

## **Ashfield District Council**

### **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Review 2024**

#### **Introduction**

It is our vision that residents of Ashfield have affordable and warm housing in a safe community that promotes their health and wellbeing. Reducing and preventing homelessness is key to achieving this vision and is identified as a priority in our Corporate Plan.

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, every local housing authority is required to have a Homelessness Strategy in place which is based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their area. The Strategy must be renewed at least every 5 years and must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be available, for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review 2024 and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2024-2029 have been produced by our Strategic Housing Team, in consultation with a range of stakeholders, and in collaboration with our Mid Nottinghamshire neighbours, Mansfield District Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council.

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## **1. Methodology**

This section sets out the process we followed to develop the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Review and Strategy 2024-29, including working in collaboration with other Nottinghamshire housing authorities, gathering data and consulting with stakeholders.

We have continued to work in collaboration with Mansfield District Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council to develop the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Review and Strategy 2024-29. All three local authorities have taken the same approach to carry out the review and develop the Strategy. The aims and objectives of all the strategies not only align to each other, but also to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies of other Nottinghamshire authorities. Between Autumn 2022 and Spring 2024, representatives from each authority met on a regular basis to monitor progress against a project plan.

An Ashfield Homelessness Strategy Group made up of internal officers that meets every 6-8 weeks has received updates on the progress of the review and strategy development.

A review of progress against the 2019-24 action plan was carried out which considered if any actions should be carried forward into the 2024-2029 strategy and to learn lessons from actions that had both gone well and not progressed.

An analysis of the current and emerging national, regional and local policy context was completed to identify shared priorities, as well as opportunities and changes we need to prepare for.

An assessment of the housing market was carried out to understand how this might be driving homelessness now and in the future, as well as to identify opportunities to address homelessness.

Research into the root causes of homelessness was done to try identify the likely future levels of homelessness

A review of the financial, staffing and IT resources available took place to understand opportunities, limitations and areas for improvements.

Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, customer satisfaction surveys and customer complaints was carried out to identify trends and areas for improvement.

We met with our Homelessness Advice and Support Team (HAST) Advisor from the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) to jointly review the above homelessness and rough sleeping data for both Mid-Nottinghamshire and Nottinghamshire as a whole.

We invited all relevant internal teams and external stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of our work to tackle homelessness, and to tell us what we should consider doing differently. We did this by attending team meetings, speaking with people over email, or meeting with them one on one.

We secured government-funded consultancy support from Shelter, who facilitated in person consultation events in Ashfield, Mansfield and Newark & Sherwood during June 2023. We invited all relevant internal teams and external stakeholders to this. In Ashfield, attendees heard a presentation summarising the homelessness and rough sleeping data for 2022 and a draft set of priorities were proposed. Attendees were then asked to work in groups to discuss if these priorities were suitable and what actions they'd like to see Ashfield District Council (ADC) and its partners take to achieve them. A write up of the feedback is available at Appendix 1.

Elected Members were consulted in a similar way to the above through the Outward Focus Select Committee in October 2023. Committee Members voted in favour of the proposed priorities and asked to review annual action plans as they are developed.

In September 2023, we consulted stakeholders, customers and the general public on our draft priorities for the new strategy. We received 6 responses to an online survey, 4 responses were from staff at ADC or partner agencies. No one with lived experience of homelessness in the last 5 years completed the survey. All respondents supported the proposed priorities. A focus group also took place at a supported housing scheme during September; all attendees were supportive of the proposed priorities.

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2024-2029 is based on the data and insights we gathered through the above process and has determined our priorities for these 5 years. The Strategy will be launched at an event with stakeholders who we will collaborate with annually to review progress and develop actions plan to deliver the priorities of the Strategy. The Mid-Nottinghamshire Homeless Inter-Agency Forum will continue to meet quarterly and will play a role in the delivery of action plans. The Ashfield Homelessness Strategy Group will have responsibility for ensuring the aims of the Strategy are achieved.

## 2. 2019-24 achievements

This section provides a summary of the achievements against each of the actions included in the 2019-24 Strategy. In addition to this summary, annual reviews of the action plan can be found on our website<sup>1</sup>, providing more detail and case studies.

### Theme 1 - Reducing the Impact of Poverty on Homelessness

Action	Research how households at risk of homelessness can be proactively supported by ADC and partners to improve their financial resilience to mitigate against adverse events that may cause homelessness	
Progress	<i>Alden Social Research were commissioned in Summer 2020 to consider the underlying causes of homelessness, analyse homelessness prevention in Ashfield and identify areas for future development. A number of recommendations were made based on the research findings and an action plan was developed by the Housing Options Team to implement these.</i>	Complete
	<i>The Tackling Financial Insecurity in Nottinghamshire report reviewed the existing financial wellbeing services in Nottinghamshire and the potential for a countywide approach.</i>	
Action	Review the accessibility and take up of advice on money, debts and benefits provided by ADC and partners by households at risk of homelessness.	
Progress	<i>The Housing Options Team have completed training on basic money management advice. The Team review the income and expenditure of every customer to identify opportunities to maximise their income. There are strong working relationships with Ashfield's Housing Benefit Team, local Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) advisors and Citizens Advice Ashfield.</i>	Complete
Action	Identify opportunities to integrate local welfare benefits services with the ADC Housing Options Team to proactively support households at risk of homelessness.	
Progress	<i>There are strong working relationships with Ashfield's Housing Benefit Team, local DWP advisors and Citizens Advice Ashfield.</i>	Complete
	<i>Between 2019 and 2023, the Housing Benefit Team have awarded £725,320 in Discretionary Housing Payments.</i>	
Action	Work with partners to develop sustainable pathways out of homelessness that minimise the levels of poverty experienced.	

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/housing-strategy-research/homelessness-strategy>

<i>Progress</i>	<i>Significant external funding has been secured by ADC and partners during 2019-24 that can be used to support homeless households with the cost of moving and settling into their new home</i>	<i>Complete</i>
	<i>The Housing Options Team now includes an officer dedicated to supporting customers to move out of temporary accommodation into a new home</i>	

## Theme 2 - Responding to the Shortage of Social Housing

<i>Action</i>	Deliver the ADC Affordable Housing Delivery Action Plan 2019 – 2021	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>A summary of the outcomes of this action plan, and the 2021 – 2023 action plan are available on our website.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
	<i>Data published by DLUHC shows that 171 new affordable homes were completed in Ashfield in 2019-2022<sup>2</sup></i>	
<i>Action</i>	Work with social housing partners to deliver the required additional tenancy sustainment support, using external funding where available	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Significant external funding has been secured by partners such as Framework Housing and Change, Grow, Live (CGL) in Nottinghamshire to provide support to secure and sustain a tenancy, particularly for those experiencing, or at risk of, rough sleeping.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	Research the underlying causes of tenancy failure in social housing.	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Due to a national moratorium policy on evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, this action was not relevant during 2020-2021.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
	<i>Between 2019 and 2023, only 41 households were homeless or threatened with homelessness due to the end of social housing tenancy. The majority of evictions are due to rent arrears.</i>	
<i>Action</i>	Identify the barriers to homeless households accessing social housing.	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Between 2019 and 2023, 47% of all customers moved into social housing.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
	<i>Currently, the main barrier is the high demand and low supply of social housing.</i>	
<i>Action</i>	Work with partners to reduce the number of evictions from social housing	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Due to a national moratorium policy on evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, this action was not relevant during 2020-2021.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
	<i>Between 2019 and 2023, only 41 households were homeless or threatened with homelessness due to the end of social housing tenancy.</i>	

<sup>2</sup> Live Table 1011C

### Theme 3 - Supported Housing and Housing Related Support

Action	Work with partners to deliver the required additional supported housing, using external funding where available	
Progress	<p><i>External funding has been secured to deliver 26 additional supported housing bedspaces until 2025</i></p> <p><i>We have commissioned 17 one-bedroom short term supported housing flats and 5 move on flats for 2023-25.</i></p> <p><i>External funding has been secured to continue 6 existing domestic abuse refuge properties (37 bedspaces) and to deliver an additional 2 properties for 2023 – 2030.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Work with partners to deliver the additional required housing related support, using external funding where available	
Progress	<p><i>Significant external funding has been secured by partners such as Framework Housing, CGL, Juno Women’s Aid and Equation in Nottinghamshire to provide support to secure and sustain a tenancy, particularly for those experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping, and for those experiencing domestic abuse.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Identify the barriers to sustainable move on from supported housing.	
Progress	<p><i>The main barriers are reduced availability of social housing and of Private Rented Sector (PRS) housing available at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, alongside high levels of demand for the properties that are available.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Identify barriers to accessing supported housing by those households who need it.	
Progress	<p><i>There is good access to supported housing where customers meet the referral criteria. However, there remains a lack of supported housing for customers with “high” support needs.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Conduct an annual review of support needs of supported housing residents and evaluate if these needs are appropriately met	
Progress	<p><i>Commissioners of supported housing (such as Nottinghamshire County Council) monitor these issues and work with providers under the terms of their contracts to address them.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Create a governance structure that includes oversight of all supported housing and housing related support	
Progress	<p><i>There are a number of strategic forums in Nottinghamshire that regularly meet, which consider the quality and performance of supported housing and housing related support as part of their agenda. An additional forum was not required.</i></p>	Complete

	<i>Meetings are arranged as required with individual providers and commissioners to raise any concerns and agree a way forward.</i>	
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#### Theme 4 - Working with the Private Rented Sector

Action	Work with partners and PRS landlords to remove the barriers to homeless households accessing the PRS establishing any required products and services (subject to resource availability), using external funding where available	
Progress	<p><i>External funding was secured in 2019-2020 to trial a Nottinghamshire social lettings agency. The agency created 30 tenancies and did not continue following the trial.</i></p> <p><i>External funding was also secured in 2018-2020 for a landlord liaison officer, employed by a partner agency, who secured 46 tenancies on behalf of individuals experiencing, or at risk of, rough sleeping.</i></p> <p><i>Between 2019 and 2023, 13% of all customers moved into the PRS</i></p> <p><i>Between 2019 and 2023, 150 households received support from our prevention fund, almost all households were supported to access the PRS.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Secure funding to introduce the Call Before You Serve scheme in the district	
Progress	<i>External funding was secured in 2019-2023 for the Call Before You Serve scheme in Ashfield to work with private landlords wishing to serve a notice of seeking possession.</i>	Complete
Action	Research the underlying causes of loss of a PRS tenancy.	
Progress	<p><i>Due to a national moratorium policy on evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, this action was not relevant during 2020-2021.</i></p> <p><i>The Alden Social Research project considered the drivers of homelessness in the PRS, as well as reviewing the way we work with private landlords. The research report made a number of recommendations and an action plan was developed by the Housing Options Team to implement these.</i></p>	Complete

#### Theme 5 - Addressing the Causes and Consequences of Homelessness

Action	Deliver the additional required supported housing and housing related support – see Theme 3	
Progress	See above	Complete
Action	Work with partners to ensure robust pathways to prevent homelessness upon discharge from an institution.	
Progress	<p><i>We are in regular conversation with partners from the Integrated Care System, Adult Social Care, Children’s Social Care, Probation Service, local hospital trusts, etc. A range of initiatives are in place to ensure timely referrals, to hold multi-agency case conferences and to provide specialist support. Some initiatives have received external funding. The national policy context concerning institutional discharge changes regularly and as such dynamic pathways are required.</i></p> <p><i>Between 2019 and 2023, 658 Duty to Refer referrals were received, the majority (60%) concerned prison leavers. Only 28 customers stated their reason for homelessness was leaving an institution.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Identify the barriers to homeless households accessing specialist support and treatment.	
Progress	<i>Multi-agency case conferences consider the barriers at an individual level. Any trends in these barriers are highlighted at the relevant strategic forum. Where required, a task and finish group will work to agree changes to the system.</i>	Complete
Action	Work with partners to identify options to prevent the underlying causes of homelessness in the next generation	
Progress	<p><i>Broxtowe Youth Homeless have delivered sessions in person and online to schools across Nottinghamshire. Sessions enable young people to recognise when they are at risk of homelessness and seek early support.</i></p> <p><i>We have White Ribbon Accreditation and every year takes part in the 16 days of activism to encourage people to seek help and to promote healthy relationships.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Work with partners to identify how households at risk of homelessness as a result of their support needs can be identified and proactively assisted as early as possible.	
Progress	<i>A multi-agency case conference takes place fortnightly and all agencies are asked to highlight households who are at risk of homelessness</i>	Complete
Action	Work with partners to provide joined up support to households with multiple and complex needs at risk of homelessness.	
Progress	<i>A multi-agency case conference takes place fortnightly for all current single homelessness cases in Ashfield. Separate multi-</i>	Complete



	<i>disciplinary team meetings are arranged as required to discuss individual cases in greater detail with relevant partners.</i>	
Action	Contribute to the development of Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Homelessness Strategy in 2020	
Progress	<i>We attend the Youth Homelessness Forum and contributed to the development of the current Youth Homelessness Action Plan.</i>	Complete

### Theme 6 - Reducing the Impact of Homelessness on the Community

Action	Ensure options are available to ensure no one has to sleep rough other than through personal choice	
Progress	<i>Substantial external funding has been secured for 2019-2025 to support those experiencing, or at risk of, rough sleeping in Nottinghamshire. This has increased the accommodation and support available to prevent rough sleeping. On a typical night in Ashfield, there are 4 people rough sleeping (Nov 2022 snapshot).</i>	Complete
Action	Minimise and manage the negative impacts of street activity by rough sleepers, supported housing residents and others	
Progress	<i>Street activity (such as begging, drinking, noise nuisance) is rare in Ashfield. Where activity does occur, it is quickly addressed through multi-agency working.</i>	Complete
Action	Work with partners to ensure the welfare needs of rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping are met	
Progress	<i>During the Covid-19 pandemic, all rough sleepers were offered accommodation to protect them from the virus. We continue to offer accommodation to all rough sleepers, alongside a package of support</i>	Complete
Action	Establish the Homeless Reduction Board as required by the MHCLG Rough Sleeping Strategy and Delivery Plan	
Progress	<i>This requirement is no longer included in the DLUHC Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy</i>	Not required
Action	Create a community homeless prevention charter and encourage partners, public, businesses, etc to pledge to do their bit to end homelessness	
Progress	<i>This action was not relevant during 2020-21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</i>  <i>The community are encouraged to report anyone experiencing, or at risk of, rough sleeping to StreetLink or to Framework.</i>  <i>The local faith sector has secured funding to establish a volunteering programme to support homeless households.</i>	Complete

Theme 7 - Improving Customer Services for People who are Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness

Action	Regularly gather customer feedback and utilise this to continuously improve the service and its integration with our services.	
Progress	<p><i>All customers are asked to complete a satisfaction survey after their initial contact with us, after their PHP is agreed and after they have left temporary accommodation. Survey results are reported to the internal strategy group.</i></p> <p><i>Almost all customers report high levels of satisfaction, and say their allocated officer was polite and understanding, and that it was clear what actions they and the officer would take.</i></p> <p><i>All Sanctuary customers are asked to complete a satisfaction survey and to confirm if the intervention prevented their homelessness for at least 6 months.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Research customer journeys into homelessness to identify early opportunities to prevent their homelessness and any barriers to doing so.	
Progress	<p><i>Alden Social Research were commissioned in Summer 2020 to consider the underlying causes of homelessness, analyse homelessness prevention in Ashfield and identify areas for future development. A number of recommendations were made based on the research findings and an action plan was developed by the Housing Options Team to implement these.</i></p> <p><i>An internal customer journey mapping exercise also started in January 2023 to identify opportunities to improve the experience of customers who need support from Housing Options, Environmental Health (Residential) and/or Homefinder</i></p>	Complete
Action	Research customer journeys into homeless to understand how it affects their health and well being and identify opportunities to minimise the negative effects of homelessness.	
Progress	<p><i>Alden Social Research were commissioned in Summer 2020 to consider the underlying causes of homelessness, analyse homelessness prevention in Ashfield and identify areas for future development. A number of recommendations were made based on the research findings and an action plan was developed by the Housing Options Team to implement these.</i></p> <p><i>All customers are asked if they have any support needs and are signposted to relevant partner agencies.</i></p>	Complete
Action	Conduct a 12 month review of the Duty to Refer operation and identify opportunities to enhance its contribution to preventing homelessness.	

<i>Progress</i>	<i>A review was carried out and partner agencies were contacted to remind them of the Duty to Refer and to explain how to complete a referral.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	<i>Conduct an annual review of Housing Options Team and partner training needs, arrange required training.</i>	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>A Housing Options Team training and skills audit is regularly refreshed as both legislation and staff change, and learning and development needs are discussed with new starters and annually with all staff during their Performance Development Reviews.</i>  <i>Training and shadowing opportunities are provided to partner agencies as required.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	<i>Work with partners to ensure there are clear pathways to resolving a household's homelessness for the key causes of homelessness, integrating services wherever possible (end of AST, fleeing violence, friends/family exclusion, etc)</i>	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>A number of policies and procedures have been reviewed to improve the support available for the key causes of homelessness.</i>  <i>In addition, as described above, significant funding has been secured in Nottinghamshire to enhance the housing options and support available to those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, particularly those who are rough sleeping, fleeing domestic abuse, homeless from the PRS or require substance misuse treatment.</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	<i>Work with partners to identify how those with lived experience of homelessness can be included in the design and delivery of services.</i>	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Funding has been secured by Framework and CGL to include lived experience roles within their services.</i>  <i>Nottinghamshire became joined the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) programme in 2022 and this project will include a lived experience panel.</i>  <i>Some multi-disciplinary team meetings are attended by the customer</i>  <i>Customer feedback is gathered via the satisfaction surveys and journey mapping described</i>	<i>Complete</i>

## Theme 8 – Improving the data available to relevant agencies

<i>Action</i>	<i>Work with partners to develop a governance structure to oversee the delivery of this strategy</i>
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<i>Progress</i>	<i>A governance structure is in place – this is kept under regular review to ensure it is fit for purpose</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	The governance structure will agree the monitoring and outcomes data to be reported to them	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Our internal Homeless Strategy Group meets 6 weekly and monitors a range of data</i>  <i>The Nottinghamshire Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Steering Group oversees the RSI Programme and monitors a range of data</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	The governance structure will be responsible for identifying good performance and areas for improvement, ensuring any required remedial action is taken as appropriate	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Our internal Homeless Strategy Group meets 6 weekly and agrees improvements or remedial actions as required</i>  <i>The Nottinghamshire RSI Steering Group meets bi-monthly and shares good practice, and agrees improvements or remedial actions as required</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Action</i>	The governance structure will regularly share the monitoring and outcomes data with all relevant partners	
<i>Progress</i>	<i>Data is shared with partners through the Mid-Notts Homeless Prevention Forum and the RSI Steering Group</i>	<i>Complete</i>

### **3. Policy context**

This section sets out the national, regional and local policy context that needs to be reflected in our strategic priorities and operational action plans to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

#### **3.1 National policy**

As highlighted in the End Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy, homelessness and rough sleeping is not simply a housing issue, meaning a whole system approach is needed, encompassing policies and initiatives across health and social care, the criminal justice system, immigration and enforcement, welfare, employment, support for care leavers, as well as housing. There is of course overlap between these areas, as well as regular changes to the scale and nature of homelessness and rough sleeping, both nationally and locally.

For this reason, organisations working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping are encouraged by the DLUHC to adopt the following core principles<sup>3</sup> to guide their work through the complex and shifting policy landscape:

1. integrate health and care and housing
2. focus on delivering person-centred, empathetic, non-judgemental support and trauma informed care in psychologically informed environments
3. build long-lasting, trusting relationships and recognise that engagement with services may not work first time round
4. ensure that the lived experiences of people informs the action we take

This section provides a high-level summary of the national policy context<sup>4</sup> regarding the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping in order to identify challenges and opportunities for Ashfield's Housing Options Team. As such, more detail is provided on policies that are most relevant to the work of this team. Policies affecting the wider system working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping are included for context, but in less detail.

There are three broad parts to this section:

1. Homelessness reduction policies
  - a. Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
  - b. Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy 2022
  - c. Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Focus Report
2. Housing market challenges
  - a. Affordable housing supply

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng214/resources/integrated-health-and-social-care-for-people-experiencing-homelessness-pdf-66143775200965>

<sup>4</sup> As at Autumn 2023

- b. PRS reform
  - c. Supported housing oversight
  - d. Help with housing costs
3. Specialist support
- a. Domestic abuse
  - b. Asylum dispersal
  - c. Refugee resettlement
  - d. EU settlement scheme
  - e. Prison leavers
  - f. Care leavers
  - g. Armed forces veterans
  - h. Health and social care
  - i. Substance misuse treatment
  - j. Repossession

### Homelessness reduction

#### *Homelessness Reduction Act 2017*

In April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced which placed duties on local housing authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. The implementation of this legislation was evaluated in 2020<sup>5</sup> and a number of recommendations were made. An overview of the legal duties owed by local housing authorities to homeless applicants is provided in a House of Commons Library Paper<sup>6</sup> and on the NHAS website<sup>7</sup>.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, a new methodology to calculate the Homeless Prevention Grant (HPG) funding was introduced and funding allocations for 2023-25 were announced in December 2022<sup>8</sup>. The funding conditions of HPG are:

- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention
- Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families
- Report total homelessness spend (from HPG and other budgets) under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities
- Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/919748/Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Implementation\\_of\\_the\\_Homelessness\\_Reduction\\_Act\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/919748/Evaluation_of_the_Implementation_of_the_Homelessness_Reduction_Act_Final_Report.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN01164/SN01164.pdf>, pp 8 - 11

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nhas.org.uk/news/article/local-authority-duties-to-prevent-and-relieve-homelessness>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-grant-2023-to-2025>

A number of amendments have been made to the Homelessness Code of Guidance since it was published in 2018, recent notable changes include:

- UK nationals fleeing violence from Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories or Lebanon are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing
- People who left Ukraine because of the Russian invasion are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing
- Confirmed victims of human trafficking and modern slavery granted limited leave to remain are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing
- A duty for public bodies to consider the Armed Forces Covenant in homelessness applications and housing allocations
- A new chapter on people who are homeless as a result of violence, other than domestic abuse<sup>9</sup>
- People made homeless due to being a victim of domestic abuse have automatic priority need for homelessness assistance<sup>10</sup>

### *Ending Rough Sleeping*

In September 2022, DLUHC published its strategy to end rough sleeping by 2025<sup>11</sup>.

For the first time, Government has defined what it means to end rough sleeping: *prevented wherever possible, but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring.*

The strategy has 4 areas of focus, and each area of focus has a set of core aims:

1. Prevention
  - a. Maximise affordable housing supply and reform the PRS
  - b. Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act
  - c. Target support to the most challenging transitional points in people's lives.
2. Intervention
  - a. Co-ordinated local rough sleeping services
  - b. A clear pathway off the streets for those with restricted eligibility for public funds
  - c. Provide local authorities, police and other agencies with the tools they need to address rough sleeping, protect the public and make communities feel safe for all
  - d. Make it easier for the public to play their part in supporting people sleeping rough
3. Recovery
  - a. Support both housing-led approaches and Housing First
  - b. Address unacceptable poor quality supported housing and increase supply

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-26-victims-of-violence>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nhas.org.uk/news/article/homeless-due-to-domestic-abuse>

<sup>11</sup> [Ending Rough Sleeping for Good](#)

- c. Improve the support available to help people with experience of rough sleeping into employment
  - d. Provide significant investment into drug and alcohol treatment
4. Transparent and joined-up system
    - a. Introduce a new national data-led framework to measure progress towards ending rough sleeping
    - b. Ensure robust but flexible accountability structures are in place
    - c. Improve the evidence-base and understanding of what works to end rough sleeping
    - d. Improve how different services work together

Further detail on the current and previous Government policies on ending rough sleeping are detailed in a House of Commons Library paper<sup>12</sup>.

### *Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Report*

In May 2023, the Ombudsman published a guide for practitioners on unsuitable temporary accommodation<sup>13</sup>, following recent court decisions and an increase in the number of complaints they have received.

### Housing market

#### *Supported housing oversight*

Since 2020, government has taken a number of steps to improve oversight of the supported housing sector:

- published a National Statement of Expectations<sup>14</sup>
- published an evaluation of the wave 1 supported housing pilots<sup>15</sup>
- published Housing Benefit guidance for supported housing claims<sup>16</sup>
- announced a second wave of supported housing pilots<sup>17</sup>
- passed the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 received Royal Assent in June 2023. When fully enacted, it will:

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<sup>12</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02007/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.lgo.org.uk/assets/attach/6410/GPG-Unsuitable-temp-accomm-F.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-housing-oversight-pilots-independent-evaluation>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-guidance-for-supported-housing-claims/housing-benefit-guidance-for-supported-housing-claims>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/unscrupulous-landlords-who-exploit-vulnerable-residents-to-be-driven-out-of-supported-housing-sector>



- Require local authorities in England to review supported housing in their areas and develop strategies
- Provide for the creation of a national expert advisory panel
- Give the Secretary of State power to introduce national support standards
- Give local authorities power to create local licensing schemes for exempt accommodation
- Give the Secretary of State an option to introduce a new planning Use-Class for exempt accommodation

### *Affordable housing supply*

There have been a number of recent opportunities to boost the supply of supported housing through the following national funding programmes:

- Rough Sleeping Initiative
- Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme
- Next Steps Accommodation Programme
- Single Homeless Accommodation Programme
- Night Shelter Transformation Fund
- The Move On Fund

A number of House of Commons Library Papers and Research Briefings provide detailed overviews of the key issues affecting the supply of affordable housing:

- Stimulating housing supply – Government initiatives<sup>18</sup>
- Social rented housing: past trends and prospects<sup>19</sup>
- Planning policy debate pack January 2023<sup>20</sup>
- What is affordable housing<sup>21</sup>
- Tackling the under-supply of housing in England<sup>22</sup>

### *Help with housing costs*

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Cost rates (Local Housing Allowance rates) have been frozen for private renters since April 2020. Since then rents have risen by 12% on average; analysis by Crisis has found that only 12% of advertised PRS properties were affordable to those in receipt of benefits<sup>23</sup>.

It was announced in the Autumn Statement 2023 that Local Housing Allowance rates will be increased in April 2024 to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of PRS market rents.

<sup>18</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06416/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8963/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2023-0002/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7747/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7671/>

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/247716/zoopla\\_briefingv6.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/247716/zoopla_briefingv6.pdf)

## *Private rented sector reform*

The Renter's Reform Bill was introduced into Parliament in May 2023, the Bill proposes to:

- Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions and thereby move to all assured tenancies being periodic
- Revise the possession grounds available to landlords to repossess their property
- Ensure tenants can appeal excessive rent increases that are designed to force them out
- Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman
- Create a Privately Rented Property Portal
- Give tenants the right to request a pet in the property, which the landlord cannot unreasonably refuse

During the second reading of the Bill in October 2023, it was confirmed that once the Bill is passed, it will not be enacted until the court system has been reformed.

Alongside the Renter's Reform Bill, the government has committed to:

- introducing an updated Decent Homes Standard to the PRS
- making it illegal for landlords and agents to have blanket bans on renting to tenants in receipt of benefits or with children
- strengthening local authority enforcement powers and introduce a new requirement for councils to report on enforcement activity

In December 2022, DLUHC opened a consultation on the amendments required to the homelessness legislation as a result of the removal of Section 21 evictions<sup>24</sup>.

## Specialist support

### *Domestic abuse*

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a number of changes regarding housing and homelessness:

- A duty on Upper Tier local authorities to prepare strategies to provide accommodation-based support for all survivors of domestic abuse<sup>25</sup>
- A duty of Lower Tier authorities to cooperate with the Upper Tier authority
- Protection of a survivor's lifetime or assured tenancy
- Priority need status for survivors of domestic abuse

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-consultation-on-consequential-changes-to-the-homelessness-legislation/technical-consultation-on-consequential-changes-to-the-homelessness-legislation>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation>

Alongside this new legislation, the Home Office has published A Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan<sup>26</sup> and a Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy<sup>27</sup>, which both prioritise prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and improving the system. A number of new measures were announced in February 2023 to protect women and girls from harassment, aggression and violence, and stop domestic abuse before it takes place<sup>28</sup>.

### *Asylum dispersal*

Since April 2022, all local authorities in England have been required to take part in asylum dispersal, which means accommodation providers working on behalf of the Home Office will procure properties for asylum seekers to occupy whilst their claims for asylum are considered. Local authorities are not expected to accommodate asylum seekers beyond 0.5% of their total population.

In April 2023, the Home Office introduced a streamlined asylum processing model to address the backlog of asylum claims. This process aims to clear a backlog of 92,000 legacy cases (those made prior to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022) by December 2023.

Home Office provided accommodation and support is withdrawn once a claim is either accepted or refused and residents are required to leave within 28 and 21 days respectively. Individuals and families granted asylum may be eligible for homelessness assistance and an allocation of social housing. Those who are granted limited leave to remain, or their application for asylum is refused, are likely to have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and no eligibility for homelessness assistance or an allocation of social housing. As such, there is a risk those leaving asylum accommodation will become street homeless and/or victims of modern slavery.

### *Refugee resettlement*

There are 4 main resettlement programmes local authorities are currently involved with:

1. Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme
2. Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)
3. Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)
4. UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)

#### *Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme*

This scheme was launched in March 2022 and is open to Ukraine nationals who were resident in Ukraine prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and their immediate family members.

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<sup>26</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-domestic-abuse-plan/tackling-domestic-abuse-plan-command-paper-639-accessible-version>

<sup>27</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

<sup>28</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/news/domestic-abusers-face-crackdown-in-raft-of-new-measures>

The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, education and other support.

Local housing authorities are expected to provide the following support to arrivals under this scheme:

- An in person accommodation check prior to and following the arrival of guests
- Homelessness assistance if the placement is ended
- Facilitate community and well-being events

Data shared by DLUHC<sup>29</sup> shows that between 24<sup>th</sup> February and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, in England 7,990 Ukrainian households were owed a homeless prevention or relief duty, of which 5,190 entered England through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 93,590 Ukrainians have arrived into England<sup>30</sup>.

It was announced in the Autumn Statement 2023 that the financial support for Homes for Ukraine Hosts will continue for a third year.

### *Afghan resettlement*<sup>31</sup>

Two bespoke immigration routes were introduced in 2020 and 2022 for Afghan nationals and their family members: The Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Due to the speed and volume of arrivals via these routes in summer of 2021, the Home Office placed people into temporary 'bridging accommodation' until they could move into permanent accommodation. All bridging accommodation sites were closed by August 2023 and any households who had not secured permanent accommodation by this time were advised of their rights to seek homelessness advice and assistance.

Home Office data shows that between July 2021 and June 2023, 19,499 Afghan nationals resettled in the UK via ARAP or ACRS<sup>32</sup>. DLUHC data shows that 476 ARAP or ACRS households were owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023<sup>33</sup>.

### *EU settlement scheme*

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-management-information-ukrainian-nationals-england>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-for-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-and-ukraine-family-scheme-visa-data-by-age-and-sex-of-applicant>

<sup>31</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9804/CBP-9804.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-management-information-afghan-nationals-england>

Following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and the introduction of a points-based immigration system, freedom of movement between the UK and EU has ended. All EU nationals, as well as other non-UK nationals, are now required to have a visa to reside in the UK.

Those EU citizens who were living in the UK by 31 December 2020 were able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme for a permanent right to reside in the UK. The deadline to apply to this scheme was 30 June 2021, however EU nationals have been able to continue to apply under the scheme. A failure to apply means individuals will have no rights to work or study, to claim welfare benefits or access health service, or to rent a property, i.e. NRPF. Those with NRPF are at risk of street homelessness and/or victims of modern slavery.

### *Prison leavers*

In December 2021, the Ministry of Justice published their Prison Strategy White Paper<sup>34</sup> which includes proposals to

- provide all prison leavers with 12 weeks temporary accommodation,
- expand the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders programme (awarded to local authorities to support with deposits, landlord incentives and support staff)
- increase the number of Approved Premises,
- reduce Friday prison releases,
- double housing specialists working in prisons

### *Care leavers*

The Ending Rough Sleeping for Good strategy includes an aim to ensure that no one should leave a public institution to the streets and that young people leaving care will receive the support they need to secure and maintain suitable accommodation.

The strategy includes commitments to:

- fund targeted support to young people leaving care most at risk of homelessness, in 69 local authorities
- invest in 'Staying Put' and 'Staying Close' programmes.

The Department of Education has introduced mandatory national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection for supported housing providers who accommodate 16 and 17 year olds. Registration began in April 2023, national standards apply from autumn 2023 and inspection will begin in April 2024.

In February 2023, the Department for Education published its response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care<sup>35</sup>, which includes a mission to increase the number of

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<sup>34</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1038765/prisons-strategy-white-paper.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1038765/prisons-strategy-white-paper.pdf)

<sup>35</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1133537/Children s social care stable homes consultation February 2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1133537/Children_s_social_care_stable_homes_consultation_February_2023.pdf)

care leavers in safe, suitable accommodation and a reduction in care leaver homelessness by 2027. Actions to achieve this include:

- removing the local connection requirement for care leavers applying for social housing
- removing the use of intentional homelessness for care leavers under 25
- encouraging rent guarantor schemes

The response also includes a mission to strengthen and extend the corporate parenting responsibilities across the public sector.

### *Armed forces veterans*

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-24<sup>36</sup> commits to ending veteran rough sleeping by 2025. In December 2022, Government launched Op FORTITUDE<sup>37</sup> and committed to end veteran rough sleeping by 2023. Op FORTITUDE is a central referral scheme to provide veterans at risk of homelessness access to supported housing and wrap-around specialist care in health, housing and education.

The Armed Forces Act 2021 enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant into law, which requires certain public bodies to help prevent service personnel and veterans being disadvantaged when accessing public services such as housing, healthcare and education<sup>38</sup>.

### *Health and social care*

In 2022, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published a guideline covering the provision of integrated health and social care services for people experiencing homelessness<sup>39</sup>.

In January 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan<sup>40</sup> was published and includes a commitment to prevent and tackle health inequalities, including investment in specialist mental health support for those experiencing homelessness.

Guidance published under the Health and Care Act 2022 recommends that housing and homelessness services should be engaged by Integrated Care Partnerships when developing the strategy that will inform local commissioning decisions made by Integrated Care Boards and upper tier local authorities<sup>41</sup>. Guidance for Health and Wellbeing Boards

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<sup>36</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1103936/Veterans-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1103936/Veterans-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-2024.pdf)

<sup>37</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-funding-and-support-scheme-to-finally-end-armed-forces-veterans-homelessness>

<sup>38</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1116148/Armed\\_Forces\\_Covenant\\_Duty\\_Statutory\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1116148/Armed_Forces_Covenant_Duty_Statutory_Guidance.pdf)

<sup>39</sup><https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng214/resources/integrated-health-and-social-care-for-people-experiencing-homelessness-pdf-66143775200965>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/online-version/overview-and-summary/>

<sup>41</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-preparation-of-integrated-care-strategies/guidance-on-the-preparation-of-integrated-care-strategies>

also references assessing and meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping<sup>42</sup>.

The Adult Social Care White Paper<sup>43</sup>, published in March 2022, includes a commitment to make every decision about care a decision about housing and pledges to increase the supply of supported housing.

### *Substance misuse treatment*

A 10 year Drugs Strategy<sup>44</sup> was published in 2022 which highlights that homelessness and rough sleeping can be both a cause and consequence of substance use. The strategy commits to improve services for people rough sleeping, to provide housing support to those in treatment and recovery, and build the evidence base of housing related needs and the most effective interventions.

The Strategy also includes objectives to break drug supply chains, deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system, and achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

### *Repossession*

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023, the Legal Aid Agency has funded a Housing Loss Prevention and Advice Service<sup>45</sup> throughout England and Wales, which provides:

- Early Legal Advice to anyone at risk of possession proceedings and loss of their home – advice can be provided in relation to Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits issues
- In Court Duty on the day emergency advice and advocacy to anyone facing possession proceedings

The service enables anyone at risk of losing their home or facing possession proceedings to get free legal advice, and representation in court, regardless of their financial circumstances.

## **3.2 Regional policy**

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<sup>42</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-wellbeing-boards-guidance/health-and-wellbeing-boards-guidance>

<sup>43</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform>

<sup>44</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-loss-prevention-advice-service-hlpas>



There are a number of public sector bodies in Nottinghamshire who are directly or indirectly working to prevent homelessness. This section provides a summary of these bodies and their strategic objectives concerning homelessness prevention.

### Nottinghamshire housing authorities

There are five Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies in place across Nottinghamshire:

1. Ashfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24<sup>46</sup>
2. Bassetlaw Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2017-22<sup>47</sup>
3. Mansfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24<sup>48</sup>
4. Newark & Sherwood Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24<sup>49</sup>
5. South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-27<sup>50</sup>

There are a number of common objectives across these strategies:

- Early prevention of homelessness
- Increasing the supply of, access to and sustainability of affordable and quality accommodation
- Ending rough sleeping
- Ensuring support for housing and health needs are available
- Provision of a high quality service to customers

### Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)

The Public Health Team, Adult Social Care Team and Children's Social Care Team each have a number of statutory duties relevant to homelessness prevention.

The following needs assessments and strategies set out NCC's priorities in these areas:

- Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023<sup>51</sup>
- Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028<sup>52</sup>
- Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24<sup>53</sup>
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26<sup>54</sup>
- The Health and Wellbeing Board Framework for Action on Homelessness<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> [Ashfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24](#)

<sup>47</sup> [Bassetlaw Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2017-22](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Mansfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Newark & Sherwood Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24](#)

<sup>50</sup> [South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-27](#)

<sup>51</sup> [director-of-public-health-annual-report-2023.pdf \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>52</sup> [Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028](#)

<sup>53</sup> [Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24](#)

<sup>54</sup> [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26](#)

<sup>55</sup> [The Health and Wellbeing Board Framework for Action on Homelessness](#)



- JSNA Health and Homelessness 2019<sup>56</sup>
- JSNA Substance Misuse: Young People and Adults 2022<sup>57</sup>
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24<sup>58</sup>
- Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-25<sup>59</sup>
- Nottinghamshire Care Leaver Local Offer<sup>60</sup>
- Adult Social Care Strategy 2017<sup>61</sup>
- Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-25<sup>62</sup>

NCC's areas of focus that are related to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping across all these strategies include the following:

- Integrated housing, health and wellbeing commissioning and care pathways
- Funding homeless prevention tools
- Embedding a trauma informed approach
- Provide long-term housing solutions with support for people with experience of severe multiple disadvantage
- Prevention of suicide
- Providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse survivors
- Good physical, emotional and mental health
- Young people transition to independent living
- Ensuring no one leaves a public institution without accommodation
- Work with people with lived experience
- Increase strategic collaboration
- Attract levelling up investment
- Release land for housing development
- Supporting Ukrainian refugees
- Identify early prevention opportunities
- Take a whole system approach
- Providing access to high-quality, specialist and supported accommodation

In addition, Nottinghamshire County Council leads on the development of the Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Supported Accommodation Joint Working Protocol for young people aged 16-21 and Care Leavers up to the age of 25<sup>63</sup>.

### Making Every Adult Matter<sup>64</sup>

<sup>56</sup> [JSNA Health and Homelessness 2019](#)

<sup>57</sup> [JSNA Substance Misuse: Young People and Adults 2022](#)

<sup>58</sup> [Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24](#)

<sup>59</sup> [Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-25](#)

<sup>60</sup> [Nottinghamshire Care Leaver Local Offer](#)

<sup>61</sup> [Adult Social Care Strategy 2017](#)

<sup>62</sup> [Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-25](#)

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/3766405/jointworkingprotocol.docx>

<sup>64</sup> [Making Every Adult Matter](#)

Nottinghamshire joined the MEAM Network in 2022 and will receive support from MEAM to adopt their approach to working with individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage until 2024. The goal of MEAM is that local services adopt a coordinated approach to tackling multiple disadvantage in the area, making permanent changes to the way organisations deliver services to this group. NCC are coordinating this work and CGL are leading on the operational activities. The Nottinghamshire MEAM project will focus on individuals experiencing homelessness, engaging in substance misuse treatment and who are suitable for a Care Act assessment.

### NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System

The Health and Care Act 2022 created Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) as replacements for Clinical Commissioning Groups, and established in law the role of Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) as the committee where health, social care and the voluntary sector and other partners come together as an Integrated Care System (ICS).

One of the aims of the ICS is to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access. The Nottinghamshire Health Inequalities Strategy 2020-24<sup>65</sup> identifies 13 areas for actions including supporting those who suffer mental ill-health, and housing.

The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Strategy 2023-27<sup>66</sup> sets out a vision that every person will enjoy their best possible health and wellbeing. The strategy aims to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access, focusing on those in the most deprived areas, or experiencing severe, multiple disadvantage. The strategy prioritises populations with severe mental illness, homelessness, domestic abuse, severe multiple disadvantage, financial vulnerability and care leavers. The strategy also makes a commitment to embedding a trauma informed approach across the system.

### Mid Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership (PBP)

This partnership brings together health and social care services across Mid Nottinghamshire, their vision is to work together to create happier, healthier communities and reduce the gap in healthy life expectancy. The PBP Place Plan 2023/24<sup>67</sup> priorities addressing key health inequalities in key geographical areas and for groups experiencing multiple disadvantage.

### East Midlands Mayoral Authority (launching May 2024)

The East Midlands Devolution Deal includes the following actions that are relevant to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping:

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<sup>65</sup> [The Health Inequalities Strategy 2020-24](#)

<sup>66</sup> [Integrated Care Strategy 2023-27](#)

<sup>67</sup> [PBP Place Plan 2023/24](#)

- New powers to drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes including compulsory purchase powers and the ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations.
- Over £17 million for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified.
- £18 million capital funding in this Spending Review period to support the delivery of housing priorities and drive Net Zero ambitions in the East Midlands area.

The proposed Deal also identifies other areas of focus to bring into the remit of the new authority in the coming months and years:

- Deliver transformative regeneration and new high-quality housing.
- Tackle local housing challenges including homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Tackle domestic abuse through an improved and system wide holistic approach.
- Develop strong links between the Authority and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to help join up public service delivery and strategies in relation to community safety.
- Develop an ambitious, long term mayoral social mobility strategy, supporting young people through their journey to adulthood.

#### Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Partnership

The partnership has published a Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25<sup>68</sup>, which sets out a vision for Nottinghamshire communities to feel safe from violence and the fear of violence.

One of the strategic objectives is to implement a domestic violence perpetrator programme.

#### Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner

The Commissioner has published a draft Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy<sup>69</sup> which has as its vision to reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls, and to bring more perpetrators to justice and increase support for all survivors.

The strategy includes actions to:

- Provide schools-based healthy relationship programmes
- Provide 'bystander training'
- Increase take up of specialist support
- Ensure a range of trauma informed and gendered support services
- Provide advocacy, therapy and peer support to empower survivor's recovery
- Place lived experience at the heart of service design and delivery

### **3.3 Local policy**

<sup>68</sup> [Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25](#)

<sup>69</sup> [Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#)

This section summarises the strategic priorities of the Council and its partnerships relating to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping.

### Ashfield District Council Corporate Plan 2023-27

The Corporate Plan 2023-27 sets out 6 priorities:

1. Health and Happiness
2. Homes and Housing
3. Economic Growth and Place
4. Cleaner and Greener
5. Safer and Stronger
6. Innovate and Improve

The Health and Happiness priority includes an ambition to address key health inequalities and prioritise areas and people in most need.

The Homes and Housing ambitions include:

- Housing development
- Tackling disrepair and poor housing conditions
- Reduce and preventing homelessness

The Safer and Stronger priorities are:

- A safer district
- Health inequalities

### Homefinder Lettings Policy 2019<sup>70</sup>

Homefinder is the sub-regional choice based lettings scheme that operates across Ashfield and Mansfield. The overall aim of the Homefinder Lettings Policy is to ensure that all social housing within the Ashfield and Mansfield areas is allocated fairly and objectively to those with the greatest housing need.

### Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy 2023-25<sup>71</sup>

This Strategy aims to maximise the delivery of affordable housing by the Council, Housing Associations and private developers in the District.

### Ashfield Community Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-22<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> [Homefinder Lettings Policy 2019](#)

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/housing-strategy-research/affordable-housing-delivery-strategy-2021-to-2023/>

<sup>72</sup> [Ashfield Community Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-22](#)

The Ashfield Community Safety Partnership is a multi-agency body responsible for tackling and addressing crime and disorder in Ashfield. The partnership's vision is to make Ashfield communities safer and residents feel safer. It focuses on 5 priority areas and 2 cross cutting themes:

1. Anti social behaviour
2. Vulnerable people (including victims of modern slavery)
3. Domestic abuse
4. Violence
5. Integrated working
6. Alcohol and substance misuse
7. Mental health

### Ashfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership Strategy 2021-25<sup>73</sup>

This strategy sets out a vision for everyone who lives in Ashfield to lead a healthy and happy life.

It identifies 3 target priority areas and 4 target populations:

1. Disabled people, including those living with a long term health condition
2. Adults experiencing multiple disadvantage
3. Low income families, including the children and young people within them
4. Residents significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic

### Strategic Tenancy Strategy 2018

A requirement of the Localism Act 2011, the aims of this strategy are:

- To ensure that social housing providers operating in Ashfield offer the most secure form of tenure compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of the individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.
- To ensure that social housing providers operating in Ashfield support the Council in meeting its statutory obligations and vision for the District.
- To ensure that homes let at Affordable Rent remain affordable for low income households, either in or out of work, whilst enabling the supply of new properties in Ashfield.
- To ensure social housing tenants are supported to achieve their housing aspirations and not penalised for a change in their circumstances.
- To ensure households seeking a home in Ashfield can access information on what it means to be offered a fixed term tenancy.

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<sup>73</sup> [Ashfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership Strategy 2021-25](#)

## Temporary Accommodation Policy 2020<sup>74</sup>

This policy sets out the Council's approach to the procurement and allocation of temporary accommodation.

It explains the circumstances when Bed & Breakfast accommodation will be used, the minimum standards temporary accommodation will meet and when out of are accommodation will be used.

Finally, it sets out the process for offering accommodation and how any refusals will be handled.

DRAFT

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<sup>74</sup>[https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/ywabias3/temporary-accommodation-policy-2020.docx#:~:text=The%20Council%20has%20a%20duty,as%20amended\)%20\(HA96\).](https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/ywabias3/temporary-accommodation-policy-2020.docx#:~:text=The%20Council%20has%20a%20duty,as%20amended)%20(HA96).)

#### **4.Ashfield housing market**

This section provides an overview of the key features of the Ashfield housing market and the indicators of affordability, availability and suitability of housing, all of which have an impact on homelessness.

The Ashfield housing market can be summarised as follows:

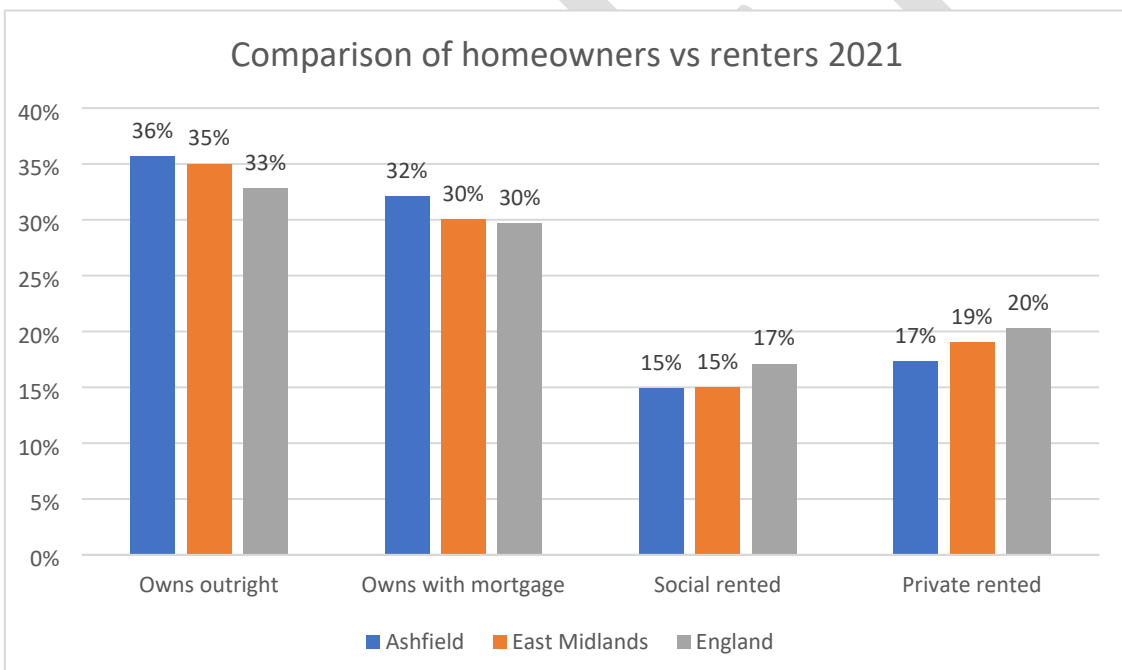
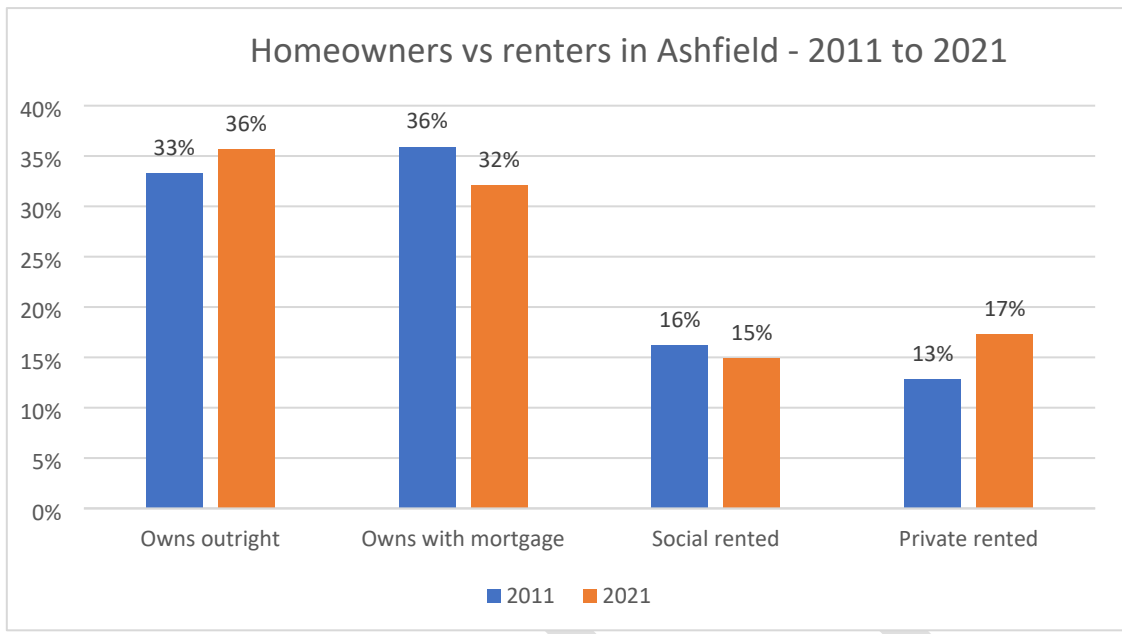
- in Ashfield there are two growing tenure types (outright ownership and private renting) and two shrinking tenures (ownership with a mortgage and social renting).
- The supported housing sector accounts for less than 1% of the housing market
- At any one time, around 1% of all dwellings in Ashfield have been empty for 6 months or more
- There are around 150 HMOs in Ashfield
- The median house price affordability ratio worsening, with house prices around 6 times the average Ashfield income
- Median rental price affordability is more than 3 times the average Ashfield income
- It would take around 7.5 years for someone in Ashfield to save a 20% deposit
- The gap between private rents and LHA rates ranges from £51pcm to £892pcm
- 15% of Ashfield residents are income deprived – Ashfield is ranked 73<sup>rd</sup> most income-deprived area in England and 18 neighbourhoods are in the 20% most income-deprived areas in England.
- Between 2018-2023, 242 new affordable homes have been developed on large sites, this is 23% of all homes delivered. Each year 237 new affordable homes are required.
- Around 5-7% of homes owned by the Council are relet each year
- Demand for homes owned by the Council has increased by 76%
- Nationally the turnover of PRS properties has reduced by 38% and demand has increase by 46%

#### Tenure

##### *Homeowners vs renters*

In Ashfield there are two growing tenure types (outright ownership and private renting) and two shrinking tenures (ownership with a mortgage and social renting).

There are slightly more homeowners and slightly fewer renters in Ashfield compared to regional and national trends.



### *Supported housing*

A snapshot analysis of Housing Benefit claims in August 2022 shows that there are around 300 supported housing bedspaces in Ashfield.

### *Empty homes*



There are typically 500 long-term empty properties at any one time in Ashfield<sup>75</sup>. This represents around 1% of all dwellings in Ashfield.

### *Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)*

There are around 150 HMOs in Ashfield, of which 100 require a license.

### *Non-dependent children living at home*

The latest Census data shows a 10% increase in non-dependent children still living in the family home in Ashfield since 2011. Nationally, there has been a 15% increase<sup>76</sup>.

### *Decent Homes*

The English Housing Survey 2022 estimates that 14% of occupied homes fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard, the majority of these are in the PRS (23%), while the social rented sector has the fewest (10%).

### Affordability

#### *Housing costs as a percentage of household income*

The English Housing Survey<sup>77</sup> provides a comparison of the affordability of each tenure type. Owner occupation is the most affordable tenure type, and private renting is the least affordable, though there has been some convergence between the three tenure types, with the cost of owner occupation increasing, and the cost of private renting slightly decreasing.

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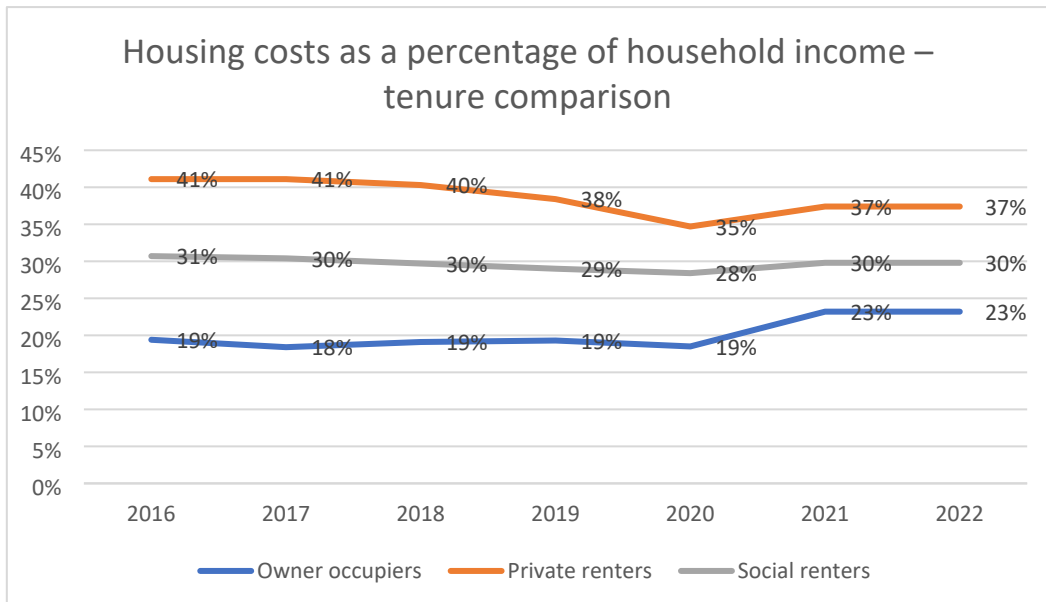
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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1140982/LT615\\_16.03.23.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1140982/LT615_16.03.23.ods)

76

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/articles/livingarrangementsofpeopleinenglandandwales/census2021>

<sup>77</sup> Table 1.12 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report>

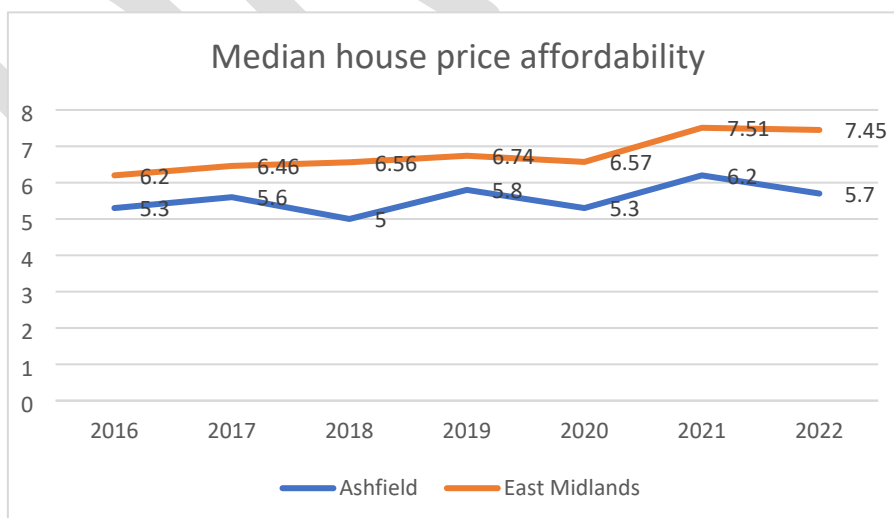


### House price to earnings ratio

House price to earnings ratios are a frequently used method of demonstrating housing affordability, however, there are a number of limitations to this method, including: no consideration of interest rate changes, no distinction between cost of buying and cost of owning, ignores size of the local rental market, disregards self-employed earners and multi-earner households<sup>78</sup>.

Additionally, even in the lowest ratio markets, there is still a percentage of the renting population that cannot afford to buy a property.

Between 2016 and 2022, both the median housing affordability ratios for Ashfield and the East Midlands have been worsening.



<sup>78</sup><https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%20RA%20Understanding%20Local%20Housing%20Markets%20June%202019.pdf>

### Home ownership affordability

Until 2022, the affordability of home ownership has been good as a result of low mortgage rates, longer mortgage terms, affordable rents and higher income buyers.

The biggest barrier to home-ownership is the cost of buying, i.e. the deposit. Nationally, around 65% of mortgages taken out are at a loan-to-value ratio of 75% or less. A further 30% are at a ratio of 76-90%<sup>79</sup>. Nationwide have estimated that it would take almost 9 years for someone in the East Midlands earning the typical wage to save a 20% deposit for an average first time buyer property, assuming they set aside 15% of their monthly take-home pay<sup>80</sup>. Saving the same amount in Ashfield would take around 7.5 years<sup>81</sup>

A significant number of first time buyers (34%) had help raising a deposit in 2019/20, either a gift or loan from friends or family, or inheritance.

### Private rents to earnings ratio

There is limited publicly available data on the cost of renting, a snapshot<sup>82</sup> of properties available to rent in Ashfield is provided below. The table also shows the gaps between the average market rents and the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate available.

	Kirkby	Sutton	Hucknall	Selston	Ashfield average
<b>For rent</b>					
1 bed	£400	£482	£595	£650	£532
LHA gap	£51	£133	£126	£181	
2 bed	£662	£650	£789	£663	£691
LHA gap	£213	£201	£240	£114	
3 bed	£825	£774	£918	£850	£842
LHA gap	£351	£300	£295	£227	
4 bed	£1,000	-	£1,220	£995	£1,072
LHA gap	£327		£422	£197	
5 bed	-	-	£1,690	-	£1,690
LHA gap			£892		

The private renting affordability ratio for Ashfield is 3.2<sup>83</sup>

### Deprivation

<sup>79</sup> <https://builtplace.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/MLAR-Release-December-2022.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.nationwidehousepriceindex.co.uk/reports/affordability-special-report-raising-a-deposit-still-the-biggest-hurdle-for-first-time-buyers-despite-affordability-becoming-more-stretched>

<sup>81</sup> Based on saving 15% of take home pay from average earnings of £30,899. No allowance for inflation has been made.

<sup>82</sup> [https://www.home.co.uk/for\\_rent/current\\_rents\\_by\\_town.htm?where=ashfield](https://www.home.co.uk/for_rent/current_rents_by_town.htm?where=ashfield) accessed May 2022

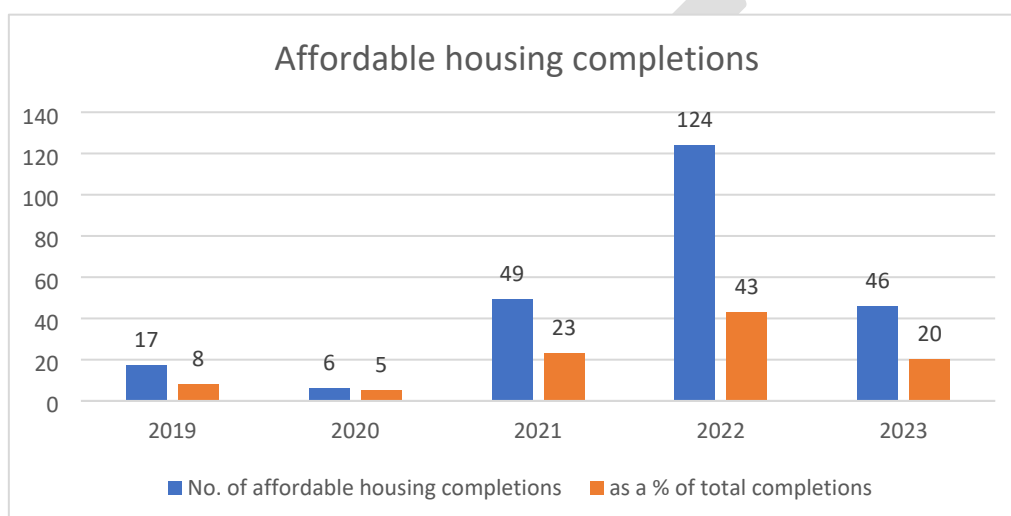
<sup>83</sup> Based on average of all rents included in the above table and average earnings of £30,899.

In Ashfield, 15.2% of the population was income-deprived in 2019 and Ashfield is ranked the 73<sup>rd</sup> most income-deprived in England. 18 Ashfield neighbourhoods are in the 20% most-income deprived areas in England<sup>84</sup>, and 5 are in the 20% least income-deprived.

## Supply

### New supply

242 new affordable homes have been completed in Ashfield on large sites between 2019 and 2023<sup>85</sup>. This represents 23% of all large site completions. Expected delivery of housing on all sites in Ashfield between 2024 – 2029 is 1,814 units.



### Turnover

Whilst building new homes is essential to making housing available for everyone that needs it, new homes only account for 10-12% of all residential transactions and so the second-hand market tends to provide most of the available housing supply at any given time<sup>86</sup>. This means turnover of existing homes is key for meeting demand.

Every year, there is a turnover of around 4% of the national home-ownership market. In the last 5 years, between 5 – 7% of local authority owned homes nationally have been relet each year<sup>87</sup>. There is a similar turnover rate in Ashfield.

In December 2022, Zoopla reported that the number of PRS homes available was 38% below the five-year average<sup>88</sup>.

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc1371/#/E07000170>

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/hppbwa5g/housing-land-monitoring-report-april-2023-accessibility-checked.docx>

<sup>86</sup>

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%20RA%20Understanding%20Local%20Housing%20Markets%20June%202019.pdf>

<sup>87</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1129498/LT602 ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1129498/LT602 ods)

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/discover/property-news/rental-market-report-december-2022-number-of-homes-available-for-rent-hits-40-below-average/>

## Demand

### *New homes*

The Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Housing Needs Assessment 2020 identified 481 new homes are required each year in Ashfield, of which 237 affordable rented homes are required. As such, there is a shortfall of 591 homes based on the 5 year supply forecast given above. This does not take into consideration any supply backlogs from previous years.

### *Social housing*

In the last 5 years, demand for social housing in Ashfield has increased by 76%, based on the average number of bids for homes advertised on Homefinder. In addition, there is now greater demand from families in urgent housing need with almost all 3 bedroom homes available in 2022/23 being let to families in Band 1, compared to around 60% of lets in 2018/19.

### *PRS*

In December 2022, Zoopla reported that the demand for PRS homes was 46% above normal levels<sup>89</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/discover/property-news/rental-market-report-december-2022-number-of-homes-available-for-rent-hits-40-below-average/>

## **5. Future levels of homelessness in Ashfield**

This section identifies the key factors that have a strong causal link with homelessness. The Housing Options Service is not able to influence future levels of homelessness but can use this information to guide the allocation and prioritisation of resources.

Academic literature traditionally divides the causes of homelessness between structural and individual factors<sup>90</sup>:

- Structural factors are wider societal and economic issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals, such as housing and labour market conditions, a weak welfare benefits system and rising levels of poverty.
- Individual factors apply to the personal circumstances of a homeless person and may include personal crisis, traumatic events, mental health, addiction challenges, relationship problems.

Recent academic literature has adopted a blended approach that acknowledges structural factors create the conditions within which homelessness will occur, and individual factors mean some people are more susceptible to structural forces.

Research<sup>91</sup> commissioned by DLUHC on the causes of homelessness and rough sleeping identified the different combinations of structural and individual factors affecting: families who are homeless, single people who are homeless, and those rough sleeping, as detailed in the images below:

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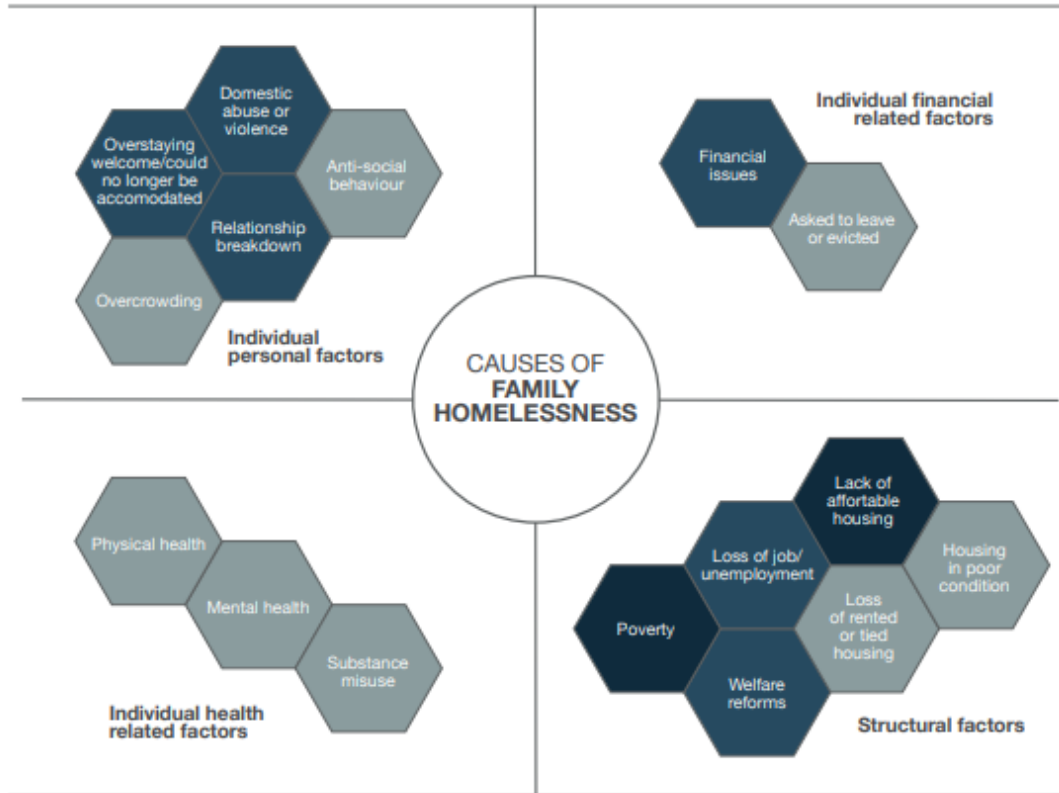
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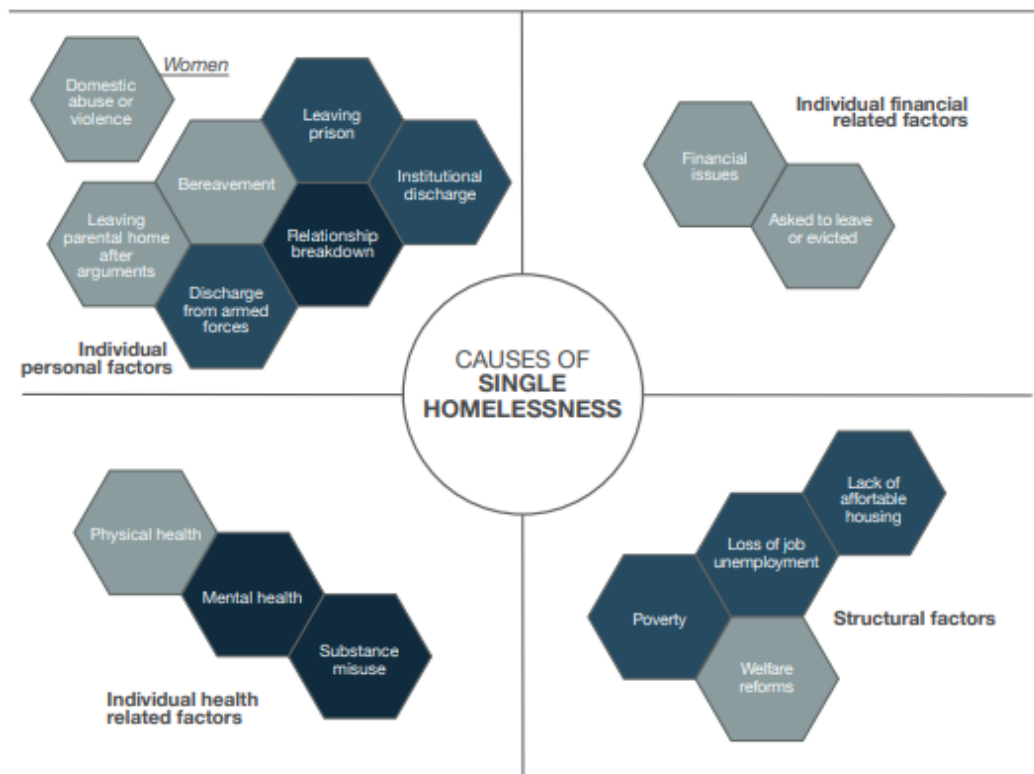
## Family Homelessness

● Strong evidence ● Medium evidence ● Weak evidence



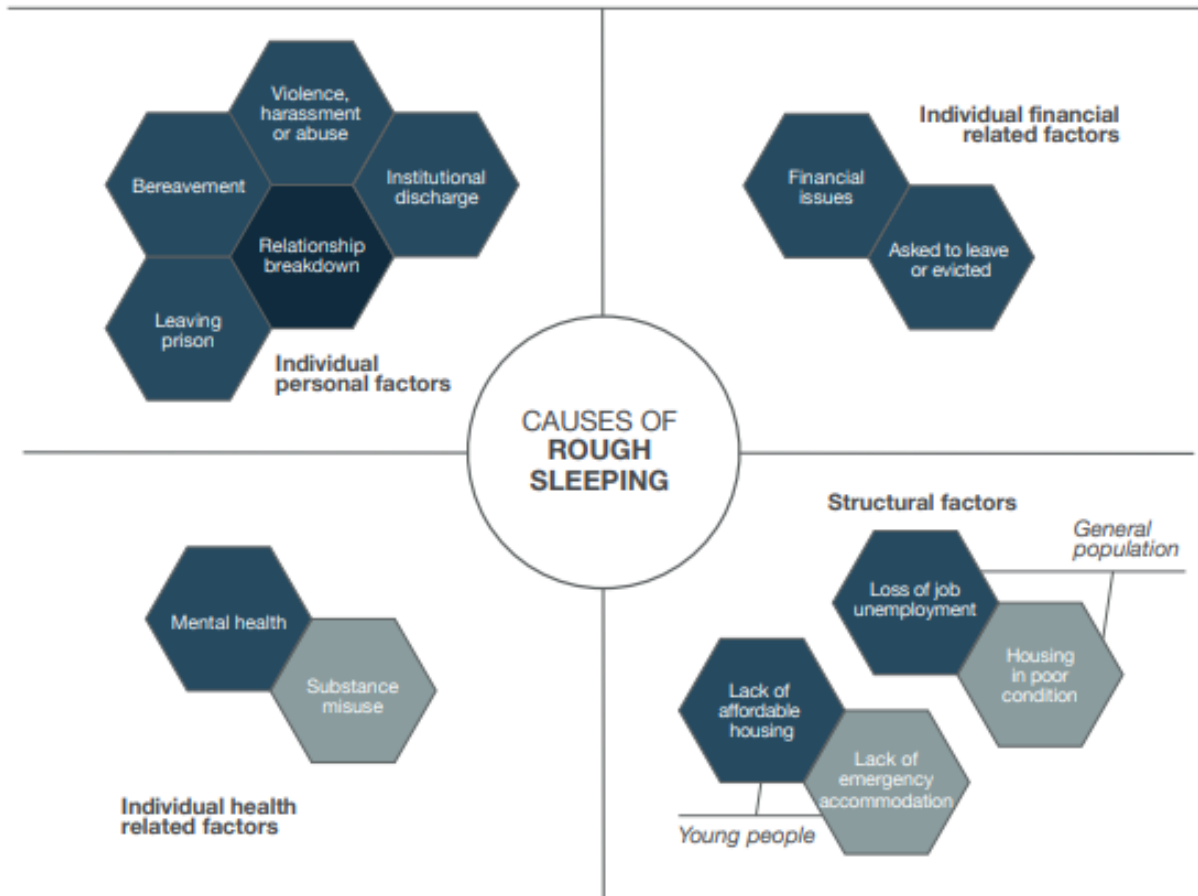
## Single Homelessness

● Strong evidence ● Medium evidence ● Weak evidence



## ➤ Rough Sleeping

● Strong evidence ● Medium evidence ● Weak evidence



Of the structural factors, research has identified that childhood poverty is a “powerful predictor”<sup>92</sup> of homelessness, though, as highlighted above, the causation of homelessness is complex and there is no single trigger – structural and individual factors combine in differing ways, producing different outcomes, not all of which include homelessness. Of all the structural factors, housing market trends appear to have the most direct impact on levels of homelessness.

The Homelessness Monitor<sup>93</sup>, published annually by Crisis, has developed a model based on these structural factors to project the amount of “core homelessness”<sup>94</sup> to 2041. The 2023 report projects that core homelessness in the Midlands will rise by 5% between 2022 and 2024, and between 2024 and 2041 will ease slightly.

Estimates of child poverty are also available; the End Child Poverty Coalition<sup>95</sup> has estimated the rate of child poverty in Ashfield between 2014 - 2021 was between 26% and 31%.

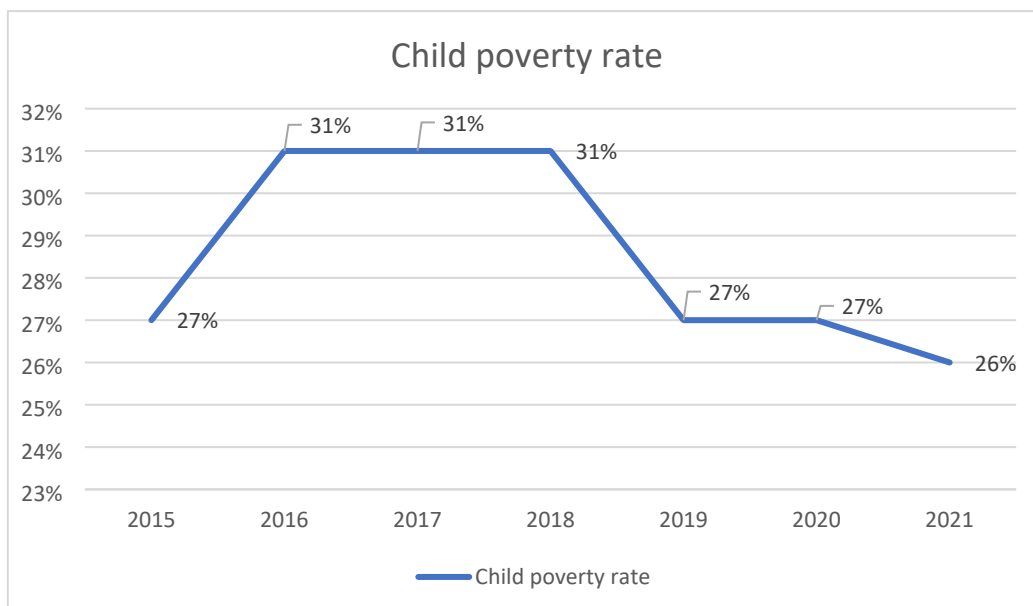
<sup>92</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673037.2017.1344957>

<sup>93</sup> [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/utehvxat/homelessness-monitor-england\\_report-2023\\_v11.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/utehvxat/homelessness-monitor-england_report-2023_v11.pdf)

<sup>94</sup> This term includes those rough sleeping, in unconventional accommodation, hostels, unsuitable temporary accommodation and sofa surfing.

<sup>95</sup> <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>





The Resolution Foundation<sup>96</sup> have forecast that relative child poverty will increase to around 31% by 2026/27 (a 20% increase on the 2020/21 figure above), but for families with 3 or more children that increases to between 50% and 77%. This variation in impact is attributed to the caps within the welfare benefit system for larger families.

Based on the above projections of core homelessness levels and child poverty, as well as the housing market trends discussed in an earlier section, a rise in homelessness in Ashfield between 2024 – 2029 is anticipated.

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2023/01/Living-Standards-Outlook-2023.pdf>

## **6. Current levels of homelessness in Ashfield**

This section sets out the levels of homelessness in Ashfield between April 2020 and March 2023, as detailed in the Homeless Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) data sets published by DLUHC. This data can be summarised as follows:

- There has been a 21% increase in the number of Ashfield households being assessed for homelessness advice and assistance over the last 4 years.
- There has been an 85% increase in the number of main duty accepted decisions in the last 4 years.
- Loss of an assured shorthold tenancy is the leading cause of homelessness in Ashfield
- Domestic abuse is a significant cause of homelessness in Ashfield
- Close to half of homeless households have one or more support needs, these are typically due to mental health problems, physical health problems and experiencing domestic abuse
- The majority of requests for assistance are from single female parent households and single male households.
- The majority of lead applicants are aged 25-34, and 85% are White British
- In 2022/23, 55% of prevention cases and 26% of relief cases either stayed in existing accommodation or secured alternative accommodation
- In 2022/23, of those who secured accommodation, 49% of prevention cases, 70% of relief cases and 85% of main duty cases moved into social housing
- Use of bed and breakfast to provide emergency accommodation has increased by 96% over the last 4 years.
- In 2022/23, a third of all households seeking assistance were placed in bed and breakfast.
- Use of bed and breakfast for households with families has increased by 340% in the last 4 years.
- No households with children have stayed in B&B for more than 6 weeks and no 16 or 17 year old customers have been placed in B&B.
- The average length of stay for all households in temporary accommodation is around 3 months; for households with children, it is around 4 months.
- Ashfield's use of temporary accommodation per 1,000 households is around half the regional rate and a quarter of the national rate.
- On average in 2022/23, 10 people were found rough sleeping each month, of which 3 were new to the streets.

When considering the levels of homelessness between 2019 and 2023, it is important to consider the below policy context that affected trends:

- The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 came into effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018
- Between April 2019 and October 2020, H-CLIC statistics published by DLUHC were categorised as experimental, meaning that the data collection was still in the testing and development phase and may be somewhat inaccurate.
- On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the first Covid-19 lockdown began in England

- On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, MHCLG (now DLUHC) asked all local authorities to provide safe accommodation to all rough sleepers by the end of the week. This became known as the Everyone In initiative.
- The National Probation Service established Homeless Prevention Taskforces in March 2020 and these have continued post-Covid.
- From May 2020, the requirements of the Everyone In initiative were amended, and local authorities given more discretion in how it was applied.
- A moratorium on evictions from the private rented and social rented sectors was in place between 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.
- After 16 months of restrictions, all lockdowns laws<sup>97</sup> were brought to an end on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- Between March 2020 and March 2021, there were 22 funding announcements totalling around £11bn<sup>98</sup> by DLUHC relating to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping during Covid-19.
- In February 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine began and the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022.
- In December 2021, the Bank of England raised interest rates for the first time since August 2018. Rates have not exceeded 1% since January 2009; as at November 2023 rates were 5.25%
- A cost-of-living crisis began in late 2021, with the annual rate of inflation reaching a 41 year high of 11.1%<sup>99</sup>

### *Total initial assessments*

There has been a 21% increase in the number of Ashfield households being assessed for homelessness advice and assistance over the last 4 years. This is comparable to regional trends (+20%) but is significantly higher than the national trend (+2%).

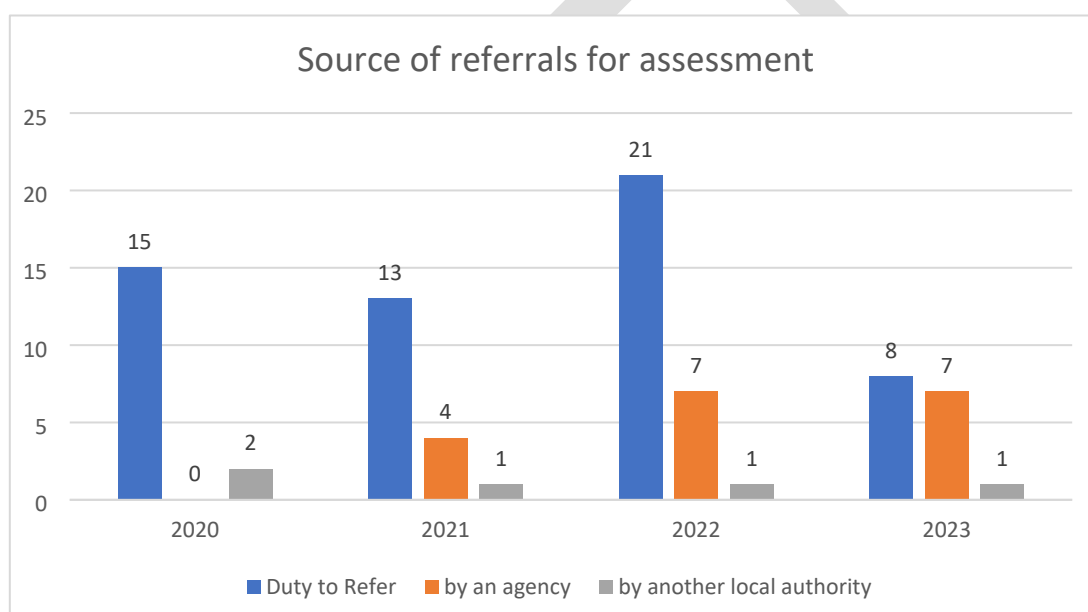
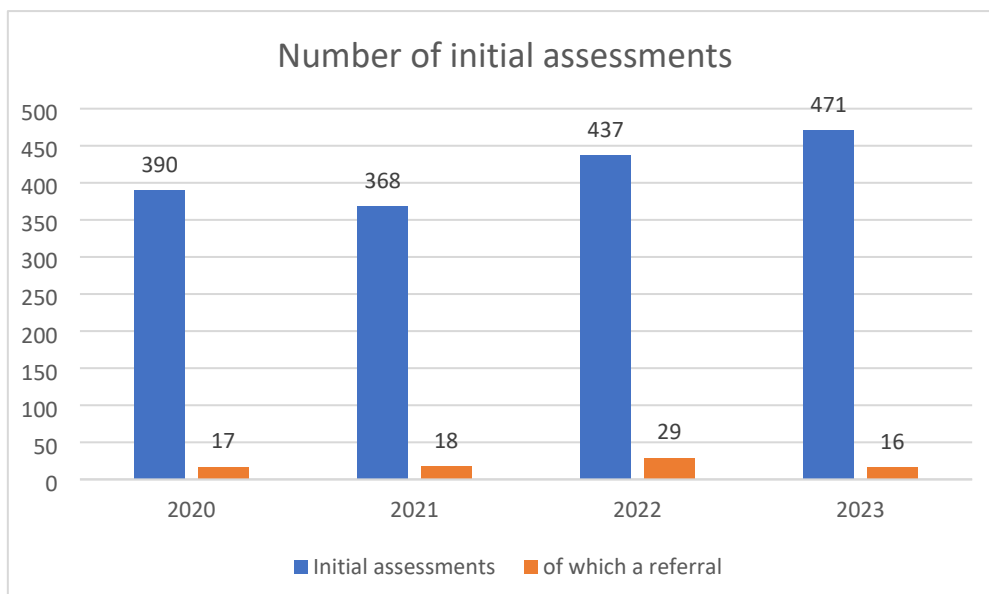
A very small number of households are referred to us for assessment under the Duty to Refer or by another local authority.

<sup>97</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9068/CBP-9068.pdf>

<sup>98</sup>

[https://tfl.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/Homelessness\\_and\\_rough\\_sleeping\\_in\\_the\\_time\\_of\\_COVID19\\_-\\_LSE\\_London\\_May\\_2021.pdf](https://tfl.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/Homelessness_and_rough_sleeping_in_the_time_of_COVID19_-_LSE_London_May_2021.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9428/>



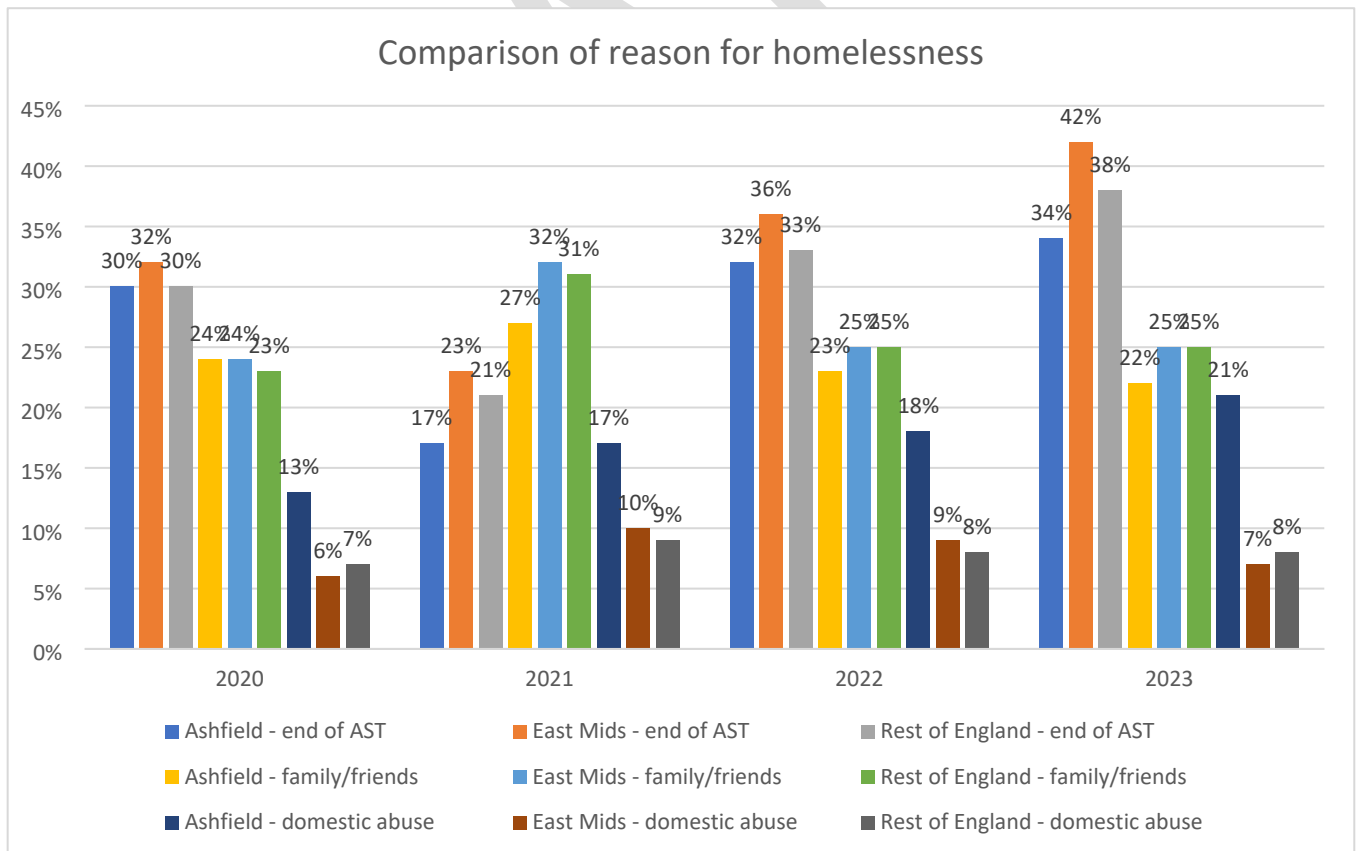
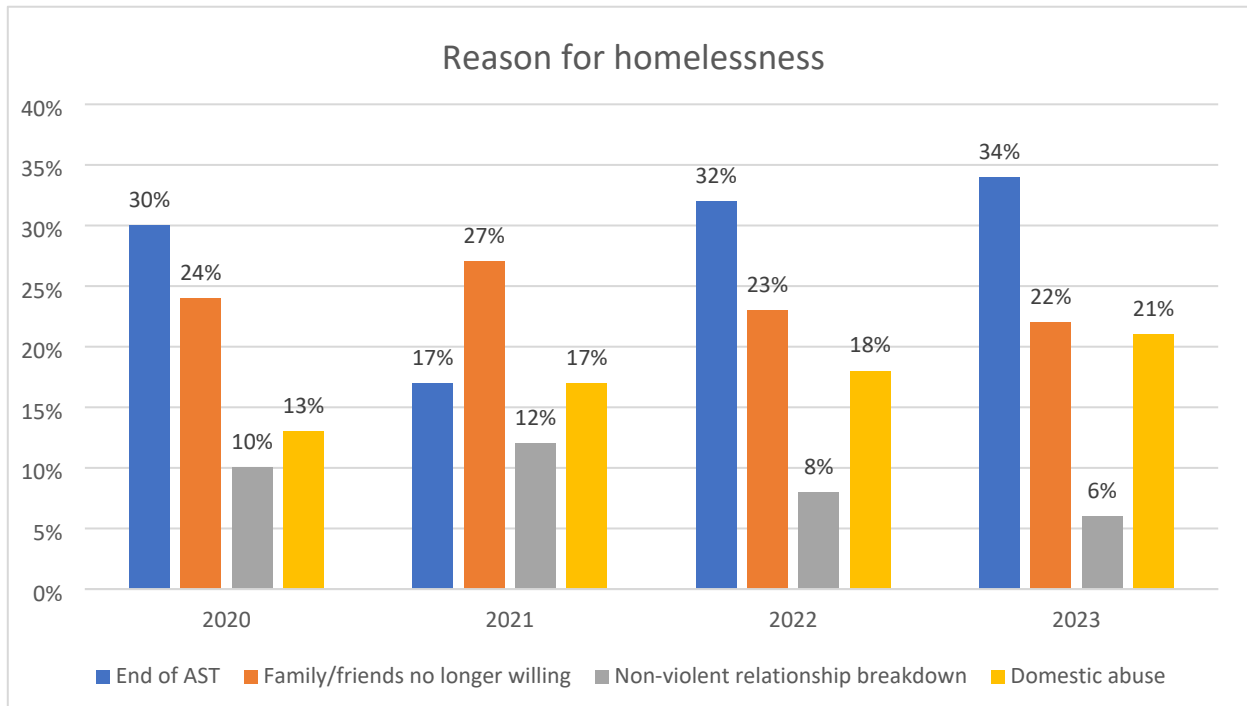
### *Reason for homelessness*

The leading cause of homelessness is loss of an assured shorthold tenancy (AST), with around a third of households typically facing homelessness for this reason. Regionally and nationally, end of AST is also the leading cause of homelessness, though this has grown at a faster rate than in Ashfield in the last 2 years.

Friends and family no longer willing to provide accommodation is the second cause of homelessness; there has been a slight reduction in the proportion of households facing homelessness for this reason in the last 2 years. This is comparable to regional and national trends.

Experiencing domestic abuse is a significant cause of homelessness and an increasing number of households are homeless for this reason. Ashfield has a much higher rate of

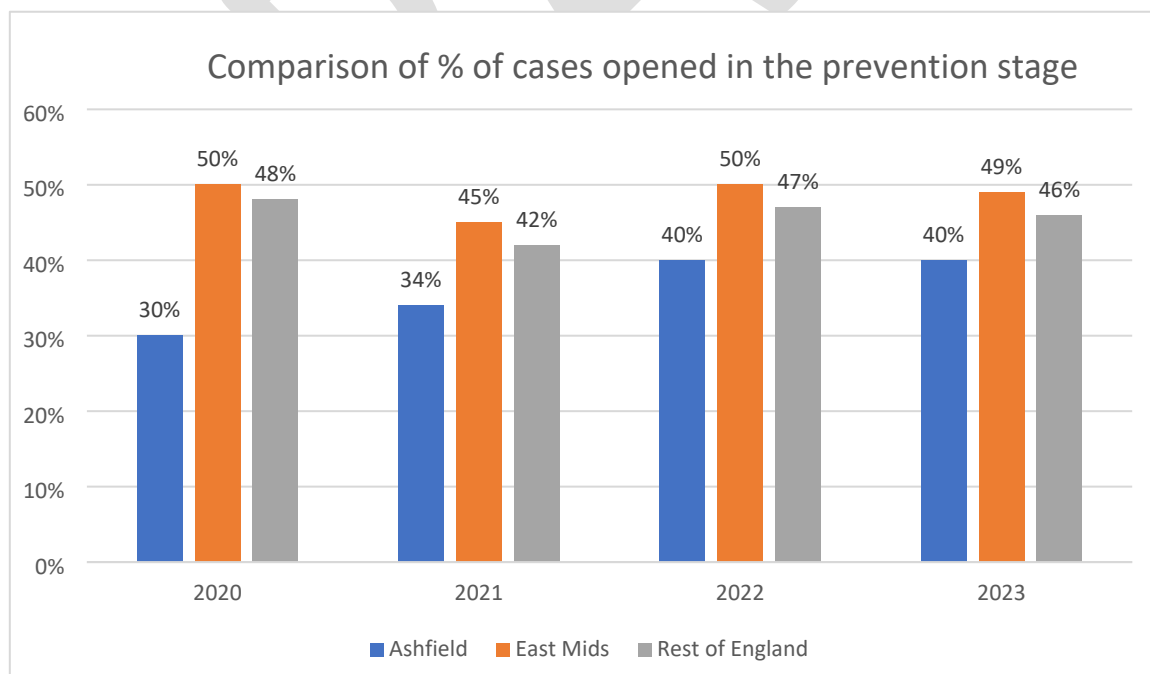
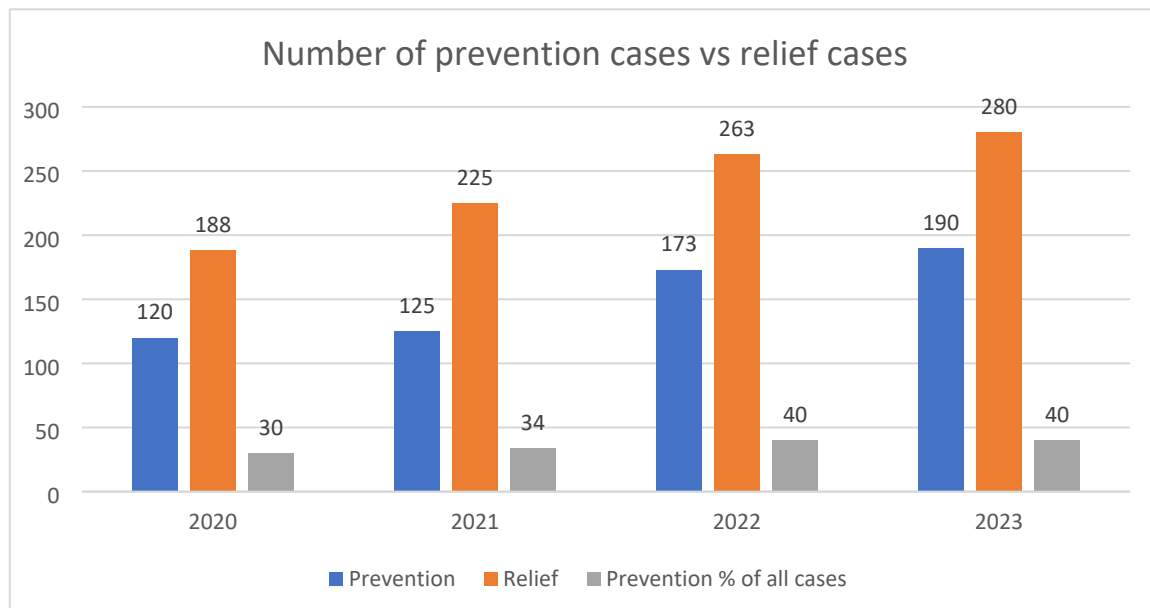
homelessness resulting from domestic abuse than regionally or nationally. In 2022/23, the rate was three times higher in Ashfield than in the East Midlands.



*Prevention vs relief*

More households approach us for assistance when they are already experiencing homelessness (the relief stage) than when they are threatened with homelessness (the prevention stage). Though it is worth noting that during Oct 2022 – April 2023, an almost equal number of households contacted us for help in both stages (136 compared to 146).

Regionally and nationally, a greater proportion of households seek assistance in the prevention stage, though Ashfield's performance in this area has improved in the last 2 years.

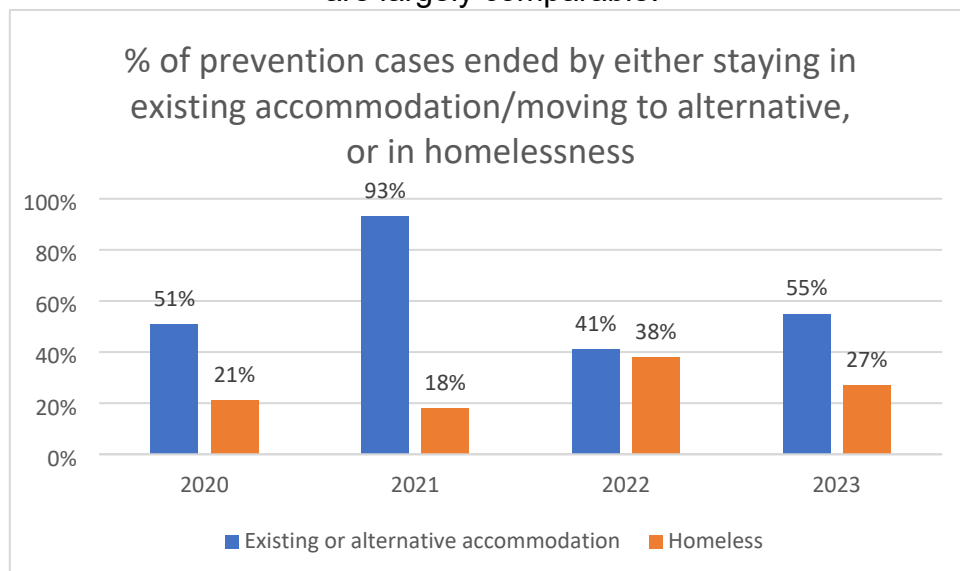


*Prevention duty outcomes*

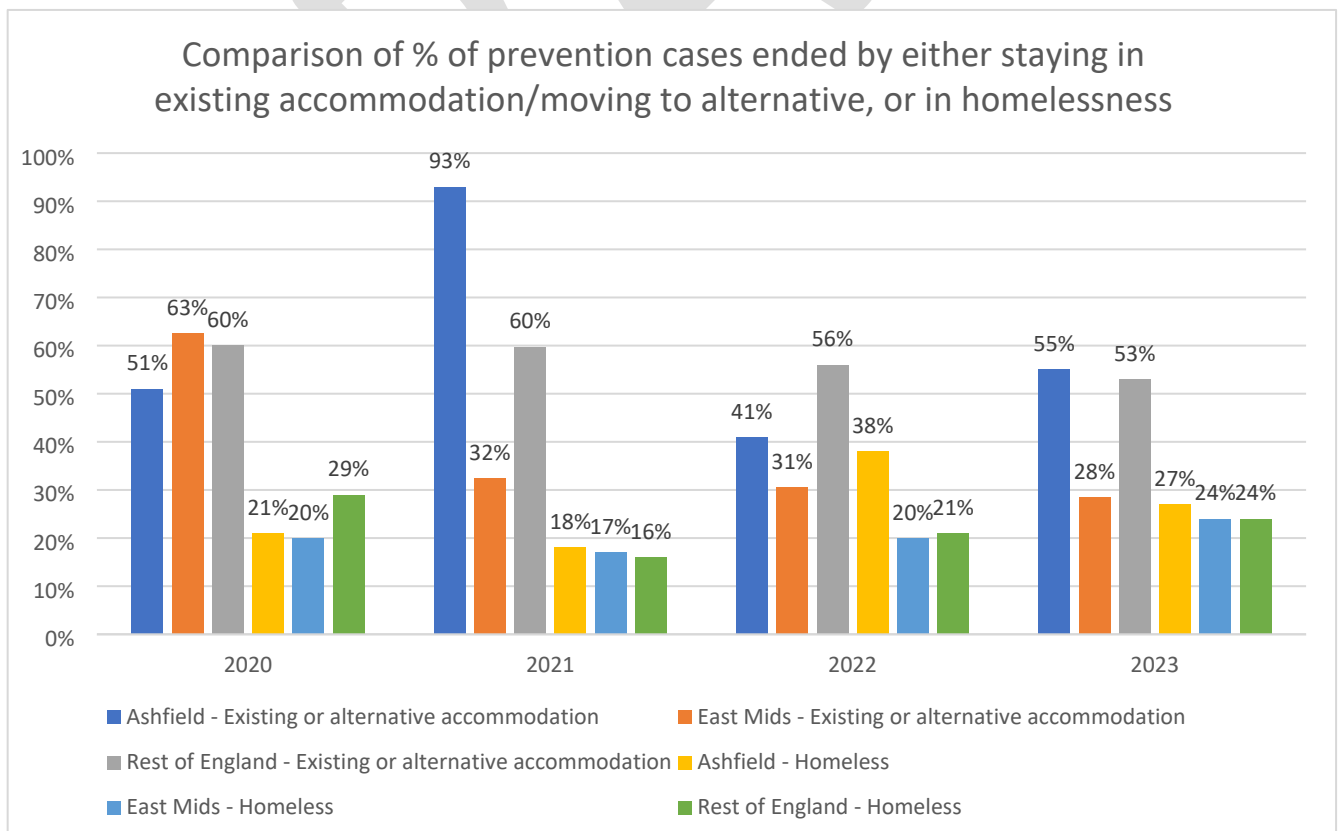
The majority of prevention stage cases are ended either by staying in their existing accommodation or moving to alternative accommodation, or by becoming homeless and subsequently moving into the relief stage.

With the exception of 2020/21, Ashfield’s performance in ending prevention cases through an accommodation outcome have been similar to national trends and proportions, whereas compared to regional trends, there are significant differences.

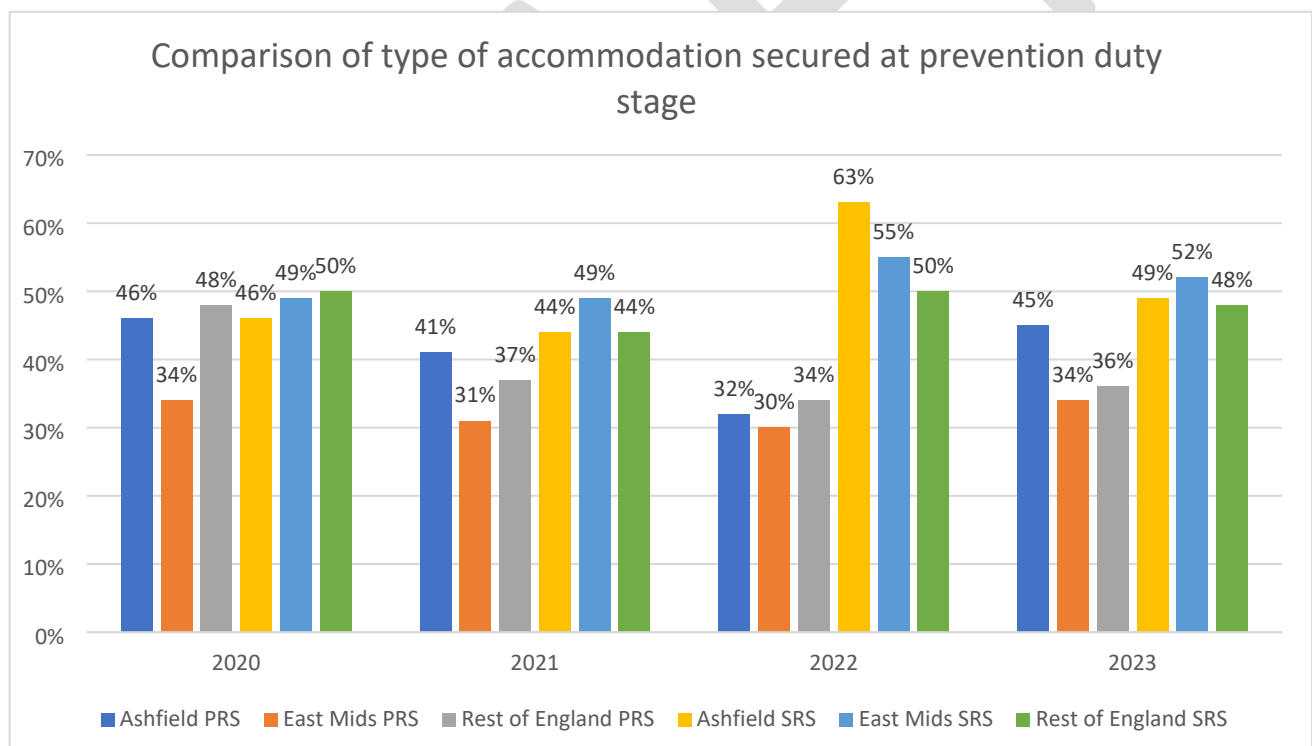
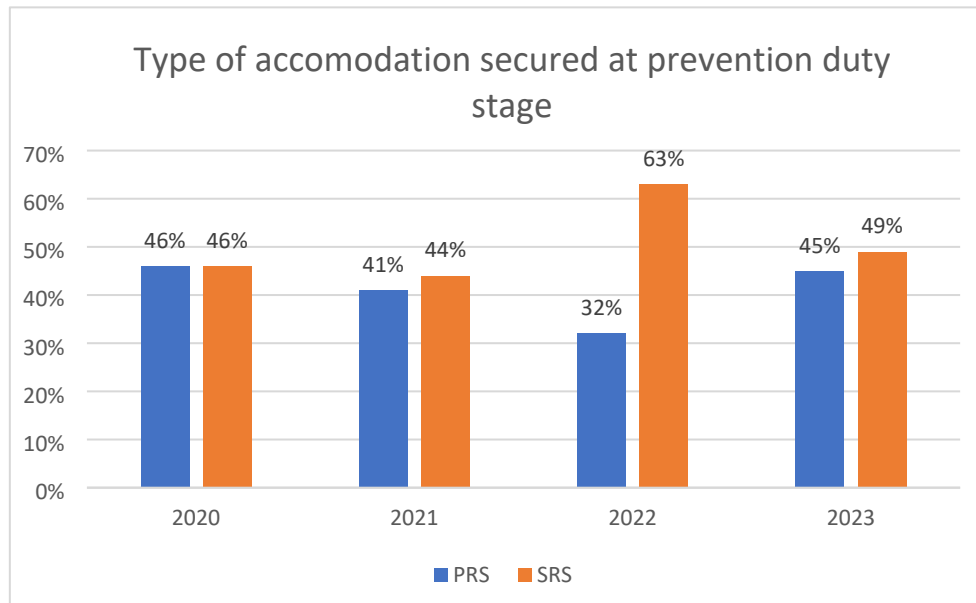
Trends in all three areas regarding prevention cases ending with a homelessness outcome are largely comparable.



Note figures do not add up to 100% as not all reasons cases are ended are shown

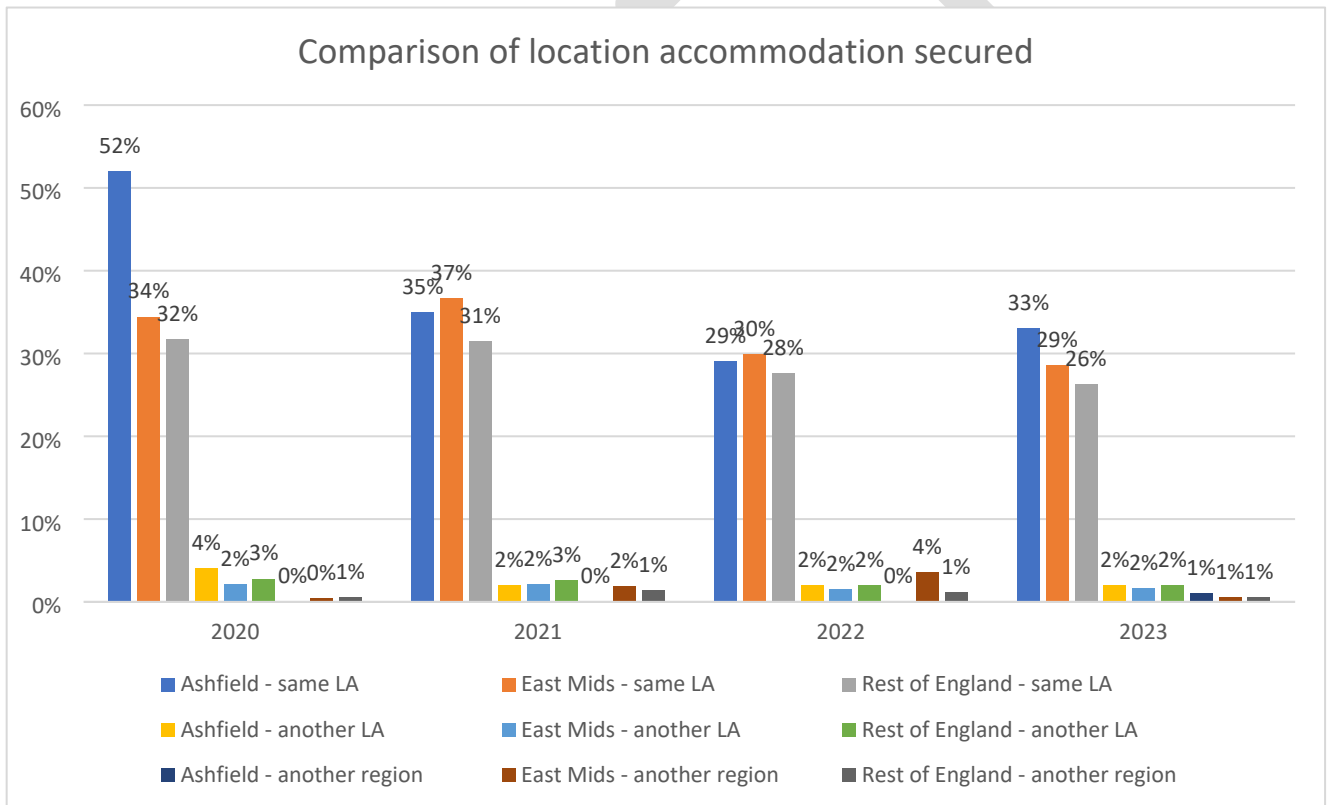
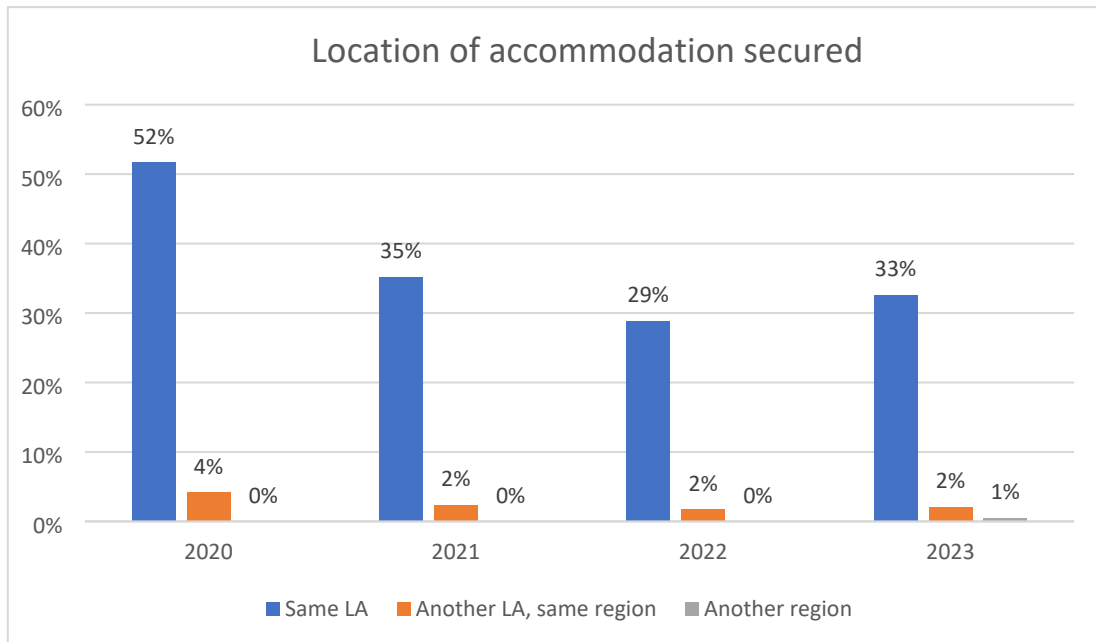


With the exception of 2021/22, of those staying in existing or moving to alternative accommodation, a similar percentage of households move into the private rented sector as the social rented sector. This is broadly true regionally and nationally also.



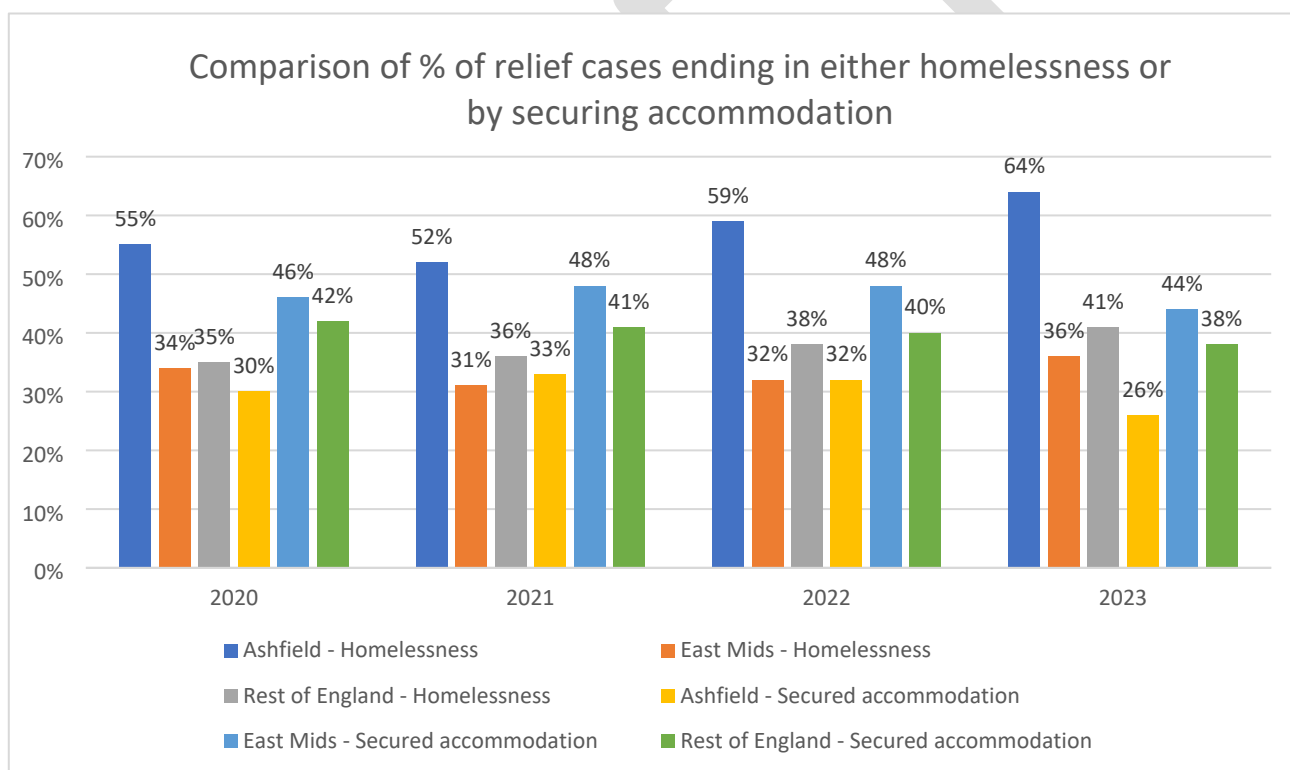
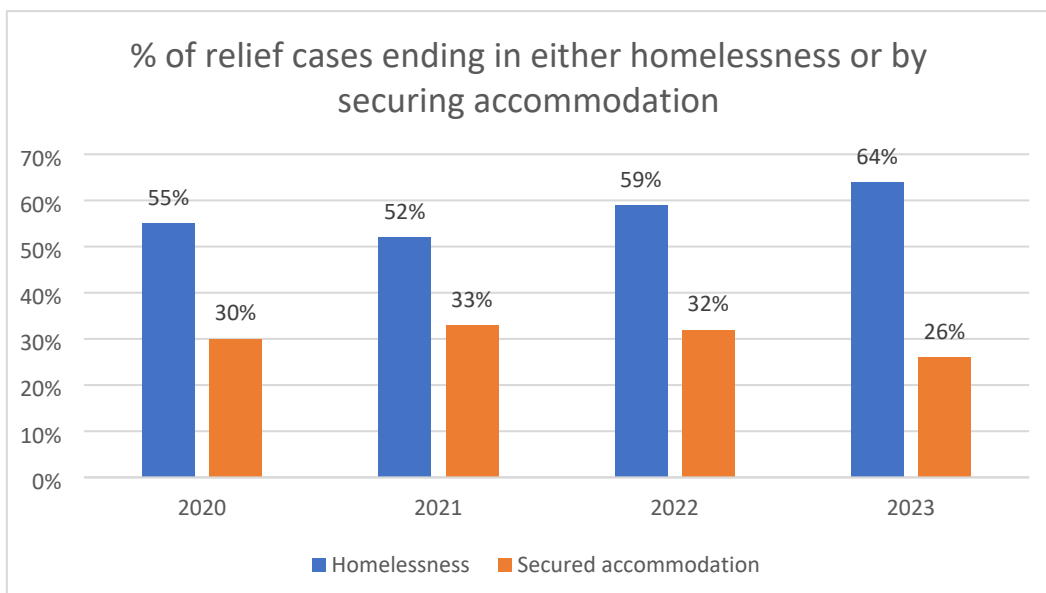
Around a third of households secured accommodation with Ashfield, with only a small number moving into other part of Nottinghamshire or England. However, there is a large number of households where the location of their accommodation is unknown. This is in line with regional and national trends.



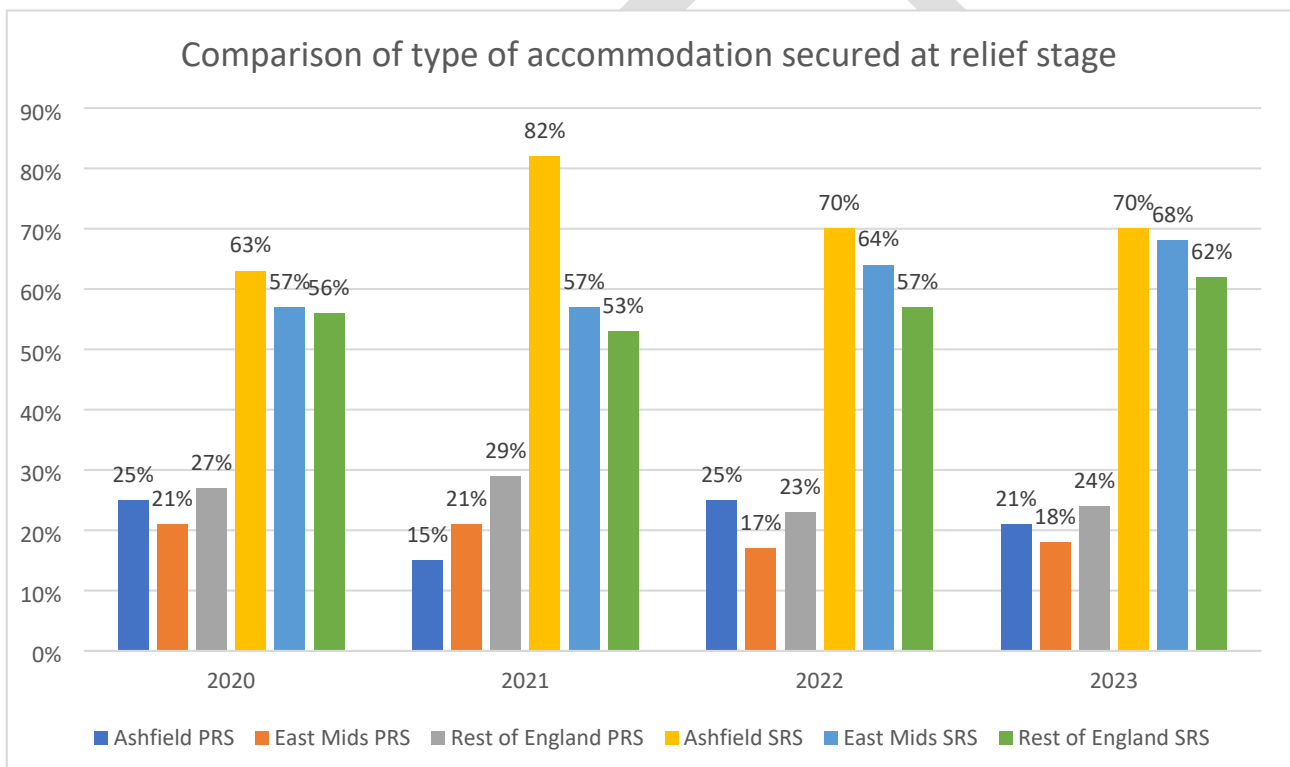
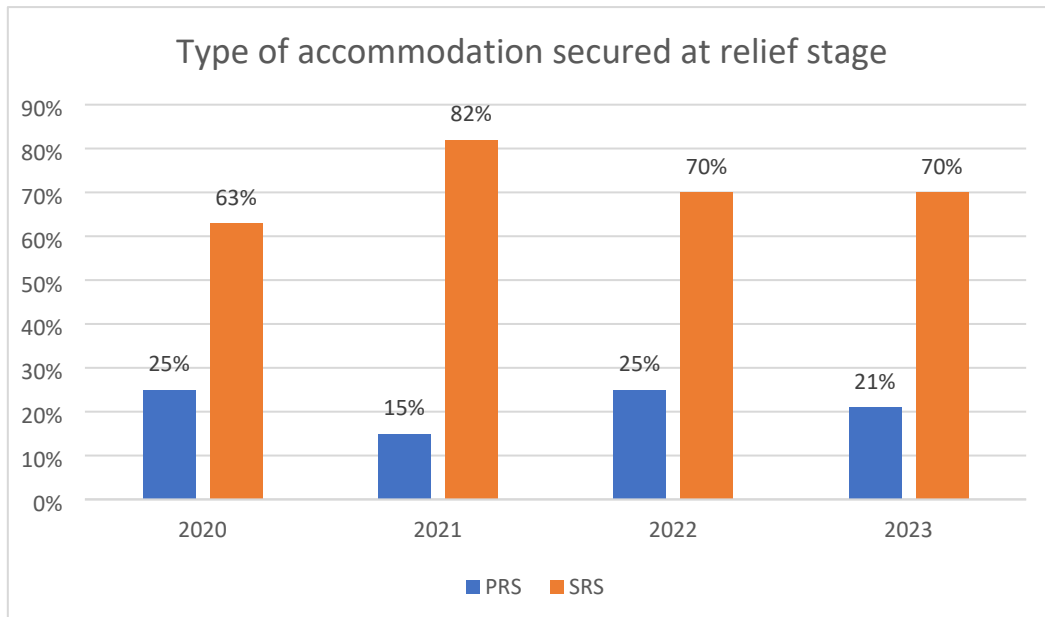


### *Relief duty outcomes*

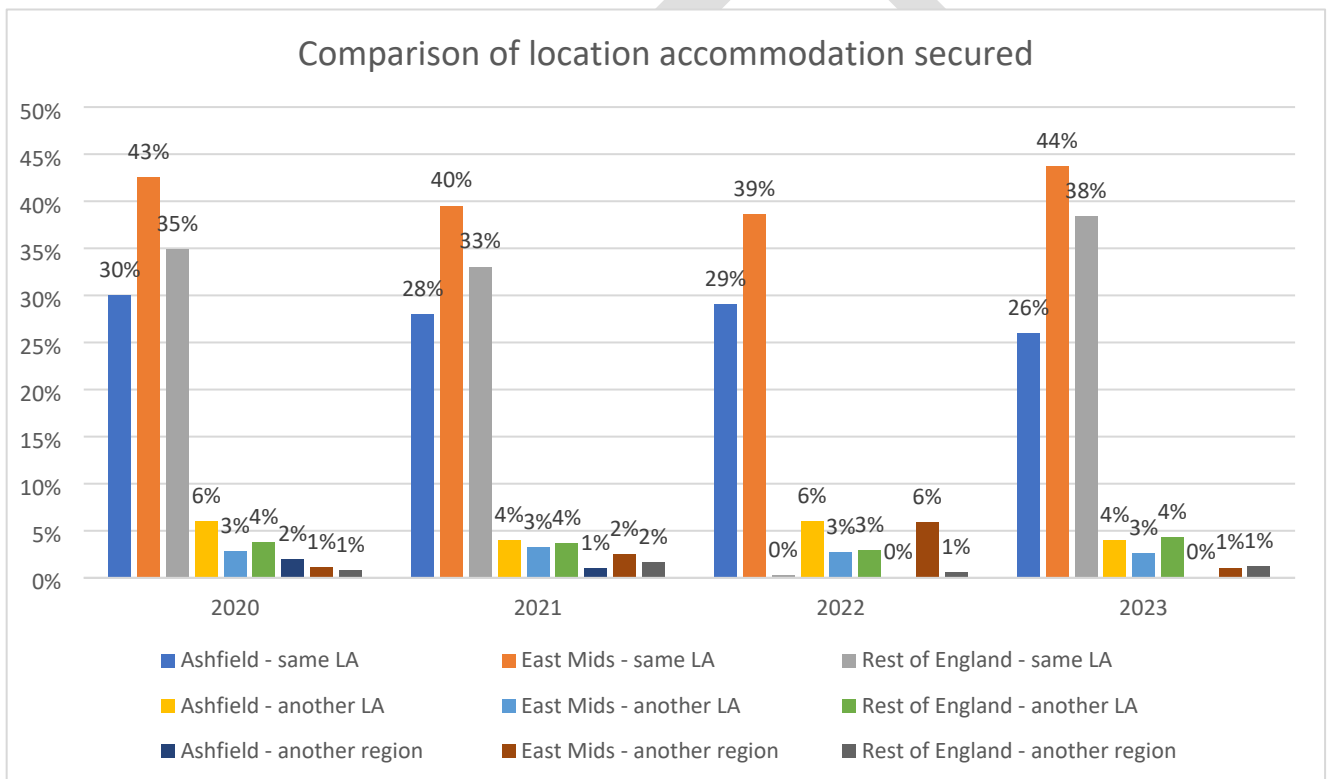
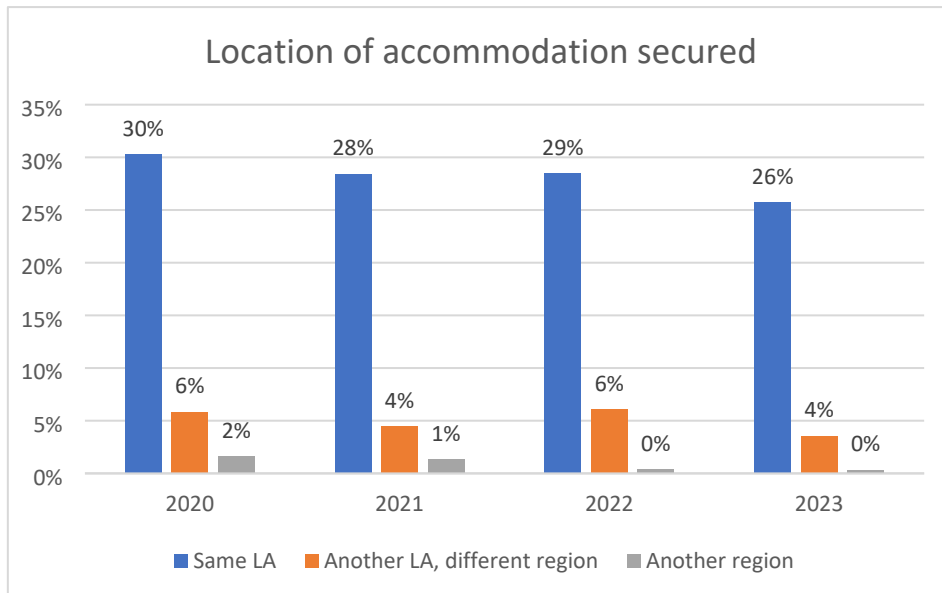
The majority of relief stage cases end in continued homelessness, though a quarter to a third of households secure alternative accommodation. Typically, between 40-50% of households secure accommodation at the end of the relief stage nationally and regionally. The percentage of relief cases ending in homelessness in Ashfield has increased over the last 4 years. A similar trend can be seen regionally and nationally, though the growth in the homelessness outcome has been faster in Ashfield.



Of those securing accommodation, the majority move into social rented housing, and up to a quarter of households move into the private rented sector, this is comparable to regional and national trends. The proportion of households securing social rented sector housing is consistently higher than regional and national trends, though the gap narrowed in 2022/23.

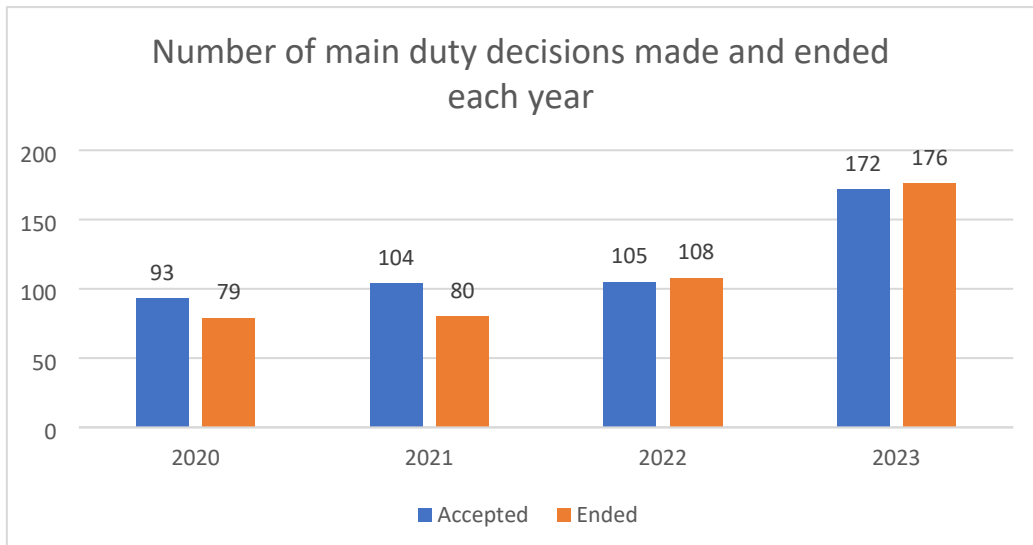


Around 1 in 3 households secured accommodation with Ashfield, with only a small number moving into other part of Nottinghamshire or England. However, there is a large number of households where the location of their accommodation is unknown. A greater proportion of households regionally and nationally secure accommodation in the same area.

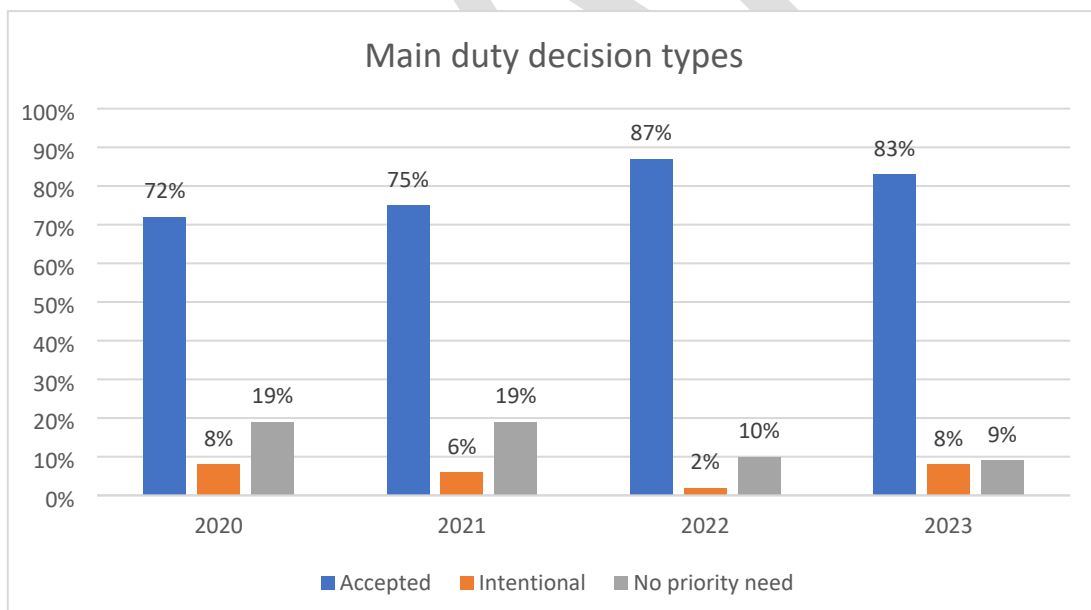


### *Main duty decisions*

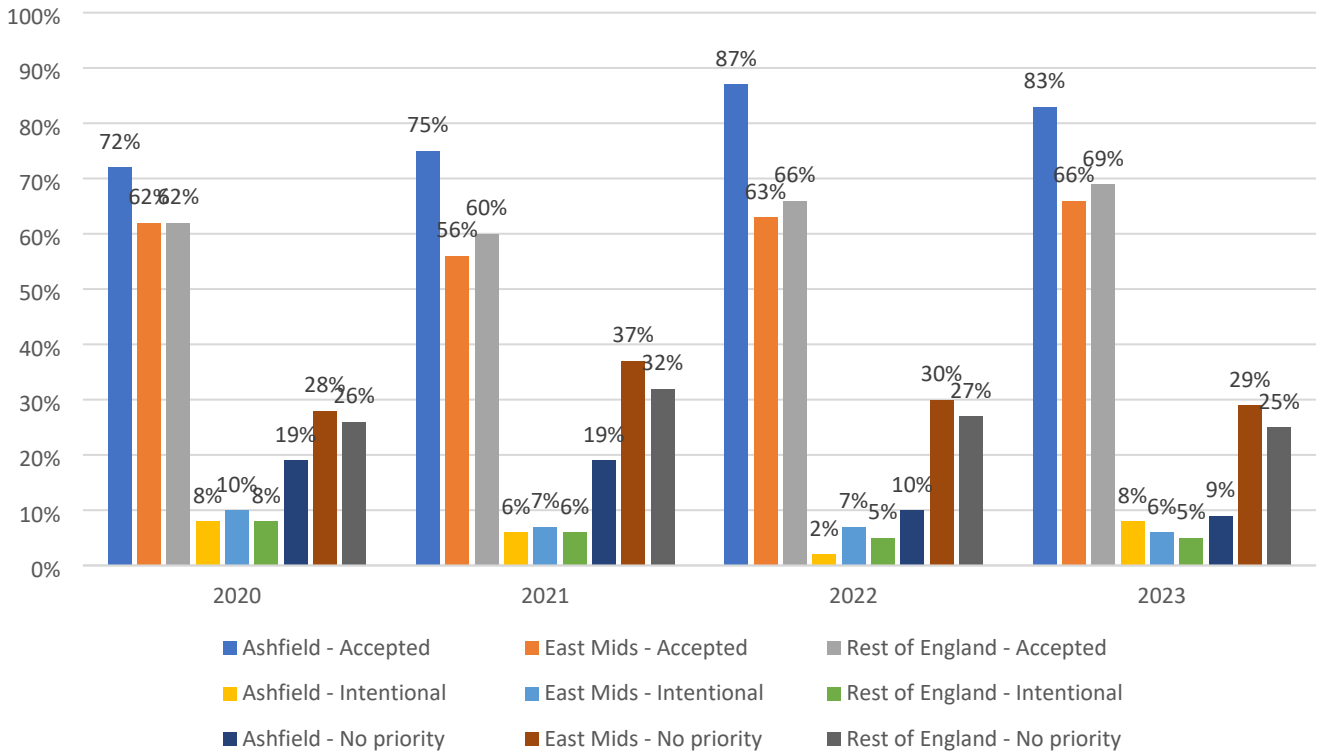
The number of main duty decisions made each year has increased substantially between 2020 and 2023. A similar number of cases are ended each year as are opened.



A significant majority of main duty applications are accepted, with over 80% of cases being owed the main duty in the last 2 years. Regionally and nationally, around 60% of cases are owed the main duty. At the same time, the percentage of Ashfield applications being in non-priority need have decreased to 9%, whereas regionally and nationally around 25% of cases are considered in non-priority need.



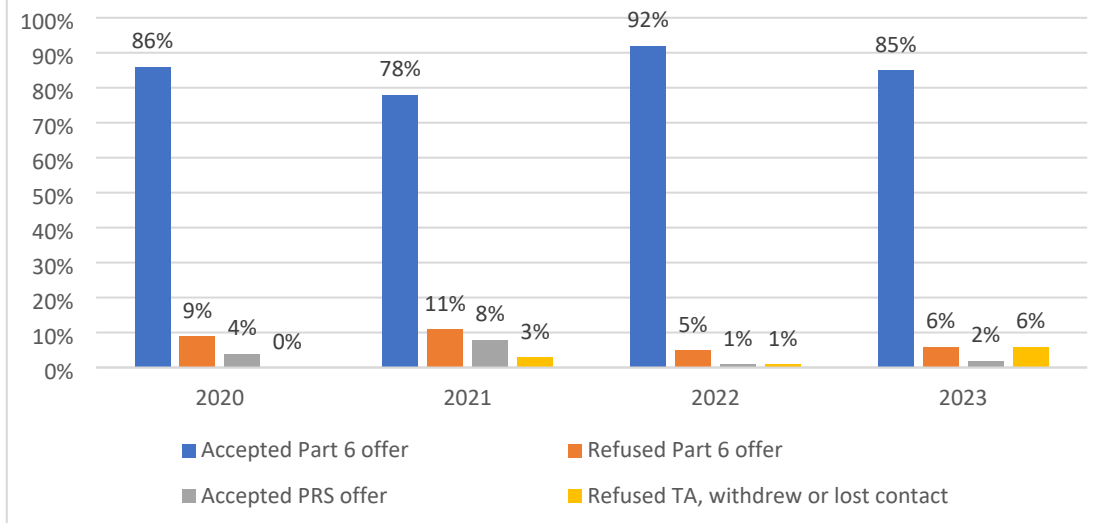
### Comparison of main duty decision types

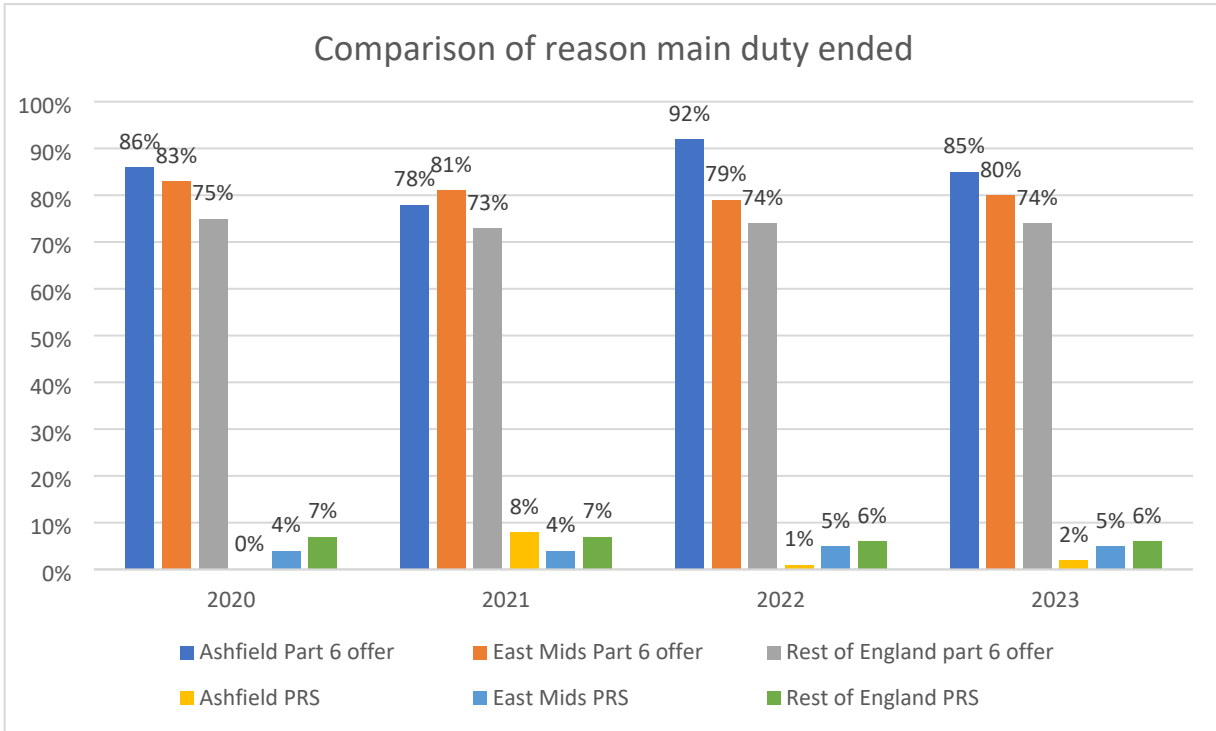


In almost all cases, a main duty is ended when a household moves into the social rented sector through a Part 6 offer, though there is a small percentage that refuse a Part 6 offer. A very small number move into the PRS and a small but growing number either refuse an offer of temporary accommodation, withdraw their application or lose contact with us.

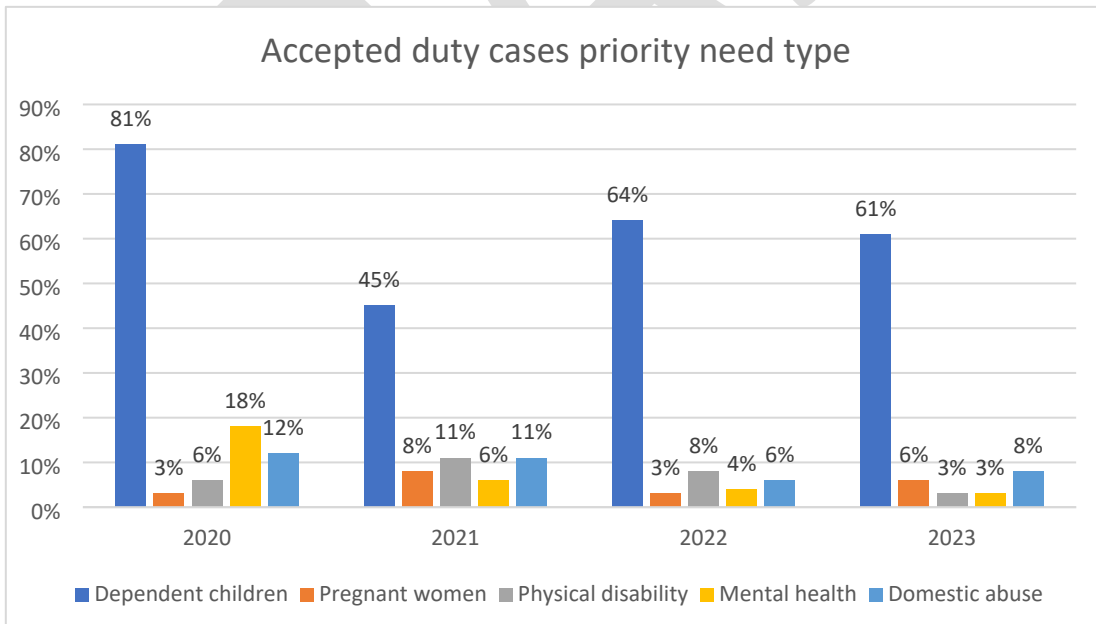
Regionally and nationally, a greater number of PRS offers are made and as a result there is less reliance on the social rented sector.

### Reason main duty ended





The majority of main duty cases are awarded priority need due to the household including dependent children. In the last two years, the trends in priority need type have been consistent.



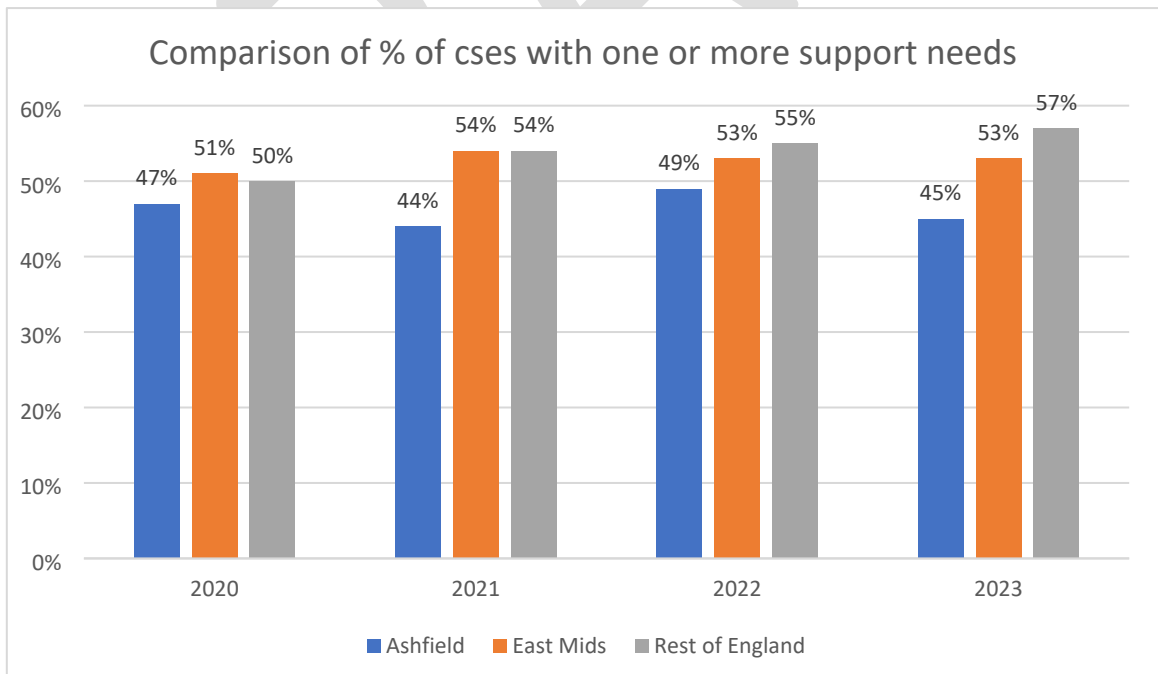
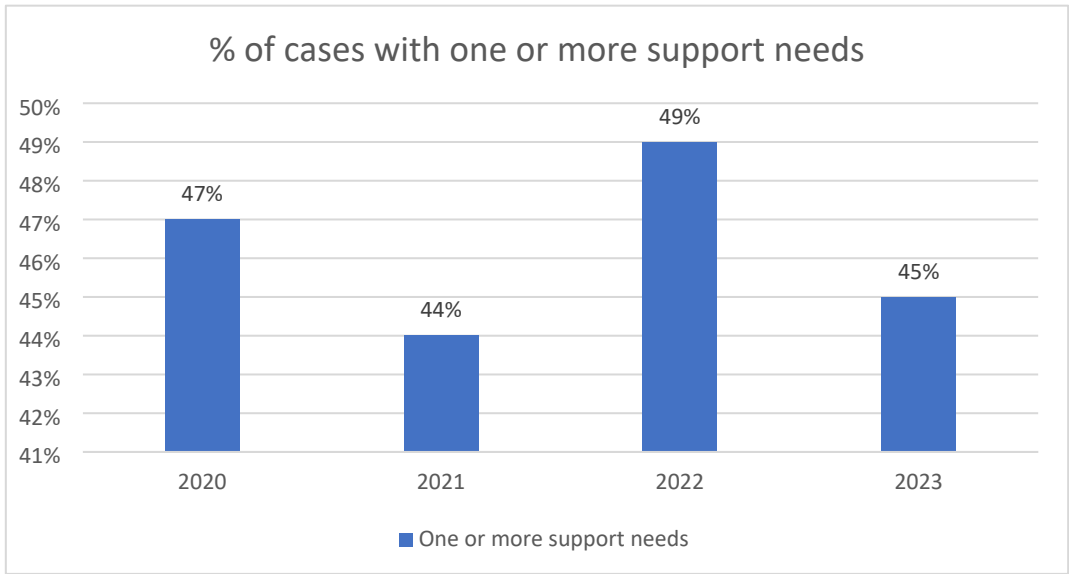
### *Review of decisions*

Each year, on average, less than 2% of households assisted by us request a review under s.202 of the Housing Act 1996 regarding our decision concerning the duties owed to them under the homelessness legislation.

### Support needs

Close to half of households requesting assistance report having one or more support needs. The most frequently reported support needs are related to mental health problems, physical health problems and experiencing domestic abuse.

Regionally and nationally, over 50% of households report one or more support needs, and these are also related to mental health problems, physical health problems and experiencing domestic abuse.



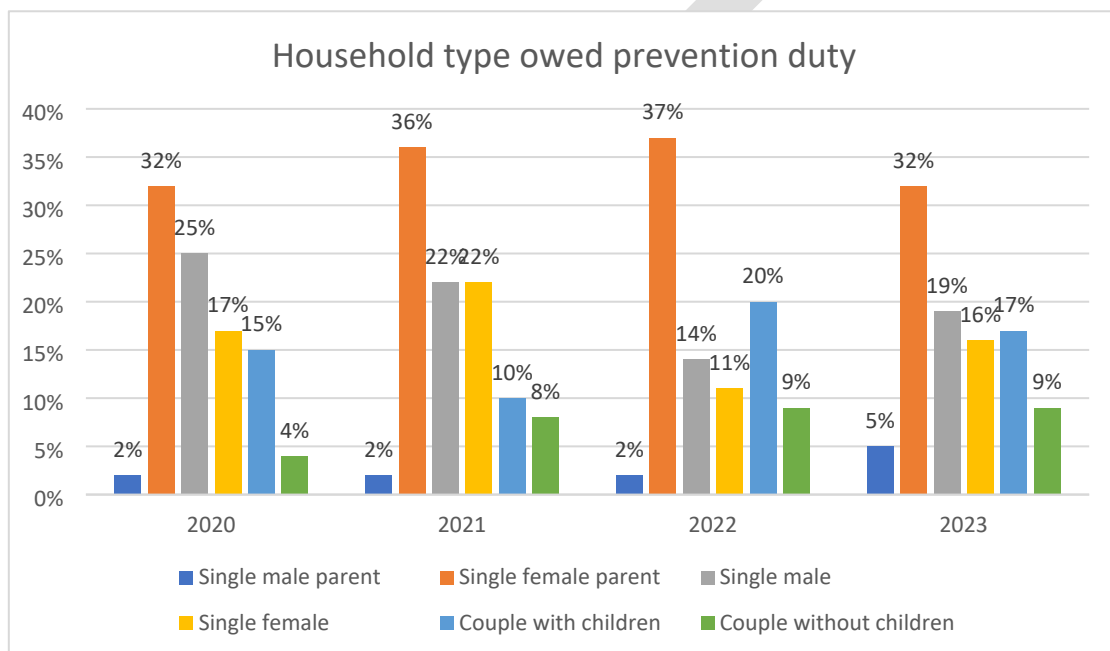
### Household type

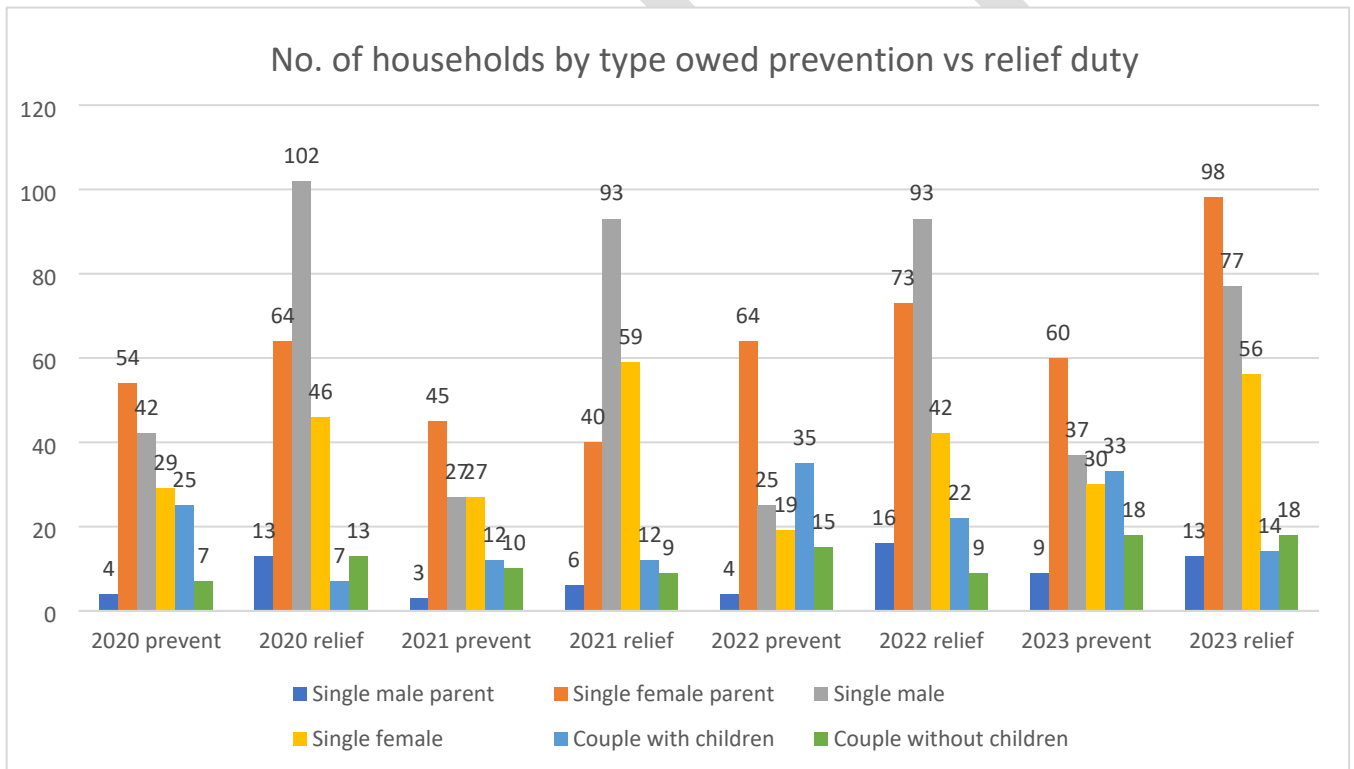
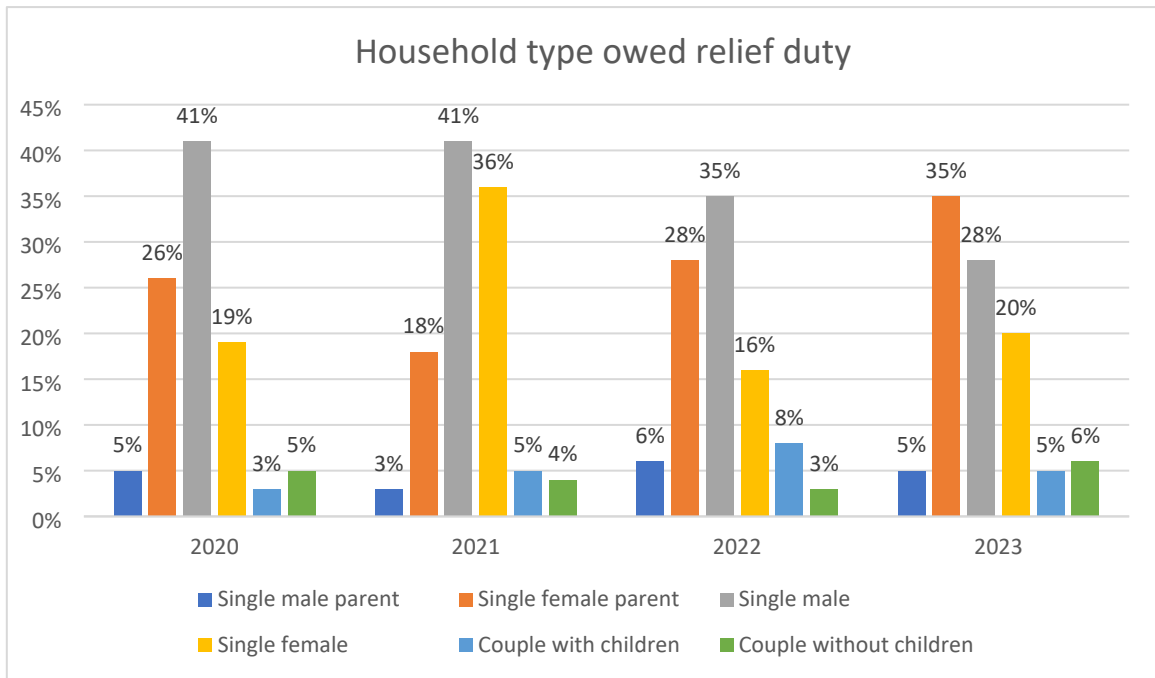


The majority of applications for assistance are consistently from either single female parent households or single male households. There is also a high number of single female households requesting assistance. This is comparable to the regional and national position, though more single male households are seen in these areas.

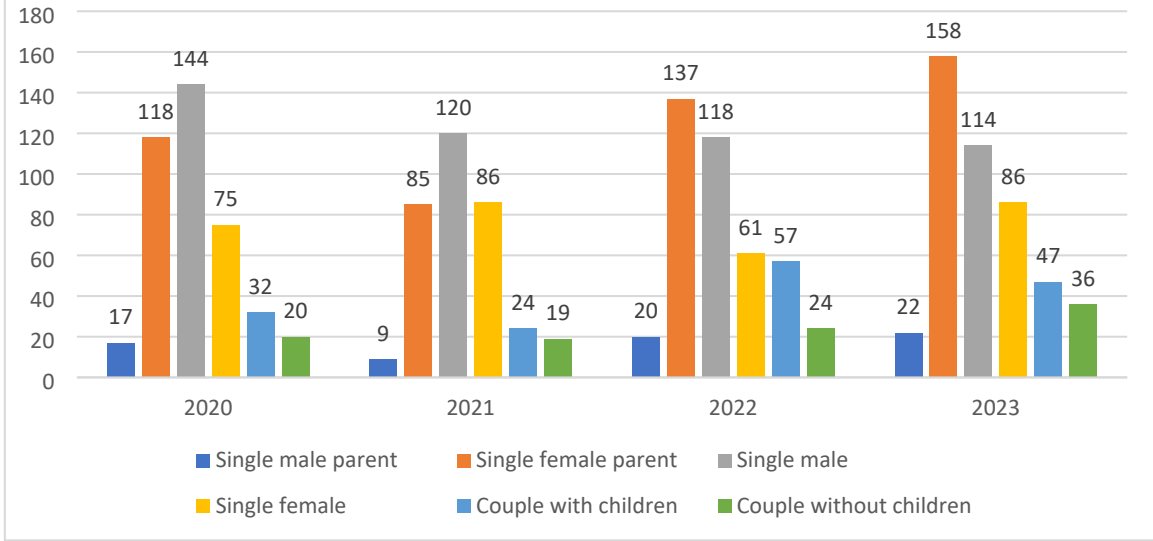
Single female parent households are seen in fairly equal numbers in both the prevention and the relief stage. Typically, around a third of prevention stage cases relate to single female parent households.

In 3 of the last 4 years, the majority of applications in the relief stage have been made by single male households, though in the last year there was a rise in single female parents. Significantly more single males apply for assistance in the relief stage than the prevention stage.

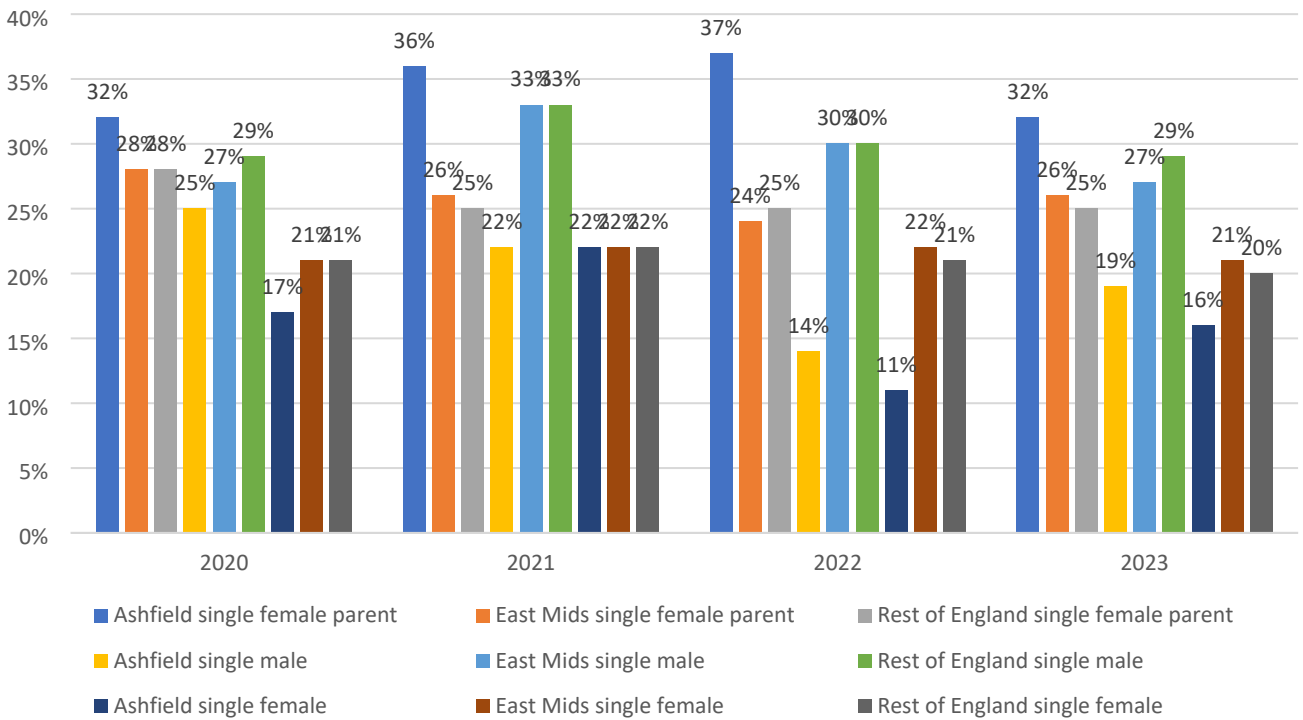


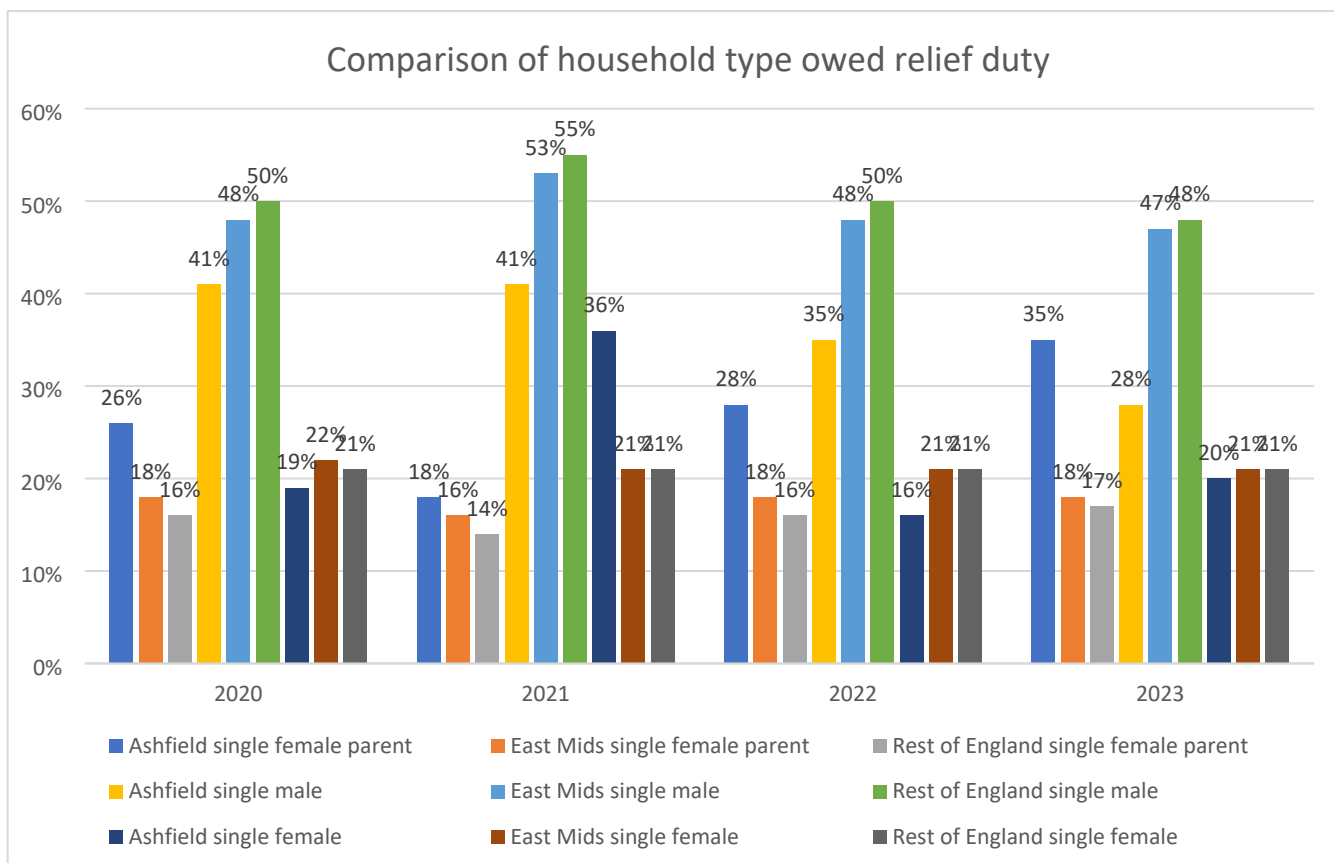


### No. of households by type owed either prevention or relief duty



### Comparison of household type owed prevention duty

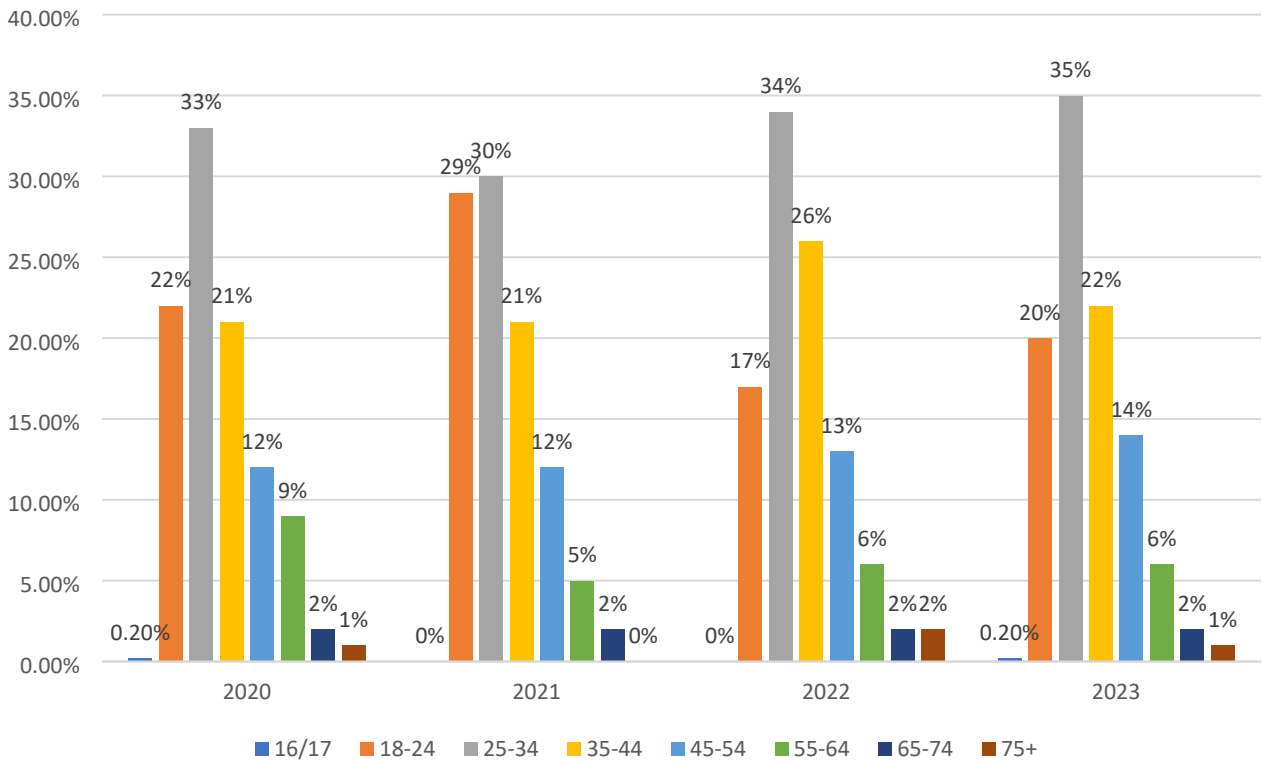




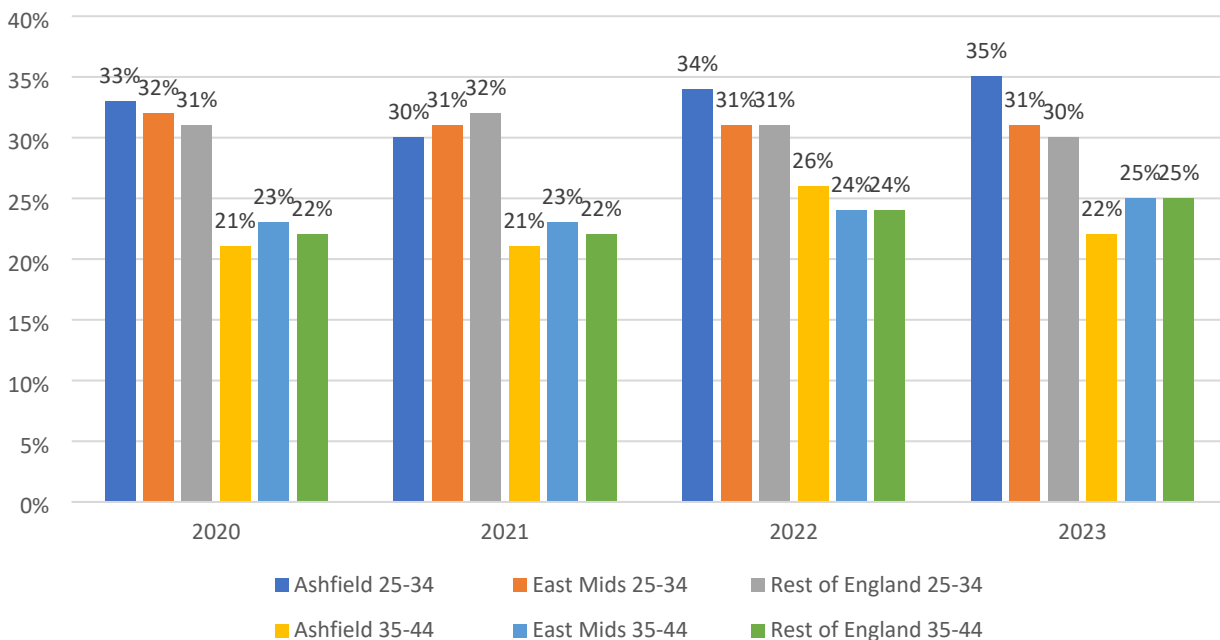
The majority of households owed a prevention or relief duty have a lead applicant aged 25-34, followed by those aged 35-44. This is comparable to the regional and national trend. There have only been 2 applicants aged 16 or 17 years in the last 4 years.

Under the joint working protocol, Nottinghamshire County Council Children's Social Care have handled referrals for 16 or 17 year olds at risk of homelessness. Between January and December 2023, 124 referrals were made stating Ashfield as a location of choice for housing. This is a 57% increase of compared to 2020.

### Age of lead applicant owed prevention or relief duty

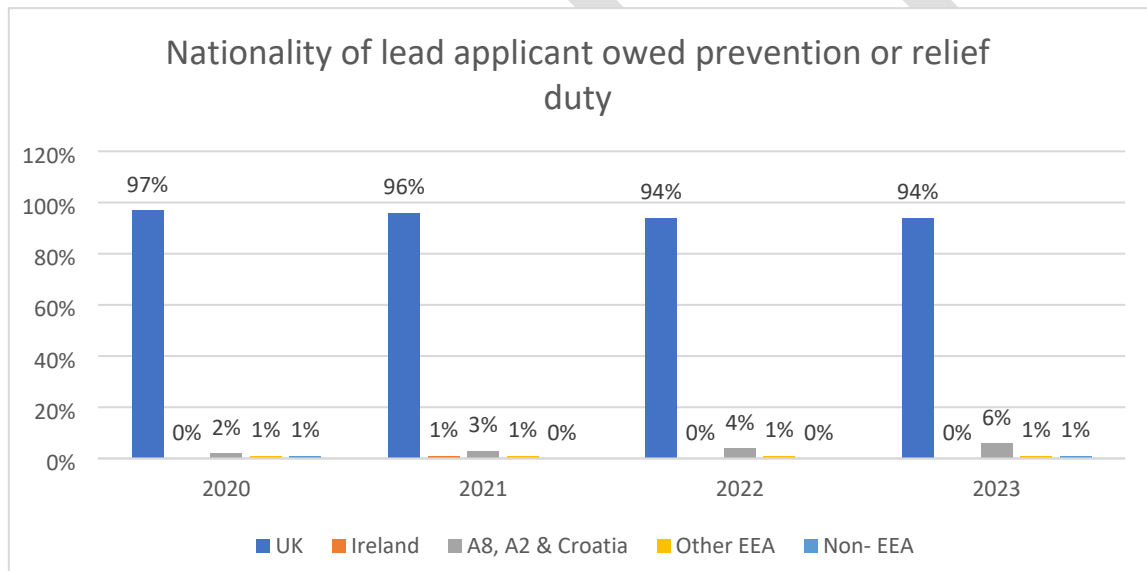
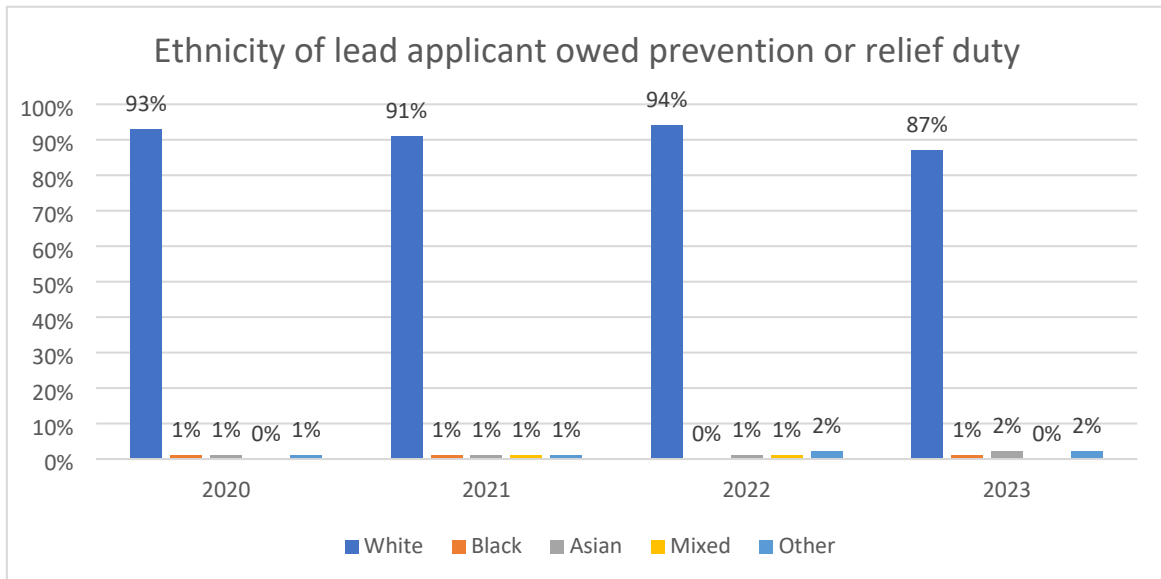


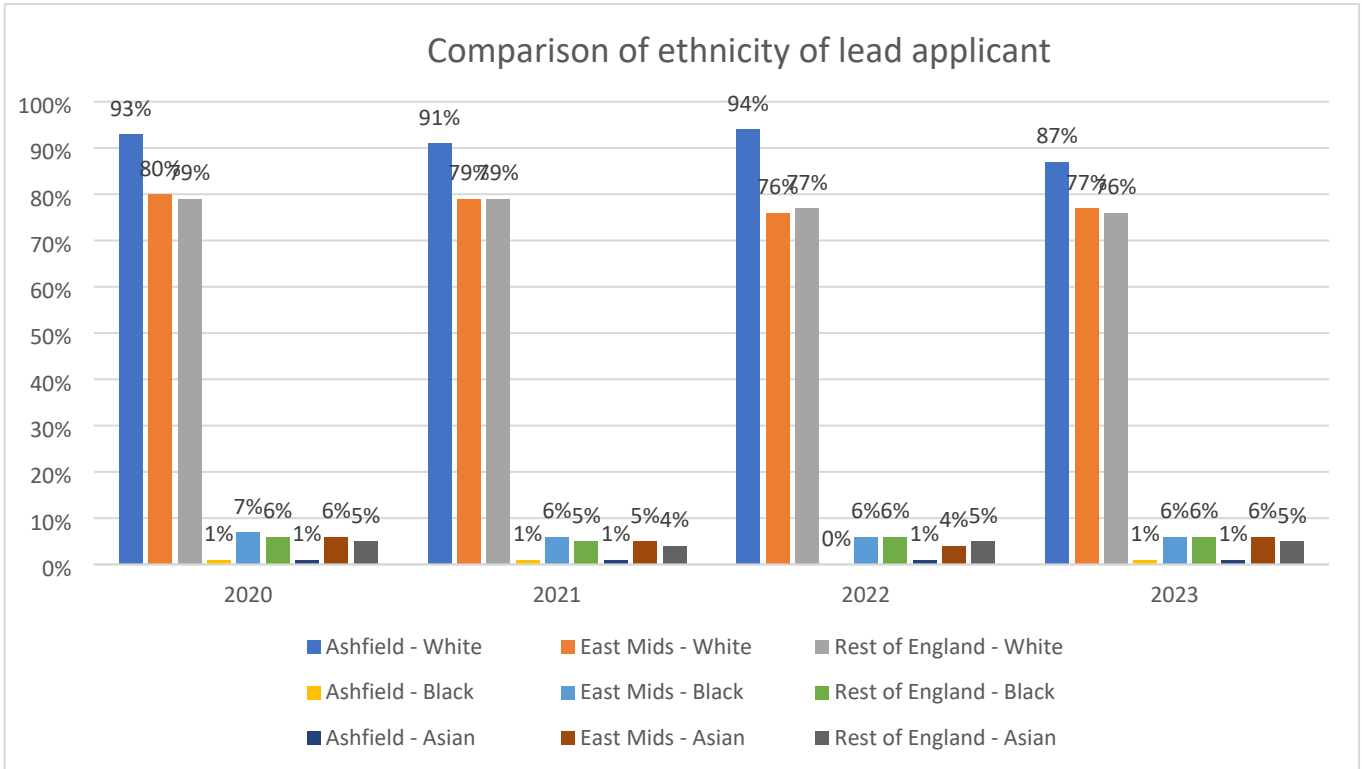
### Comparison of age of lead applicant



The majority of households owed a prevention or relief duty have a lead applicant who is White and with a UK nationality. This is broadly comparable to the regional and national

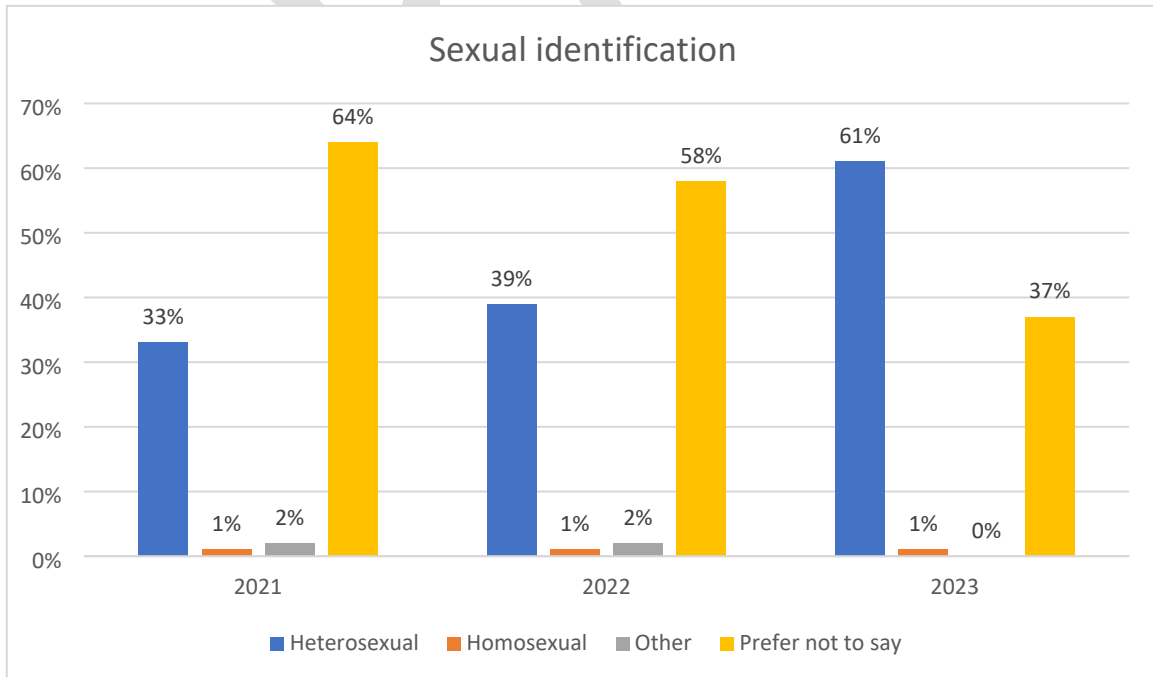
position, though a higher proportion of non-White and non-UK households are seen in these areas.

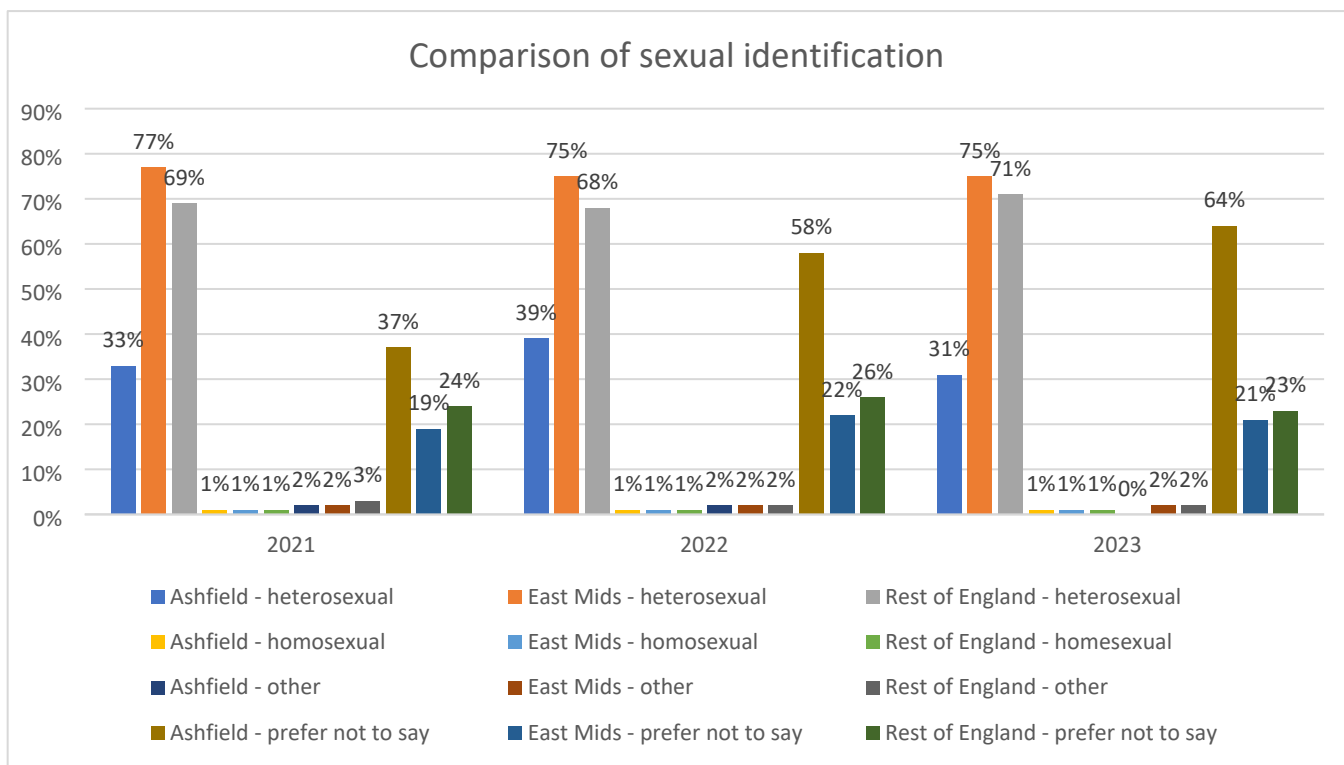




A high percentage (over 50%) of lead applicants prefer not to share their sexual identity, though in 2022/23 this improved with 61% of lead applicants identifying as heterosexual.

Regionally and nationally, up to a quarter of lead applicants prefer not to share their sexual identity, and around three-quarters of lead applicants identify as heterosexual.





### Temporary accommodation

Use of temporary accommodation has grown in the last 4 years, with over half of households placed including children in the last 2 years.

Whilst use of B&B appears consistently low based on the average quarter-end figures reported in H-CLIC data, internal records show a substantial rise in the number of households requiring emergency accommodation. Last year, a third of all households seeking assistance were placed in B&B, and close to half of all placements included children, compared to 20% in 2020. No households with children have stayed in B&B for more than 6 weeks and no 16 or 17 year old customers have been placed in B&B.

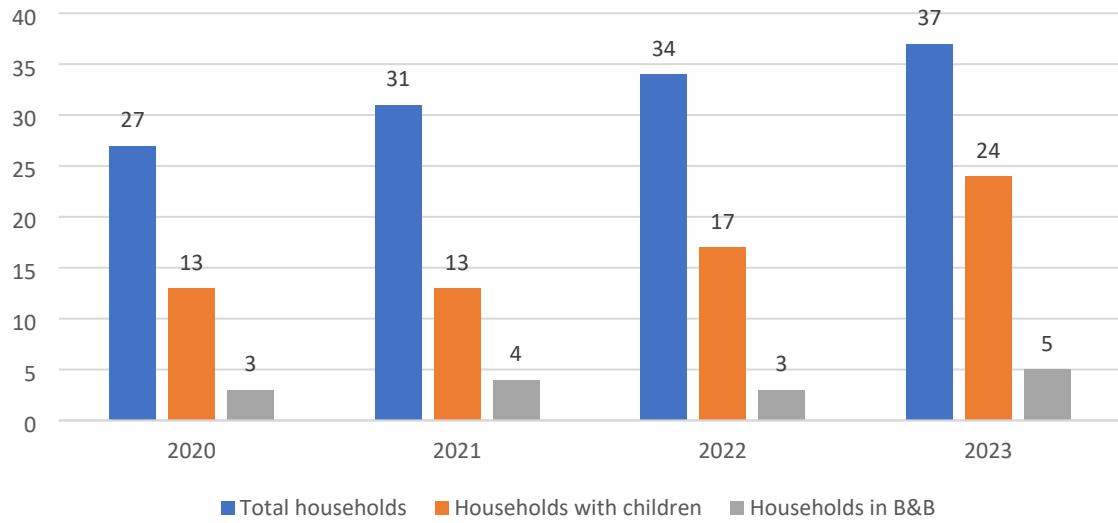
The average length of stay for all households in temporary accommodation is around 3 months; for households with children, it is around 4 months. Around 90% of households placed in temporary accommodation stay in accommodation owned by Ashfield District Council. In the last 2 years, around 45% of households with children placed in B&B, have been placed out of area. This is due to the lack of B&Bs in Ashfield.

Single female parent households and single male households are most frequently provided with temporary accommodation. In 3 of the last 4 years a similar number of each household type has been placed, though in the last year, twice as many single female parents were placed as single male households.

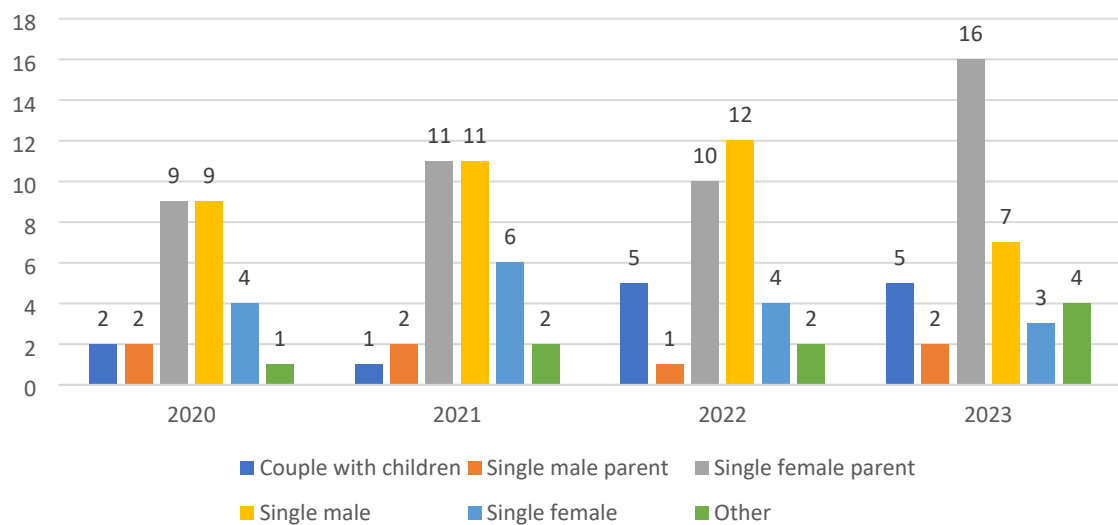
Ashfield's use of temporary accommodation per 1,000 households is around half the regional rate and a quarter of the national rate. All three areas have seen growth in their use of temporary accommodation, however, the rate of growth in Ashfield has been slightly slower compared to the other two areas.



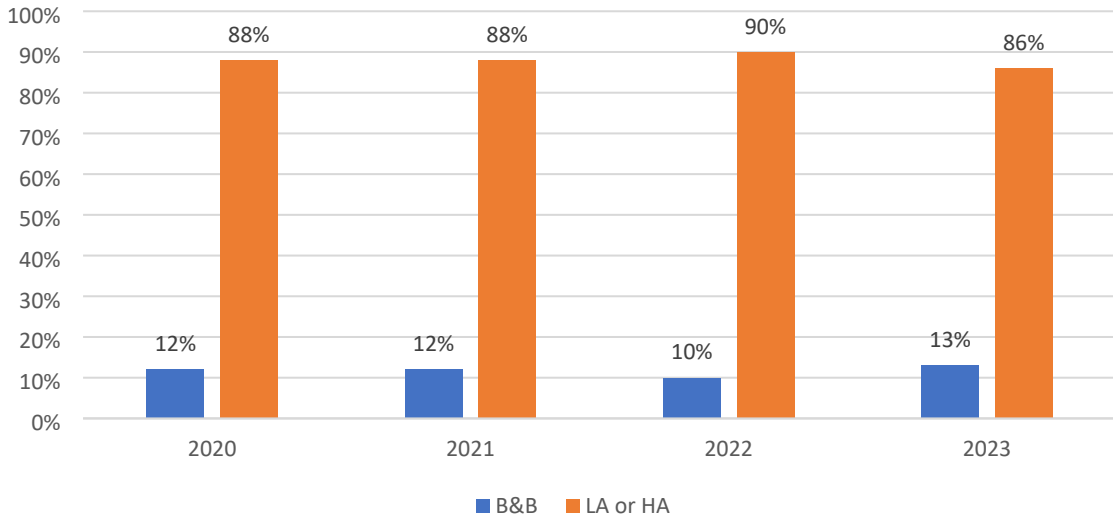
Average number of households in temporary accommodation at quarter end



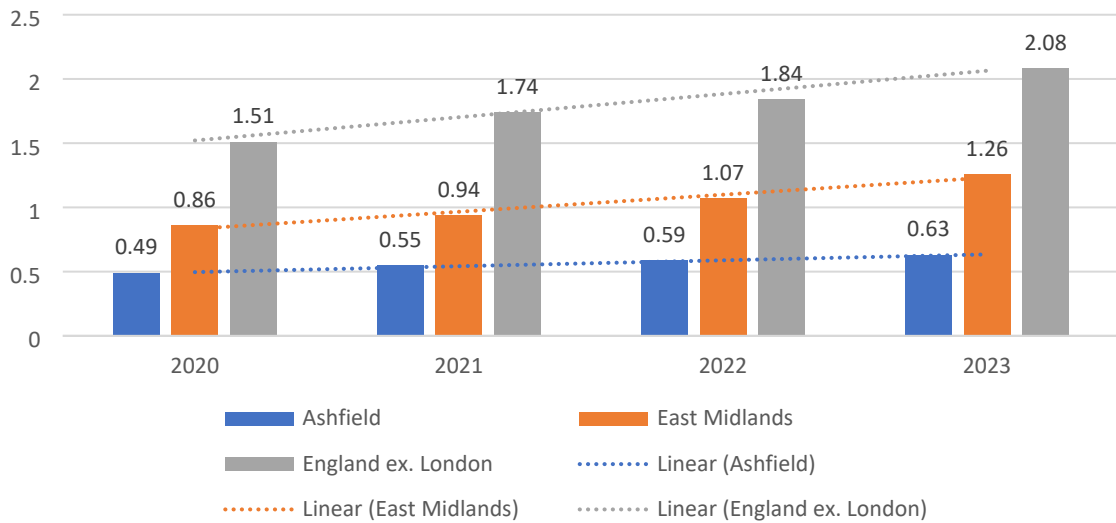
Average number of households in temporary accommodation at quarter end, by household type

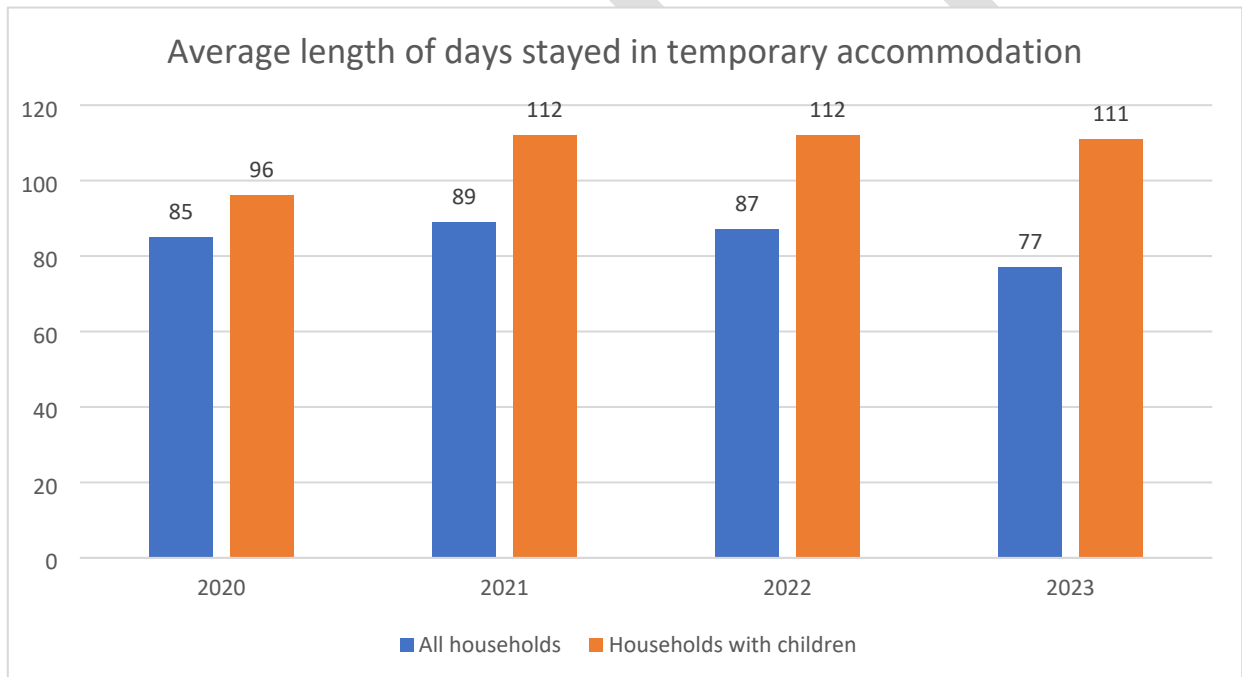
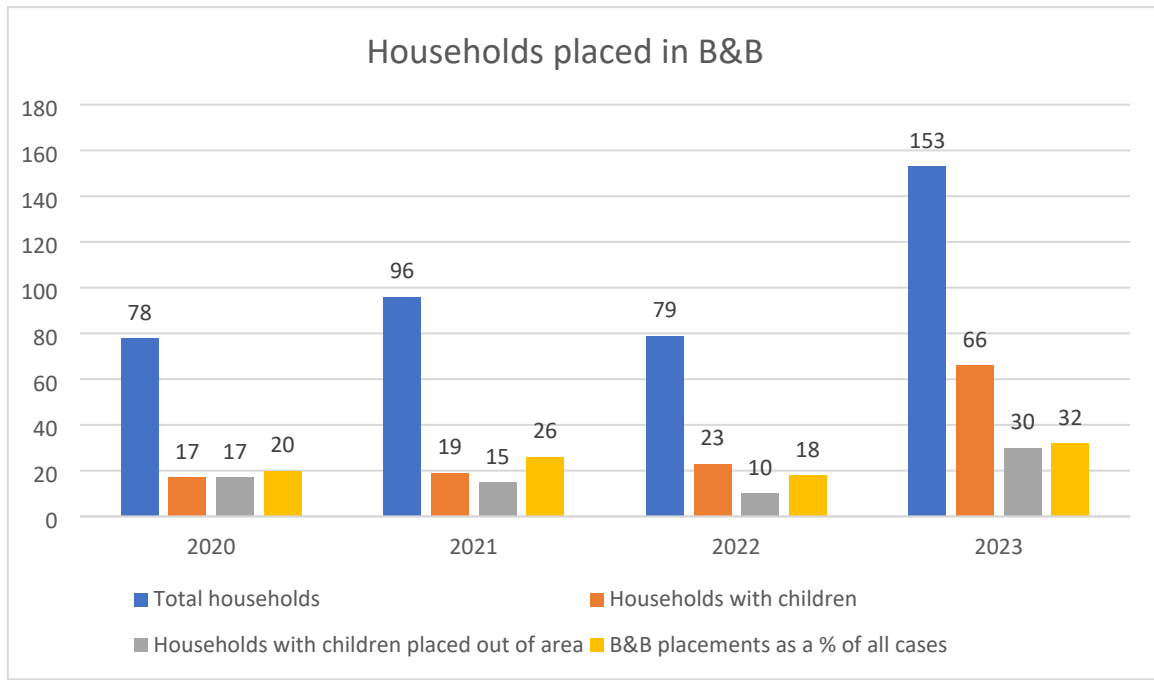


### Percentage of temporary accommodation placements by accommodation type



### Comparison of average rate of temporary accommodation placements per 1,000 households





### Rough sleeping<sup>100</sup>

The number of people rough sleeping on a single night in Ashfield has remained low and quite stable, as demonstrated by both the annual snapshot data collected in Autumn each year, and the monthly<sup>101</sup> data collected by the Street Outreach Team. Around 1 in 4 people rough sleeping are new to the streets each month<sup>102</sup>.

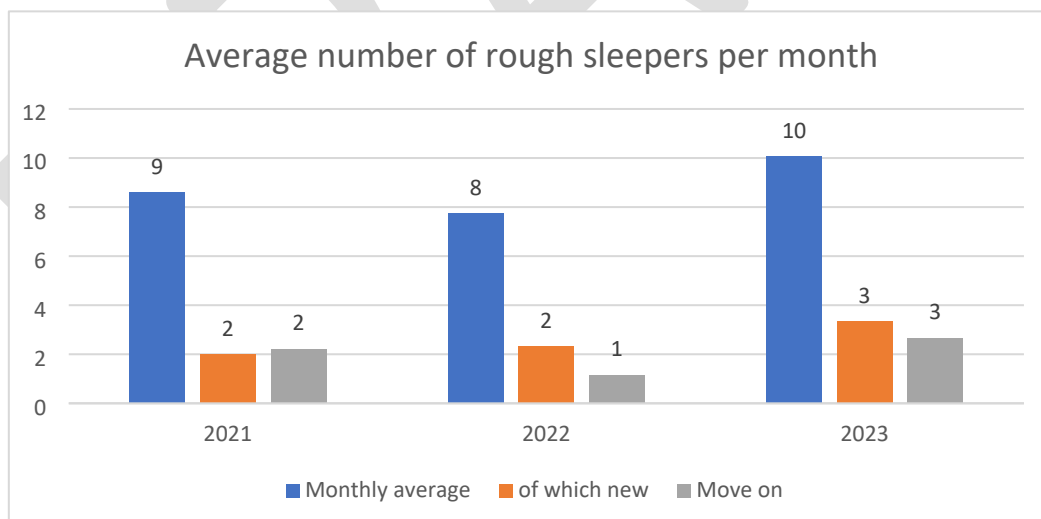
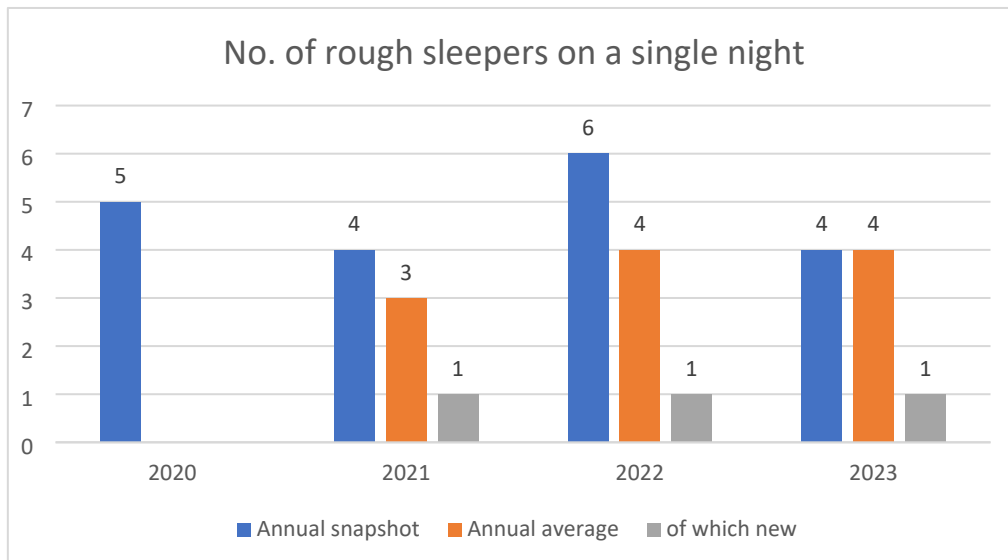
<sup>100</sup> [Support for people sleeping rough in England, June 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/support-for-people-sleeping-rough-in-england)

<sup>101</sup> This data collection started in June 2020

<sup>102</sup> This data collection started in October 2020

The data on the total number of people found rough sleeping throughout the year<sup>103</sup> shows a greater and growing number of people are experiencing rough sleeping in Ashfield. In 2022/23, on average, 10 people were found rough sleeping each month, and 3 of these were new to the street. A similar number of people leave the streets and begin rough sleeping each month.

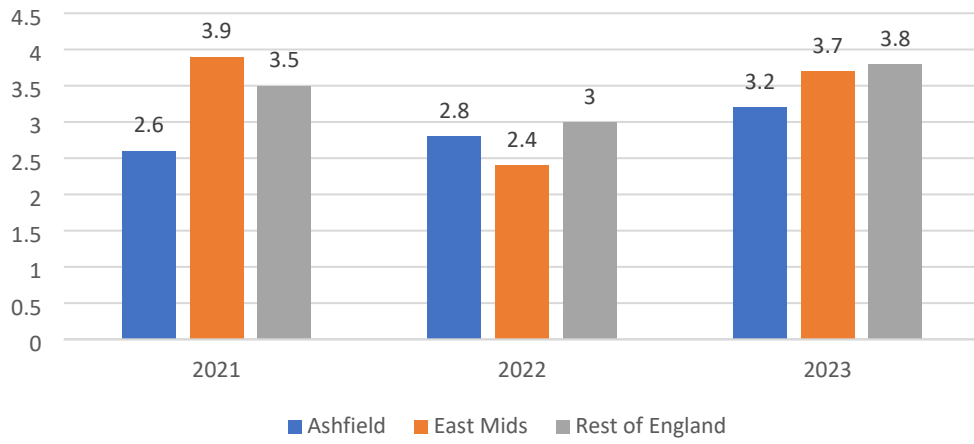
Whilst rates of rough sleeping per 100,000 people<sup>104</sup> are typically greater regionally and nationally than in Ashfield, in the last 3 years, there has been continued and faster growth in rough sleeping rates in Ashfield than regionally and nationally.



<sup>103</sup> This data collection started in November 2021, note individuals may be recorded more than once in these figures

<sup>104</sup> This data collection started in June 2020

Rate of people rough sleeping on a single night per 100,000 people



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## **7. Resources available in Ashfield**

This section provides a summary of the resources (funding, technology, people) that we have available to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

Key points:

- The Housing Options Team is funded through a combination of internal budget and external grant funding from DLUHC
- The funding available varies year on year
- Notification of funding allocations are received 3 months in advance
- Additional funding often becomes available, but at short notice
- Almost all external grant funding is allocated to staffing costs
- A range of Government funding allocations are made to other public bodies in Nottinghamshire to support the prevention of homelessness

### **Funding**

The Housing Options Team is funded through a combination of General Fund budget and grant funding from DLUHC. In some cases, DLUHC funding is awarded to Nottinghamshire County Council who have then made it available to us.

The funding available from DLUHC has varied year on year since 2019, both in terms of the amount available, the methodology to allocate the funding and the conditions attached. Typically, DLUHC notify local authorities of their funding allocations in December each year for the upcoming financial year. Often, additional funding becomes available in year with short timescales to utilise it.

The majority of the financial resources available in Ashfield are allocated to staffing costs, and the remainder to the Ashfield Homeless Prevention Fund. In recent years, we have started to commission a small number of services (accommodation and/or support) with partner agencies, often in collaboration with other Nottinghamshire housing authorities. These services are commissioned on a short term basis as a result of the short term nature of the available funding.

In addition to these staffing, prevention fund and commissioning costs, it is important to note the costs of providing interim accommodation, particularly where Bed & Breakfast accommodation is used. These costs are funded from the Council's General Fund. Historically, these costs have been minimal, however, the position has changed significantly between 2021/22 and 2022/23 with costs increasing by over 400%.

### **Staffing**

#### *Structure*

Staffing resources have increase since 2019 from 9.4 FTE to 13.8 FTE, of which 7.3 FTE are case-working officers.

The increase includes a Senior Officer as well as an Assertive Outreach Officer.

### *Learning and development*

As homelessness legislation, case law and guidance is constantly evolving, the Housing Options Team are provided with regular learning and development opportunities. Both classroom-style and on the job learning opportunities are provided. A training and skills audit is regularly refreshed as both legislation and staff change, and learning and development needs are discussed annually with staff during their Performance Development Reviews. A key, long-standing gap in the knowledge and skills of the team is mediation and negotiation skills that can be used with friends, family and landlords.

### *Case loads*

On average, each month the 7.3 FTE case working officers open 39 new cases between them.

### IT

Between 2019-24, a range of IT changes have been made to benefit both customers and staff.

Customers are able to complete the triage process online at a time to suit them. Appointments mostly take place via telephone, meaning that customers do not have to travel to our office. Customers are able to submit any supporting documentation to their advisor by email and their advisor will issue letters and updates to customers via email.

Staff have been provided with IT hardware and software to enable them to work from a range of locations including the office, their home and the customer's home. Staff are also able to meet with partner agencies virtually.

Whilst a case management system is used, there are a number of Excel spreadsheets in use to monitor information not held in the system. Some aspects of case management are also completed outside of the system, where the system does not provide a satisfactory solution (e.g. letter writing)

We are signed up to the Jigsaw website for Duty to Refer referrals and this works well, however, many agencies either fail to complete referrals, fail to submit them in a timely manner, or provide partial information.

## **8. Resources available in Nottinghamshire**

In addition to the funding allocated to ADC, a range of funding allocations are made from Government to other public bodies in Nottinghamshire. These funding programmes fund a

range of services that contribute to the prevention and relief of homelessness in Ashfield. The Ending Rough Sleeping For Good strategy sets out the majority of these funding programmes, and highlights the need for a multi-agency response to the problem of homelessness. This represents an important shift in responsibility for homelessness and means local housing authorities are no longer expected to lead on the range of issues that affect homeless prevention and relief.

We are the lead authority for some Nottinghamshire-wide funding programmes, for many others, we are represented on the strategic forums that develop and monitor the services delivered utilising these funds, meaning that we are able to influence the services and ensure they are of maximum benefit to Ashfield residents experiencing homelessness.

As before, there is variation in the methodologies used to allocate funding, as well as the conditions attached to the programmes. Funding opportunities are made available at different times in the year, often with short deadlines. Recent funding opportunities have been for multiple years, though in many cases there is uncertainty for 2025 onwards. In the event that funding programmes are not renewed, there is unlikely to be capacity from Nottinghamshire partners to replace the lost funding, meaning that services are likely to close.

## **9. Conclusion**

This review of homelessness has identified the achievements of the Ashfield Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2019-24. Notable achievements from 2019-2024 include:

- Providing more support to all customers to maximise their income and improve their money management, with additional support for those in temporary accommodation
- 171 new affordable homes were completed in Ashfield between 2019 and 2022
- Significant external funding secured to provide support to secure and sustain a tenancy
- Homeless households have good access to social housing and loss of a social housing tenancy is a minor cause of homelessness
- External funding secured for 54 supported housing spaces
- Trialled new ways to improve access to the private rented sector
- Multi agency case conferences are well established
- Homelessness awareness sessions delivered in secondary schools
- Substantial external funding secured to support those experiencing rough sleeping
- High levels of satisfaction reported by customers

It has also considered the national, regional and local policy context, as well as the nature of the housing market in Ashfield across a range of indicators. It has examined the data on



the current and future levels of homelessness in Ashfield and set out the resources available to address homelessness in Ashfield and Nottinghamshire.

Throughout, the review has identified a number of areas that are working well, as well as areas for improvement:

### *What's working well*

We fully delivered the 2019-2024 action plan with delivery of only a handful of actions being affected by COVID-19 or no longer required due to national policy changes.

We have a well-resourced staff team that customers are highly satisfied with.

We ensure no 16 or 17 year olds are placed in B&B, and families are not placed in B&B for more than 6 weeks.

We secured significant external funding during the period of the last strategy, particularly to support those experiencing homelessness during COVID-19 and those who are rough sleeping.

The Housing Options Team has good access to social housing for our customers, but there is a reliance on it.

We have the full support of the stakeholders, customers and Members involved in our consultation activities for the proposed priorities of the 2024-29 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy.

The stakeholder consultation event highlighted a number of strengths about our homelessness service:

- It is quick and easy to access support and information from the service
- There is effective multi-agency working
- We are open to being challenged and we learn from these
- We lead the Rough Sleeping Initiative and contribute to the Making Every Adult Matter project

### *Areas for improvement*

Access to affordable housing is becoming more and more challenging.

There are rising levels of homelessness that we need to respond to.

Domestic abuse continues to be a significant cause of homelessness in Ashfield.

We must continue to improve the proportion of customers approaching at prevention stage.

We need to reverse the trend of increasing B&B use.

We have persistent levels of rough sleeping, particularly for long-term rough sleepers.

We are operating within a challenging economic environment and housing market that limits our opportunities for improvement.

Our funding position is highly uncertain, particularly for April 2025 onwards. This is both for funding awarded directly to us, as well as to others in Nottinghamshire.

Significant national policy reform is expected in multiple parts of the housing market over the next couple of years that we will need to respond to. These reforms will also have an affect, both positive and negative on the supply of and demand for affordable housing.

The stakeholder consultation event also identified areas for improvement:

- Building relationships with PRS landlords
- The suitability and availability of supported housing for single parents and people with high support needs
- Earlier identification of homelessness, including improving the Duty to Refer process
- Promoting the services available more widely
- Staff retention and preventing burnout
- Access to social care support
- Support for struggling homeowners
- Supporting PRS tenants served notice to remain in the property with an unhappy landlord

#### *Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2024-29 Priorities*

Based on the findings of this review, the following priorities for the 2024-29 strategy have been identified:

1. Prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy or as a result of domestic abuse
2. End rough sleeping<sup>105</sup>
3. Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Where it is needed, make sure it is good quality.
4. Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with, and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services
5. Encourage and support leaders of other organisations to do more to prevent homelessness
6. Be a trauma-informed service, by looking after the wellbeing of our customers and staff

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<sup>105</sup> <sup>105</sup> Defined by the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities as preventing rough sleeping or ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurrent.