table below:

The table and pie chart below displays the number of recorded social housing properties owned by each Registered Provider as at May 2019. At this point, there were 8,100 recorded social housing properties across the Borough.

As visible in the pie chart, Stafford and Rural Homes has the largest number of social housing stock in the Borough, alone owning more than 75% of social properties. Wrekin Housing Trust is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest stock holder in the Borough, with 513 properties.

Registered Provider	% of Social Housing Stock
<b>Aspire</b>	0.68%
<b>Bromford</b>	4.22%
<b>Heylo</b>	0.11%
<b>Housing Plus Group</b>	0.47%
<b>Midland Heart</b>	3.78%
<b>Sage</b>	0.14%
<b>Sanctuary</b>	4.35%
<b>South Staffordshire Housing Association</b>	0.44%
<b>Stafford and Rural Homes</b>	76.93%
<b>Staffordshire Housing Association</b>	2.06%
<b>Walsall Housing Group</b>	0.49%
<b>Wrekin Housing Trust</b>	6.33%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>





Continued delivery of affordable homes remains a Council priority as this is essential in tackling homelessness. The graph demonstrates how delivery is currently exceeding targeted figures however we are not predicting this trend to continue going forward.

### Dwelling Tenure in the Borough

Stafford Borough has a significantly higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than across England. Levels of social and private rented properties are subsequently lower in Stafford than England.

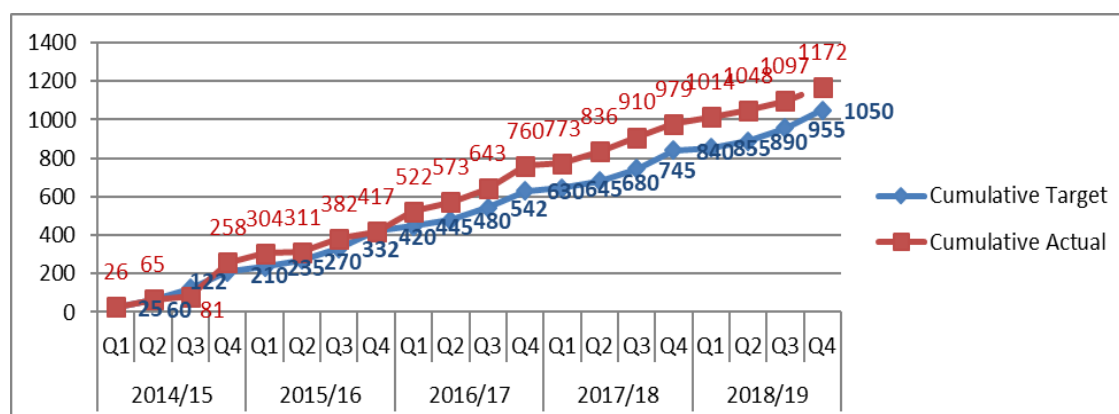
*Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2018, Household type by tenure, 2016-2017*

### Affordable Housing

As part of its current Local Plan 2014 – 2031, Stafford Borough Council has made a commitment to deliver 210 affordable homes per annum up to 2031.

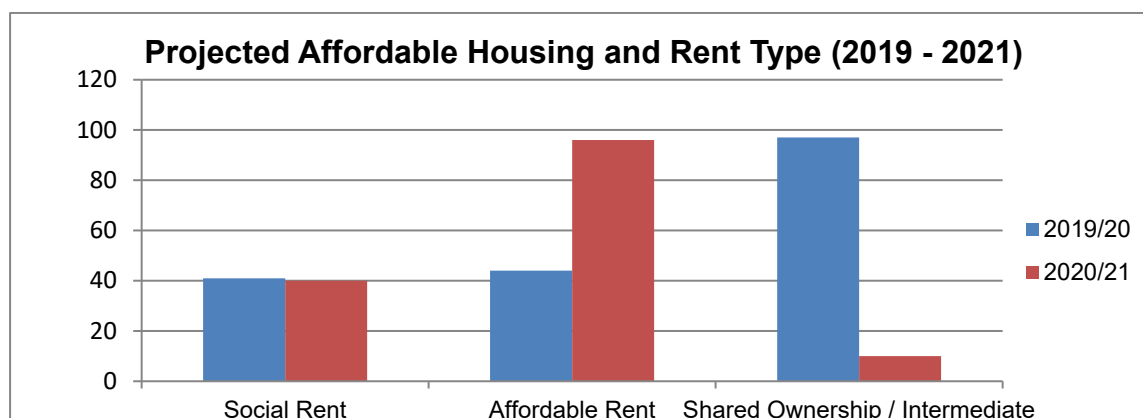
*Source: Stafford Borough Council, 2014, The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011 – 2031*

## Provision of Affordable Homes



Registered Providers based in the Borough have submitted projections on affordable housing completions for the next two years. Currently, there are 328 affordable homes planned to be built and completed in the Borough by Autumn 2020.

**Figure 5: Projected Affordable Housing and Rent Type (2019 – 2021)**



**Figure 7: Projected Affordable Housing for Registered Providers 2019-2020**

Registered Provider	Predicted Builds 2019/20	Predicted Builds 2020/21
Stafford and Rural Housing	39	0
Walsall Housing Group	37	0
Wrekin Housing	72	96
Aspire	16	0
Sage Housing Association	18	50



### Figure 8: Projected Affordable Housing No. of Bedrooms

Registered Providers provided figures of planned number of bedrooms for some of their projected affordable homes. Using this data, we have been able to predict the proportion of future affordable homes per number of bedrooms.

Number of Bedrooms	Number of homes	Predicted proportion of future affordable homes
1	8	5%
2	127	83%
3	18	12%
4+	0	0%
TOTAL	153	100%

Source (Figures 4 – 8): Data from Registered Providers in Stafford Borough, 2018-19

### Supported Housing Units in the Borough

Supported housing accommodation is offered in the Borough by 4 housing providers: Eagle House; Rethink; League of Friends; and Derventio Housing. The table below outlines the number of units provided by each organisation and the number of individuals that can be housed and supported in these units.

Name of Supported Housing provider	Number of Units	Number of Customers to be housed and supported
Eagle House	12 bedsits 21 flats	33 customers
Rethink	5 self-contained flats <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All 1-bed</li></ul> 1 house <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6-bed</li></ul>	11 customers
League of Friends		
Derventio Housing	8 houses <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 x 4-bed</li><li>1 x 2-bed</li></ul>	30 customers

### Local Housing Allowance Disparity

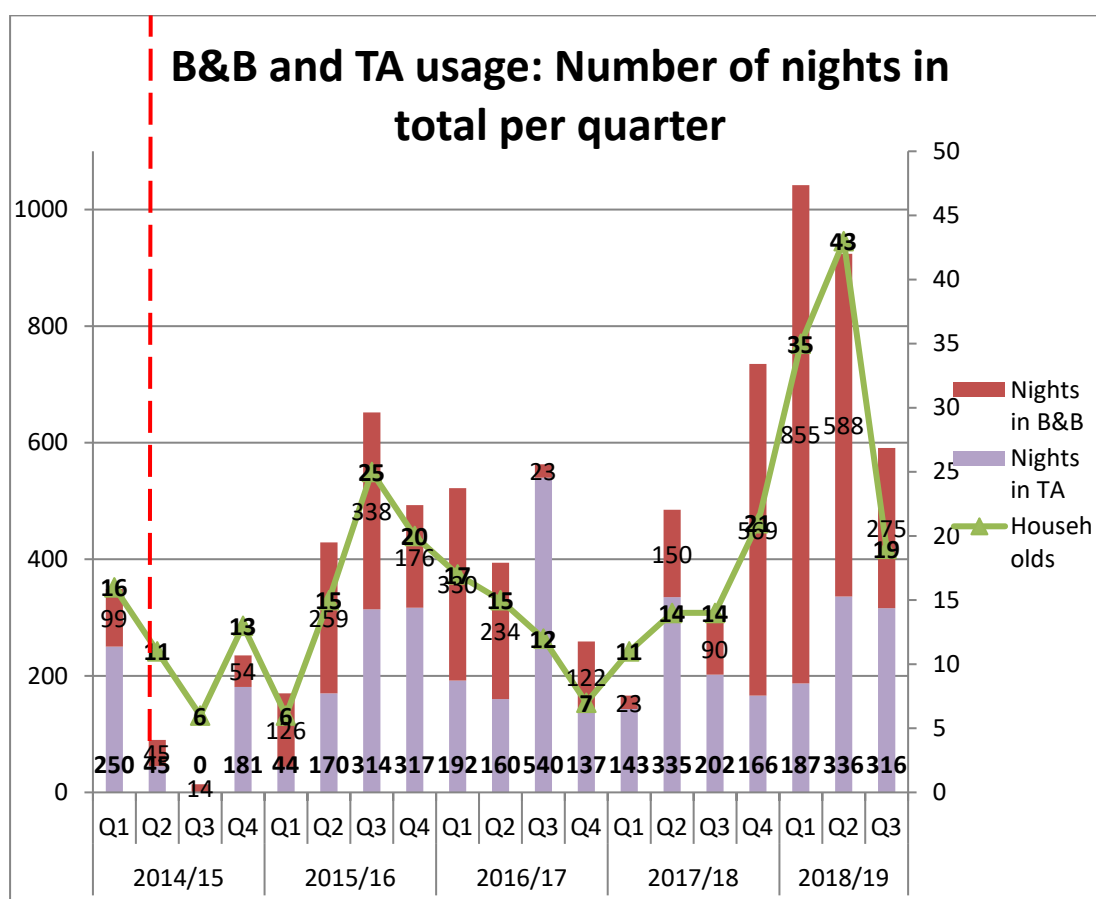
Local Housing Allowance covers the housing cost for individuals on a low income who live in the private rented sector. Local Housing Allowance is capped depending on the size of the property. Whilst rents in the private rented sector have been increasing in recent years, local housing allowance has been frozen resulting in a disparity between the rents charged by private landlords and the amount of benefit low income households receive towards their housing cost. The result is that the private rented sector has become unaffordable for low income households resulting in households both being

evicted from their homes and struggling to access new homes in the private sector.

The disparity in Stafford is as outlined in the table below:

	Local Housing Allowance (weekly)	Average Private Rent (weekly)	Percentage Disparity (Shortfall)
<b>Shared Room (Bedsit)</b>	£66.70	£90.00	35% (£23.30)
<b>One Bedroom</b>	£90.90	£103.15	11% (£12.25)
<b>Two Bedrooms</b>	£113.92	£132	13% (£18.08)
<b>Three Bedrooms</b>	£129.47	£156.23	17% (£26.76)
<b>Four Bedrooms</b>	£170.67	£219.46	22% (£48.79)

## 9 Temporary Accommodation



Quarter 4 of 2017/2018 saw the beginning of a spike in temporary accommodation usage and nights spent in temporary accommodation. The Housing Options Team introduced the changes associated with the Homeless Reduction Act in January 2018 which can be attributed to the increased use of

temporary accommodation as households that would previously have been found 'intentionally homeless' became eligible for temporary accommodation for a longer period of time. The Housing Options Team have a focus on reducing temporary accommodation use and we can see this taking effect towards the end of 2018/2019 as Officers become more confident with the new legislative requirements.

### **Estimated Cost of B&B placements**

B&B accommodation typically costs £38 per night. The costs in the table below are estimates based on this cost. Between 2014 and 2019, there have been 4370 households in B&B and this has cost an estimated £166,060.

2018/19 is already the most expensive year for estimated cost of B&B and this only includes the first 3 quarters of figures.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	TOTAL
Number in B&B	212	899	709	832	1718	<b>4370</b>
Estimated Cost of B&B	<b>£8056</b>	<b>£34,162</b>	<b>£26,942</b>	<b>£31,616</b>	<b>£65,284</b>	<b>£166,060</b>

There has been an increase in B&B expenditure as households are approaching our service (who may not have done so previously) and if we have reason to believe that they are in priority need they are provided with temporary accommodation.

### **Breakdown of applicants spending more than 4 weeks in B&B**

Since 2016, there have been 37 households that have spent more than 28 days (4 weeks) in B&B accommodation. In 2018/19 alone, there have been 24 households in B&B longer than 4 weeks. Households who spend more than four weeks in B&B accommodation are single homeless who present with multiple and complex needs. The Housing Options Team are required to tailor packages of support in order to find suitable accommodation within the Borough which can be challenging.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	TOTAL
Number in B&B > 4 weeks	4	9	24	<b>37</b>

## Section 10: Nominations and Waiting List

In February 2019, there were 80 people on the waiting list held by Stafford Borough Council.

The property type most in demand are 1-bed properties, with almost half of these individuals waiting for 1-bed properties.

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	TOTAL
No. on waiting list	39	27	13	1	80
% of people on waiting list	49%	34%	16%	1%	100%

The majority of people on the waiting list are in band A or band B (95% of people on the waiting list). The highest property type and band in demand are people in band B waiting for a 1-bed property (33 individuals, 41% of people on the waiting list).

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	TOTAL	% of Waiting List
A	4	8	6	1	19	24%
B	33	17	7	0	57	71%
C	1	2	0	0	3	4%
D	1	0	0	0	1	1%
TOTAL	39	27	13	1	80	100%

Live snapshots of the Stafford Borough Council Waiting List and Stafford and Rural Homes Housing Register were conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

A comparison of the lists, focussing on households in priority banding A-C revealed 316 unique households in total across the on the given date, of which:

- 74 households appeared on both lists
- 53 additional households were on the SBC Waiting List
- 189 additional households were on the SARH Housing Register
- On the SBC Waiting List, 13 of the 127 households (10%) were already living in social housing

## Banding and Bedroom Demand

The table below displays the bedroom and banding demand for the 316 households in priority banding across the Stafford Borough Council Waiting List and Stafford and Rural Homes Housing Register.

- 48% of households require a 1-bed property
- 74% of households are in Band B

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	4+ bed	TOTAL	% of Waiting List
A	21	11	6	2	0	<b>40</b>	13%
B	123	65	38	6	1	<b>233</b>	74%
C	9	19	11	3	1	<b>43</b>	14%
TOTAL	<b>153</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>316</b>	
% of Waiting List	48%	30%	17%	3%	1%		

## Nominations Agreements

### Nomination Agreements

Stafford Borough does not hold housing stock but has entered into nomination agreements with all Housing Associations with stock in the Borough. Households are nominated to properties in line with our Allocation Policy.

Registered Provider	% of rights within the Stafford Borough
Affinity	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new build developments, 50% on subsequent lets
Aspire	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Bromford	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Midland Heart	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Sanctuary	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Stafford and Rural Homes	75% of net vacancies, including new builds
South Staffordshire Housing Association	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Staffordshire Housing Association	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Walsall Housing Group	50% of net vacancies, 75% of first let of new builds, 50% of subsequent lets
Wrekin Housing Trust	100% of net vacancies

### Number of nominations and successful referrals

Since October 2018, there have been 73 property nominations by Stafford Borough Council with a 55% success rate of households moving into properties. Successful nominations often require more than one household to be put forward to the property, with 18% of nominations have three households put forward.

Housing Association	No. of property nominations	No. of successful nomination referrals	% of nominations with a successful referral
<b>Accord Group</b>	2	2	100%
<b>Affinity Sutton</b>	2	1	50%
<b>Bromford</b>	21	13	62%
<b>Midland Heart</b>	13	10	77%
<b>Sanctuary</b>	5	3	60%
<b>South Staffordshire Housing Association</b>	4	4	100%
<b>Staffordshire Housing Association</b>	1	1	100%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	0	0%
<b>Walsall Housing Group</b>	11	6	55%
<b>Wrekin Housing Trust</b>	13	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>55%</b>

Nominations may be unsuccessful for a number of reasons which often relate to a households support needs and ability to maintain a tenancy due to issues of affordability, budgeting and previous failed tenancy. There have been a number of difficult to let properties where the Council have been unable to find a suitable household from our own waiting list (amounting to 12 properties since 2018).

