



Homelessness Review

2018

Final Version

May 2018

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1 Background

1.1 The Homelessness Act 2002

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a legal requirement on local authorities to carry out a review of all forms of homelessness in their district and publish a Homelessness Strategy at least every 5 years. The Homelessness Review is intended to provide part of an evidence base for developing the new Homelessness Strategy. For the purposes of this Act “homelessness review” means a review by a local housing authority of:

- the levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness
- the activities which are carried out to address homelessness
- the resources available to the council for such activities.

1.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Amongst a number of changes the act makes to current homelessness legislation the following points are important to note for purposes of the Review:

- **Changes to those considered as threatened with homelessness** – extension of the period during which someone qualifies as being threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days.
- **Changes in duty owed** – extension of the existing duty to provide free homelessness advice and information to any person as well as to take reasonable steps to prevent or relieve homelessness. Councils will be required to carry out an assessment in all cases where an applicant is judged homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless and agree on a homelessness plan. Councils will have a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for any individual who is at risk, regardless of priority need status, intentionality and whether they have a local connection. This means either assisting them to stay in their current accommodation, or helping them to find a new place to live. The act also places a duty on councils to relieve homelessness for all eligible households, regardless of priority need status, intentionality and whether they have a local connection. This involves taking reasonable steps to help the applicant to secure suitable accommodation.

1.3 ESBC’s Homelessness Strategy 2013-2017

The last [Homelessness Strategy](#) covered the period 2013-2017 and set out the following strategic priorities:

- (1) Avoidance of homelessness
- (2) Prevention of homelessness
- (3) Availability of accommodation

Further details can be found in the strategy document.

2 Defining homelessness

For purposes of the review the definitions of homelessness used will be those that have applied during the period 2012-2017. Moving forwards it will be important to note the changes in duty owed outlined by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

In law homelessness occurs when a *family* does not have *accommodation*:

- which is available for its occupation, and
- to which it has rights of occupation, and
- to which it has entry and unrestricted use, and
- which it is reasonable for it to continue to occupy.

2.1 Statutory Homelessness

The council currently takes a homelessness application where it has reason to believe that a person is already homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days and where a person consents to enable the Council to carry out enquiries and co-operates to enable a decision to be reached. When the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 comes into force this period will be extended to 56 days. Statutory homelessness refers to applicants that have met the criteria set out in legislation (Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002) i.e. are considered to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

2.2 Threatened with Homelessness

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, the council must have a strategy for preventing homelessness that applies to everyone at risk of homelessness, not just people who fall within the priority need group. In the past, authorities were also encouraged to take steps to relieve homelessness in cases where someone was found to be homeless but was not owed a duty to secure accommodation under the homelessness legislation. As outlined above, with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 councils will now be expected to carry out prevention and relief activities and take reasonable steps to prevent or relieve homelessness for all eligible households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

2.3 Street Homelessness

The common understanding of homelessness in the general public is that of visible homelessness such as rough sleeping or street homelessness. The Department for Communities and Local Government's definition of street homelessness is:

“People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes”).”

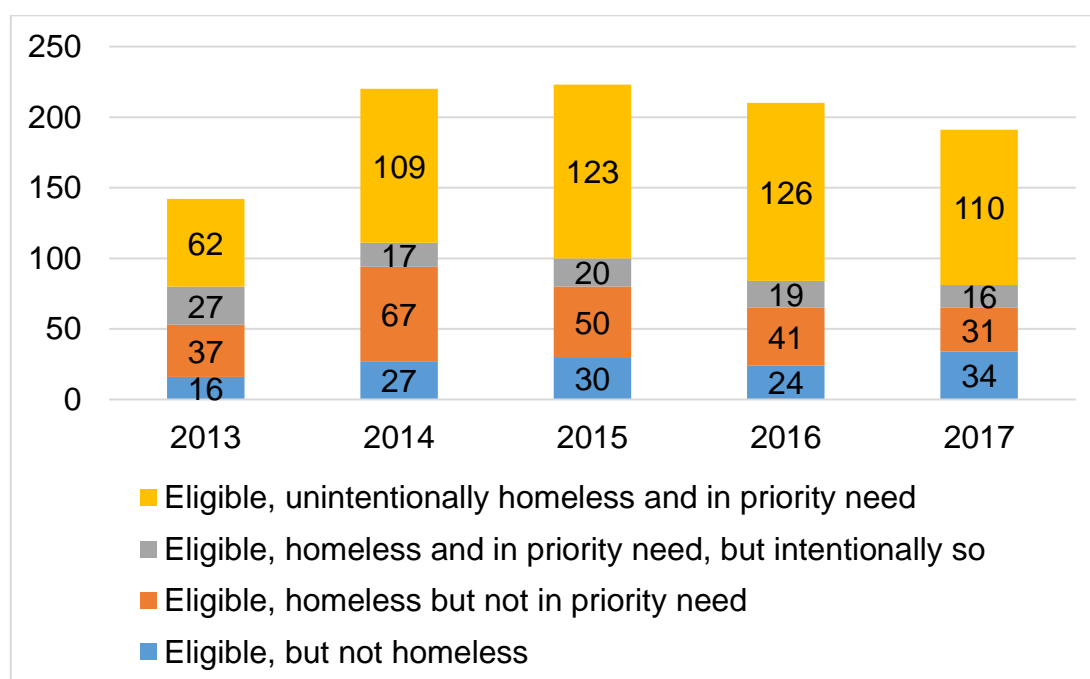
3 Levels of homelessness in East Staffordshire

3.1 Statutory Homelessness

Table 1: Decisions on homelessness applications – Oct 2012-Dec 2017 (Housing Options [HO] data)

Decision	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total	%
Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	31	62	109	123	126	110	561	35.1%
Eligible, homeless and in priority need, but intentionally so	30	27	17	20	19	16	129	8.1%
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	31	37	67	50	41	31	257	16.1%
Eligible, but not homeless	55	16	27	30	24	34	186	11.7%
Ineligible households	2	1	2	3	3	3	14	0.9%
Withdrawn - no further contact	8	31	29	20	21	39	148	9.3%
Cancelled	3	3	5	4	5	28	48	3.0%
Found suitable alternative accommodation	12	54	46	39	43	45	239	15.0%
Other	3	1	2	4	2	2	14	0.9%
Total	175	232	304	293	284	308	1596	100%

Figure 1: Eligible decisions on homelessness applications – 2013-2017 (HO data)



General Trends – Oct 2012-Sept 2017

- 70% of applicants were 18-44 old. 52% 25-44 years old.
- The largest categories of applicants are single female parents (28%) and single males with no children (30%).
- The majority of applicants (87%) consider themselves to be of white ethnic origin.
- In total 38.3% of applicants were accepted as main duty homeless.

Main Duty Trends – Oct 2012-Sept 2017

Figure 2: Household type of main duty decisions – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

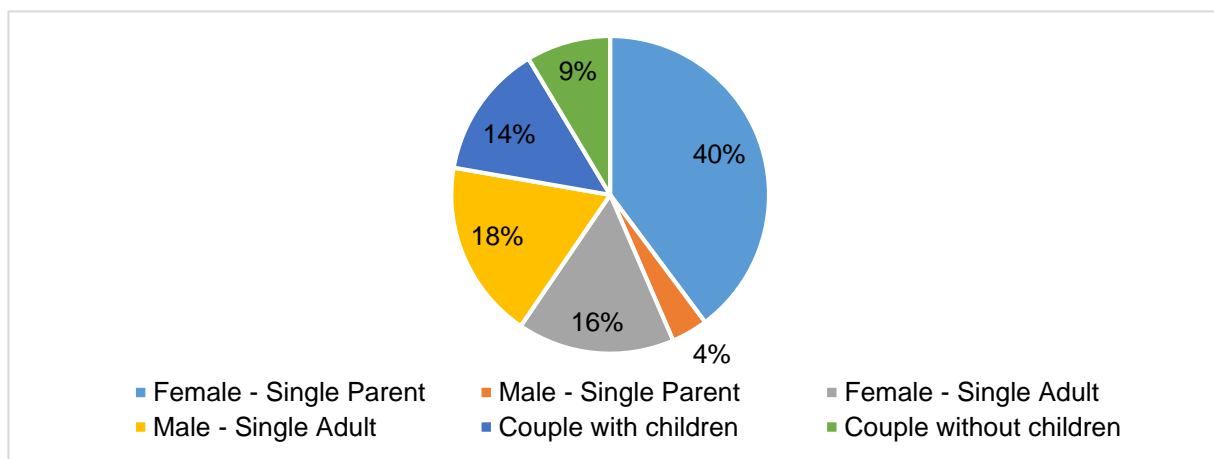


Table 2: Vulnerability profile of main duty households – 2013-2016 (HO data)

Vulnerability Profile	2013	2014	2015	2016	Av.
Dependants	50.8%	59.1%	69.0%	55.5%	58.6%
Physical disability	14.3%	14.8%	8.7%	17.2%	13.7%
MI or handicap	12.7%	7.0%	10.3%	9.4%	9.8%
Fleeing domestic violence	4.8%	7.0%	4.8%	4.7%	5.3%
18-20 years old - care leavers	11.1%	1.7%	3.2%	3.9%	5.0%
Pregnancy	3.2%	7.0%	0.8%	7.0%	4.5%
Old age	0.0%	2.6%	1.6%	0.8%	1.2%
Other	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Homeless in emergency	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	1.6%	0.6%
16-17 year olds	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%

- The largest group of applicants accepted as eligible and in priority need are female single parents (40%), followed by male/female single adults (18% and 16% respectively).
- 43% were adults without dependants, 27% had 1 child and 14% had 2 children.
- Most acceptances are for 25-34 year olds (33%), followed by 35-44 (23%) and 18-24% (19%).
- Most were deemed vulnerable due to having dependent children (58.6%), the next largest group was vulnerable due to physical disability (13.7%).

3.2 Threatened with Homelessness

In practice the number of households known to become legally homeless in East Staffordshire is fairly small. However, many people experience the knowledge that they are going to have to leave their accommodation and the stress and struggle of trying to find somewhere else to live. This is illustrated by the fact that on average around 1,000 people have approached the Council each year for housing options advice.

Figure 3: Number of enquiries to Housing Options – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

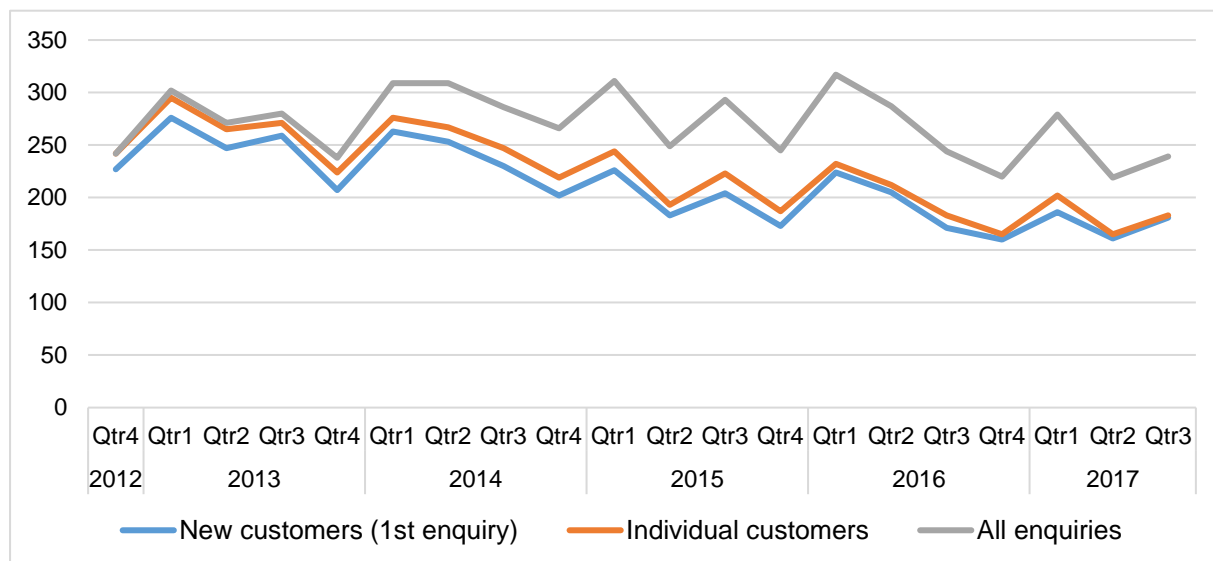


Figure 4: Enquirers' relationship and dependant status – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

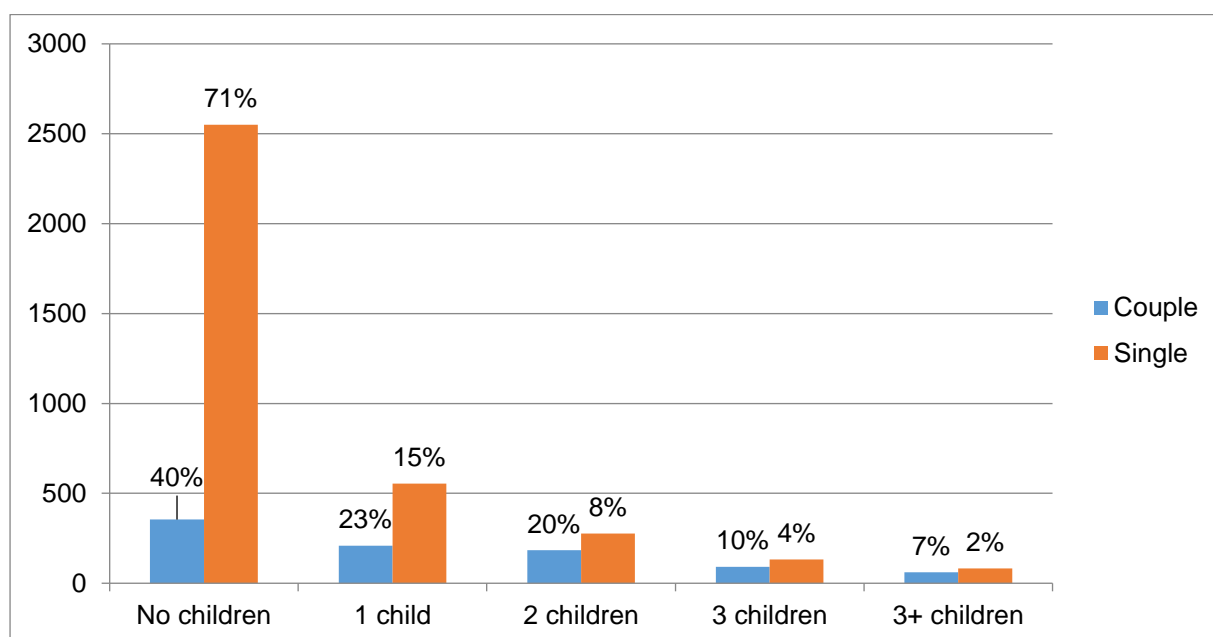
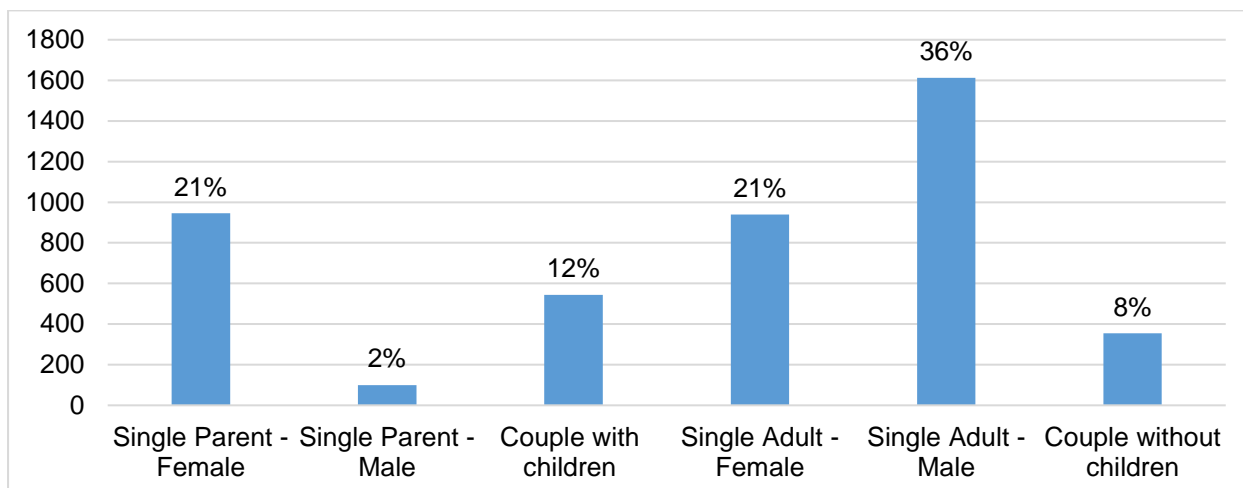


Figure 5: Enquirers' household type – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

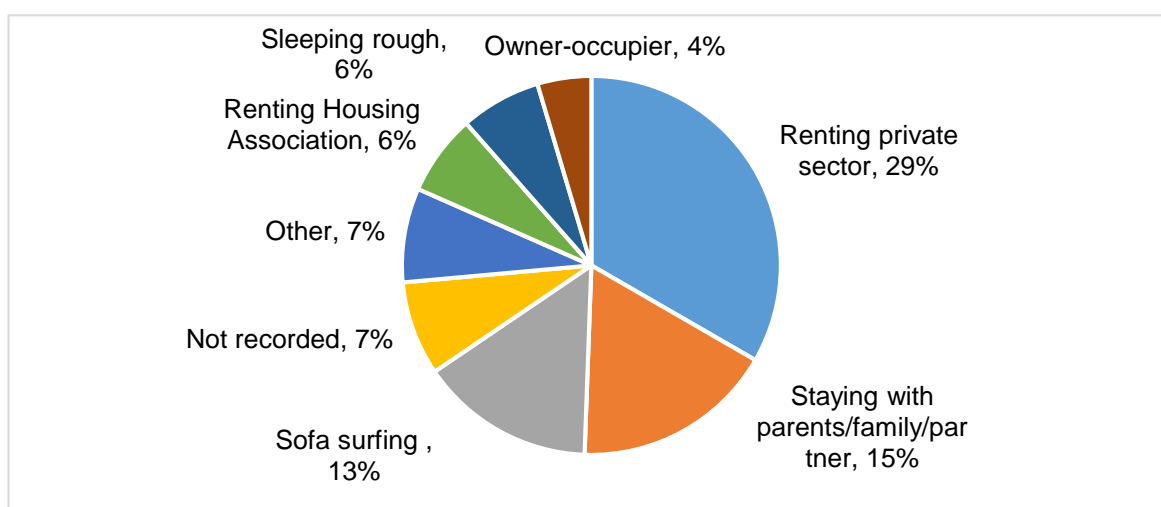


General Trends – Oct 2012-Sept 2017

- Total number of new service users has declined.
- 78% have been 1st time enquiries.
- 74% are between 18-44 years old.
- 43% consider themselves to have a disability that affects day-to-day life.
- 53% are female.
- 80% are single and 65% have no dependants. Of those with dependants 48% have 1 child, 29% 2 children.
- Average profile of the Housing Options service user is single male/female, no dependants between the ages 18-44 or single female parent 18-34 years old with 1-2 children.

Housing Status

Figure 6: Top 8 declared housing statuses of service users by overall percentage – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)



- The top housing status of enquirers was renting in the private sector (29%), followed by staying with family, friends or partner (15%) and sofa surfing (13%).

3.3 Youth Homelessness

- 30% of 18-24 year olds quoted parental eviction as the reason for homelessness, 15% due to other family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate.
- Overall, 18-24 year olds are most likely to have been made homeless from their family home (54% of all parental evictions).

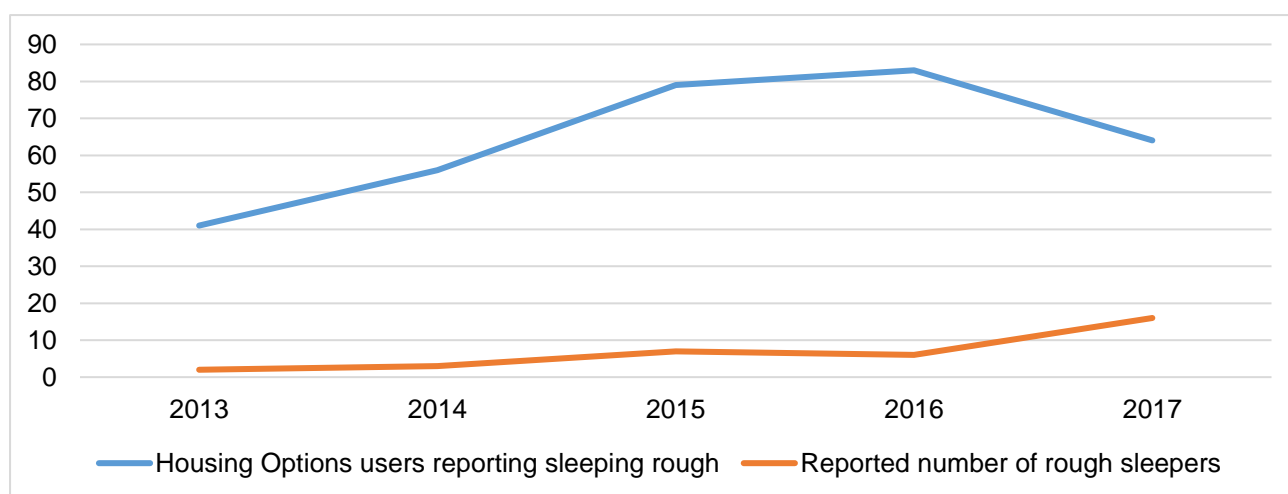
3.4 Rough Sleeping

- 6% (318) of applicants stated that they were sleeping rough over the period Oct 2012-Sept 2017.

Table 3: Street homelessness – 2013-2017 (HO data)

Year	Housing Options users reported sleeping rough	Reported number of rough sleepers on one night
2013	41	2 (estimated)
2014	56	3 (estimated)
2015	79	7 (estimated)
2016	83	6 (estimated)
2017	64	16 (actual)

Figure 7: Street homelessness counts v reported rough sleeping – 2013-2017 (HO data)



- The number of rough sleepers counted on the 15th of November was relatively higher than what has been previously estimated. However, this is in line with national trends which have seen an ongoing upward trend for estimated rough sleeper numbers, up by a total of 132% since 2010.¹

¹ 2017 [Homelessness Monitor](#) p. 53

4 Reasons for homelessness in East Staffordshire

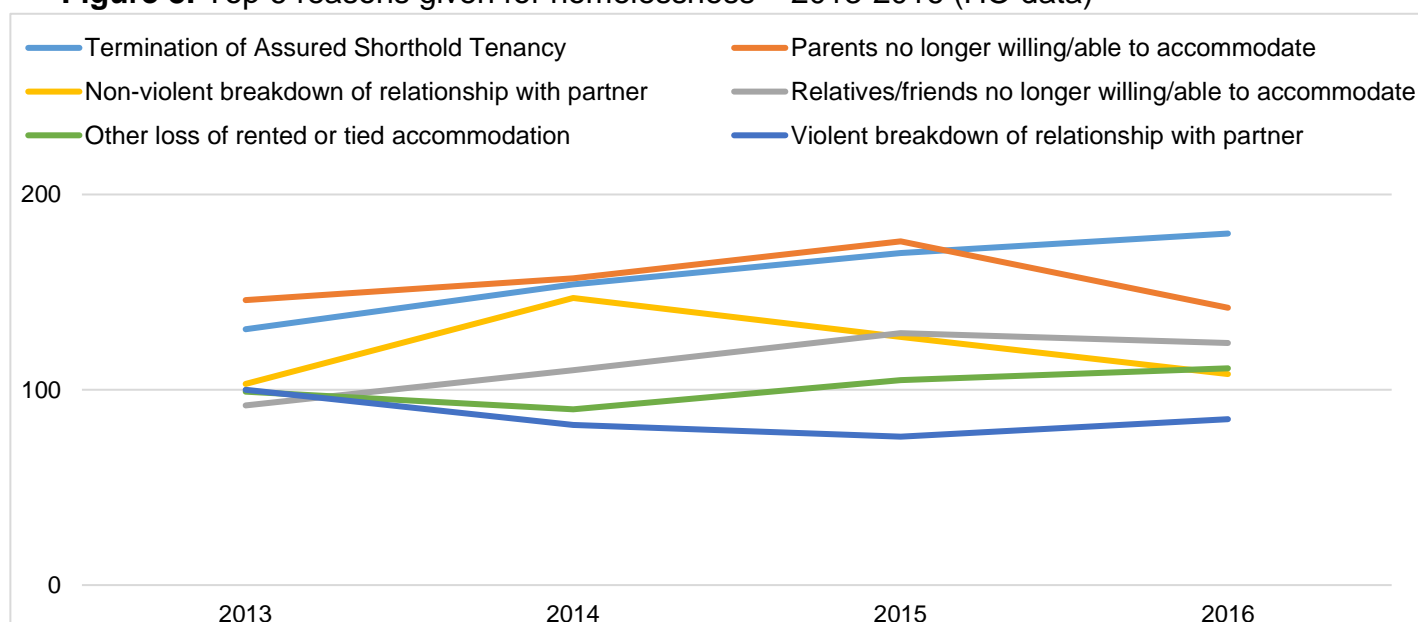
Table 4: Top 7 reasons given for homelessness by Housing Options service users – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

Reason given for homelessness	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Av.
	%						
Non-violent breakdown of relationship	19.0	12.9	16.8	14.5	13.0	17.5	15.6
Other loss of rented/tied accommodation	8.9	12.4	10.3	12.0	13.3	13.3	11.7
Relatives/friends no longer willing/able to accommodate	13.1	11.5	12.6	14.8	14.9	13.5	13.4
Parents no longer willing/able to accommodate	24.4	18.3	18.0	20.2	17.1	16.8	19.1
Rent arrears	11.9	16.1	15.3	10.3	9.9	10.1	12.3
Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)	13.7	16.4	17.6	19.5	21.6	19.1	18.0
Violent breakdown of relationship	8.9	12.5	9.4	8.7	10.2	9.7	9.9

Top reasons for homelessness continue to be the same as those identified in the 2008-2013 review:

- Parents/family/friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (av. 32.5%)
- Breakdown of relationship with partner, in most cases non-violent (av. 15.6%) than violent (av. 9.9%).
- Loss of rented accommodation, including termination of AST, rent arrears and other reasons (av. 42%).

Figure 8: Top 6 reasons given for homelessness – 2013-2016 (HO data)



- There has been a rise in termination of AST being quoted as reason for homelessness or threat of homelessness this is in line with national trends, with annual losses of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) having almost quadrupled nationally over 2009-16.²

²2017 [Homelessness Monitor](#) p. 86

5 Predicting future levels of homelessness in East Staffordshire

5.1 The Housing Market in East Staffordshire - Availability & Affordability

Home Ownership

- According to the [2014 SHMA](#), only 35% of East Staffordshire Households could afford the median house price in the Borough.³

Private Rented Sector

- The private rental sector as housing tenure grew by 77% 2001-2011.⁴
- Median rent levels in the Borough have not substantially risen 2014-2017⁵.
- However, private rented housing is not readily available to all households in housing need.

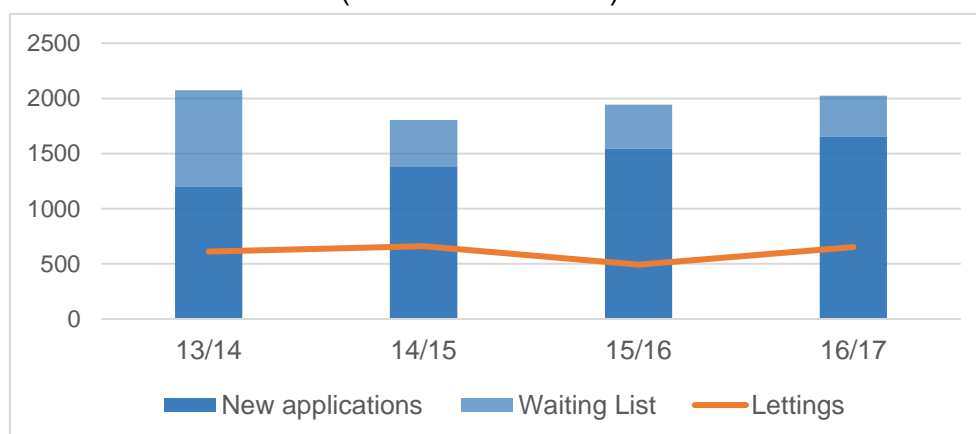
The main reasons for this are:

- The market is sufficiently competitive to allow landlords to be selective about tenants. This means benefit claimants and low-income or insecure income households have difficulty finding and securing suitable private rented housing.⁶
- The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) freeze and Benefit cap further limit the options of affordable private rented housing to claimants (See Table 5 below).

Social Rented Sector

- There are around 3 applications to every allocation for housing association properties.

Figure 9: Number of new applicants and total number of applicants on waiting list v allocations – 2013/14-2016/17 (Trent & Dove data)



- Moreover, the SHMA estimates a need for an additional 1,483 affordable homes between 2012-31⁷.

³ [Strategic Housing Market Assessment Oct 2013](#), updated April 2014, ESBC p.74

⁴ Office for National Statistics Census 2001 and Census 2011

⁵ Valuation Office Agency Reference Rents, comparison of Jan 2014, Jan 2015, Jan 2016 & Oct 2017

⁶ SHMA p. 182

⁷ 42% of projected outstanding permissions for market housing led development above the threshold. SHMA p. 194

5.2 National Policy and Implications for Homelessness

Welfare reform

- **Universal Credit (UC)** – There are concerns about the difficulties that some of the arrangements for UC pose for vulnerable households e.g. move away from direct payment to landlords and 5 week initial waiting periods.⁸
- **LHA freeze** – Rates are restricted to the lower 30th percentile of rents, which limits the number of properties available to benefit claimants.

Table 5: Private Rental Market Statistics, monthly lower quartile rents April 2016-March 2017 & East Staffordshire LHA rates (Valuation Office Agency + HMRC data)

No. of bedrooms	1 bedroom (shared, studio and flat)	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Lower quartile rents	£325-£395	£475	£550	£750
LHA rates	£240.16-£326.32	£414.24	£494.32	£649.60

- Moreover, the SHMA highlights that there is currently insufficient single room (shared) and 1-2 bedroom properties in the Borough at LHA rates for the number of households receiving those rates.⁹
- **Benefit cap** – There is potential for this policy to lead to homelessness for larger households (2+ children) where movement into employment is not an option through the inability to meet rents.¹⁰

Table 6: Impact of welfare reforms as reason for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) awards – 2015-2017 (to date)

Impact of welfare Reforms	2015	2016	2017
	Number of Awards	Number of Awards	Number of Awards
Benefit Cap	1	18	27
Removal of spare room subsidy	246	248	225
LHA Restriction	89	106	75
Combination of reforms	0	2	3
No impact	56	88	142
Total	392	462	472

- The Benefit Cap, removal of spare room subsidy and LHA restriction have already caused people to apply for DHP to temporarily cover housing costs.

A combination of pressures in the housing market combined with welfare reform could potentially put people at risk of homelessness, notably single young people and larger households relying on benefits. However, it is difficult to predict how welfare reforms will actually impact and how markets will behave.

⁸ 2017 [Homelessness Monitor p. 10-11](#)

⁹ SHMA. p. 179

¹⁰ 2017 [Homelessness Monitor p. 10-11](#)

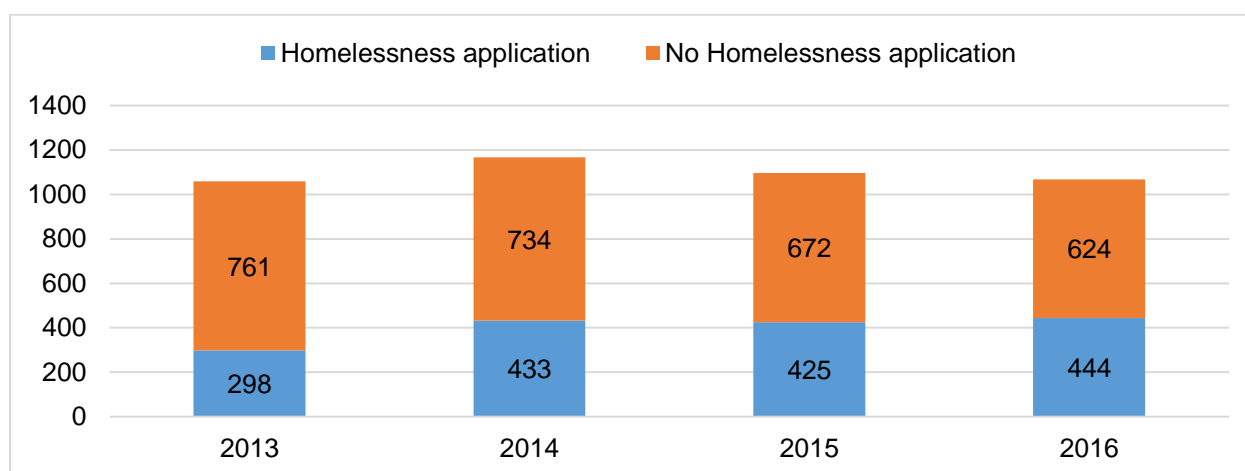
6 Tackling homelessness in East Staffordshire

6.1 Housing Options

The Council's Housing Options service is the primary service to prevent and address homelessness in the Borough.

Outcomes

Figure 10: Outcome of approaches – 2013-2016 (HO data)



- Majority of approaches have been given advice, no homeless application taken.

Table 7: Reasons duty to applicant ended – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

Reason duty to applicant ended	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme	5	47	81	89	103	48	373
Accepted offer of assured shorthold tenancy other than via part 6 offer	1	1	4	5	5	1	17
Accepted qualifying offer	2	0	0	1	1	0	4
Applicant withdrew before accepting accommodation	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Became homeless intentionally	0	1	2	0	1	1	5
Ceased to be eligible	0	1	0	1	5	3	10
Investigations concluded and applicant not eligible	34	142	174	151	130	94	725
Not ended - change of accommodation/ongoing	10	68	51	49	62	108	348
Referred to and accepted by an authority in another Government Office region	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Refused an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme	0	4	13	9	2	1	29
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation	0	9	8	15	5	3	40

Prevention and Relief

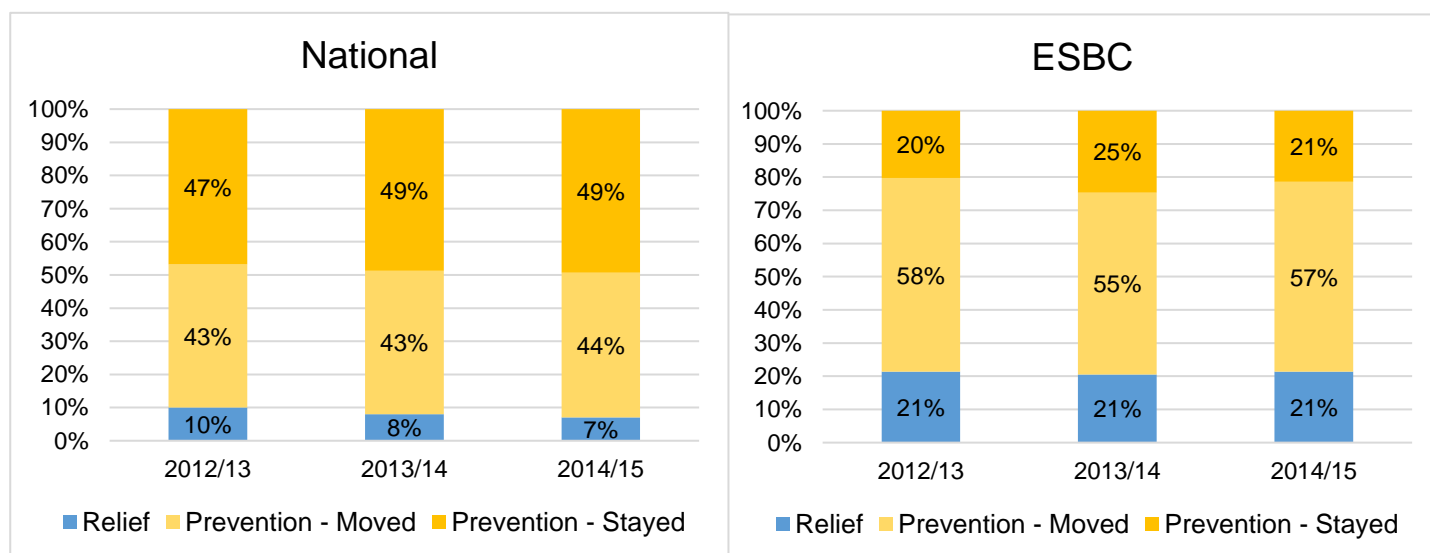
- 'Homelessness prevention' prior to the changes that took effect on 3 April 2018, meant resolving a household's homelessness prior to making a decision about what duty is owed. This could include measures that keep the household in the property from which homelessness was threatened, or where new settled accommodation has been secured.
- 'Homelessness relief' prior to the changes that took effect on 3 April 2018, is where a household has received an adverse homelessness decision, and hence has not been accepted for the main homeless duty. Therefore the authority is not obligated to resolve the households' homelessness, but has nonetheless managed to 'relieve' the homelessness by providing assistance to secure alternative accommodation.

Table 8: Prevention and relief outcomes – Oct 2012-Sept 2017 (HO data)

Intervention	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Action unsuccessful	0	6	4	4	2	0	16
Prevented	17	53	57	62	36	15	240
Relieved	6	19	24	22	17	10	98
Prevention casework not yet concluded	47	290	139	78	115	64	733
No Prevention Casework	172	723	946	932	898	642	4313

Prevention and Relief activity are now distinct duties owed to homeless people, and as result the meaning of these terms has changed significantly.

Figure 11: Homelessness prevention and relief outcomes – ESBC Comparison with National figures – 2012-2015 (P1E returns)



- 63 preventions were help to stay in their current accommodation, 177 were help to move on to other accommodation.
- 42 relief cases were helped into supported accommodation, this is important to note as access to supported accommodation is now extremely limited.

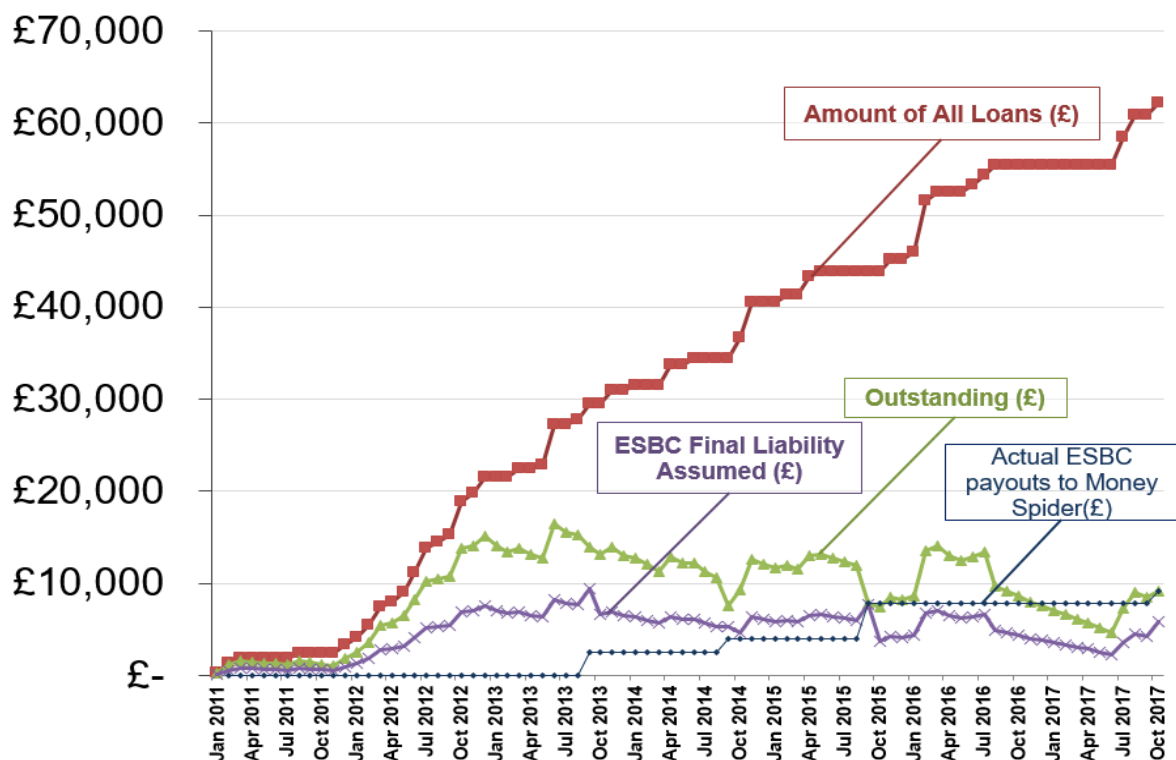
- Compared with national figures ESBC helps more people to move to new accommodation in order to prevent homelessness than to remain in their current accommodation.

6.2 New Tenancy Finance Scheme

The New Tenancy Finance Scheme is a partnership between the Council and Money Spider Credit Union and exists to help people secure private rented accommodation. As indicated above it has been the most successful single prevention activity.

Unlike the schemes operated by many councils which are only open to people with a Priority Need, the East Staffordshire scheme is open all groups of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. There are two components of the scheme, loans and bonds. Loans are provided to the client by Money Spider, guaranteed by the Council, to pay for the client's deposit, rent in advance and essential furniture and are repayable by the client over up to 28 months. Bonds are provided by the Council to landlords in lieu of a deposit from the tenant and last two years – which again is far longer than many such schemes. Hence the scheme is extremely inclusive and extensive.

Figure 12: New-tenancy finance scheme loans v. outstanding repayments - Oct 2012-Oct 2017 (HO data)



- Total loan amount over the period is £62,122.
- Outstanding loan amounts to be repaid £9,214.95.
- Average loan amount £874.96.
- 71 loans in total.
- 6 bonds have been issued over the period – all claimed full amount to be repaid. No bonds issued since 2013.

6.3 Homelessness Prevention Fund

The Council also uses a Homelessness Prevention Fund to make cash payments to prevent homelessness or to enable certain customers who cannot be helped through the New Tenancy Finance Scheme to secure accommodation.

Over the period 2012-Sept 2017 the Council has paid out £18,257.60 in rent advances, admin and application fees, deposits and crisis grants amongst other reasons in order to help homeless households keep or secure accommodation.

6.4 Emergency/Temporary Accommodation

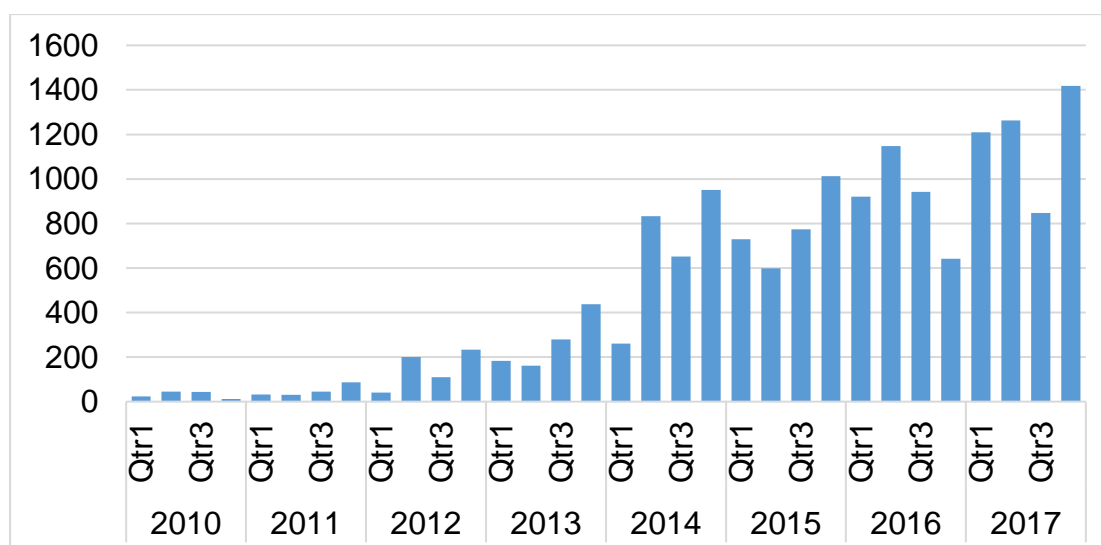
Housing Options has a statutory duty to secure interim accommodation for a household it has reason to believe may be eligible, homeless and to have a Priority Need and temporary accommodation for households found to be eligible, homeless and to have a priority need. The Council currently leases 3 properties from Trent & Dove Housing for this purpose, but many households have to be housed in bed & breakfast establishments, numbers as follows:

Table 9: Total n. of households placed in B&B and total B&B costs to ESBC – 2012-2017 (HO data)

Year	Households placed in B&B	No. of nights spent in B&B	Gross total
2012	63	584	£21,956.83
2013	62	1060	£31,163.30
2014	76	2696	£83,102.68
2015	77	3114	£134,576.65
2016	78	3652	£133,550.19
2017	109	4738	£185,006.93

- Temporary accommodation costs have been increasing considerably.
- 89% placed inside the Borough.

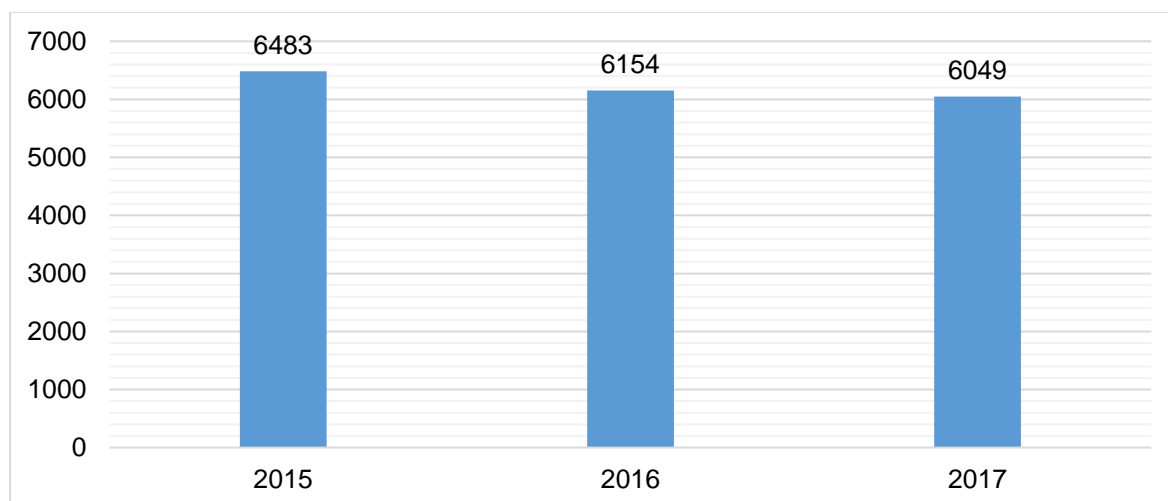
Figure 13: Total number of nights of B&B accommodation – 2012-2017



- Q1 2017 = 39 households were housed in B&B for 32 days on average
- In 2017, 109 households were housed in B&B for 44 days on average

6.5 Housing Benefit (HB)

Figure 14: Total number of housing benefit claimants – 2015-2017



- Council currently pays HB to around 6,000 households. Total number of claimants has decreased since 2015.

6.6 Discretionary Housing Payments

The Council also makes Discretionary Housing Payments to provide short-term (up to 13 weeks) assistance to households who cannot afford their rent whilst they find themselves alternative affordable accommodation.

Table 10: Discretionary Housing Payments awarded – 2015-2017 (HO data)

Purpose of DHP	Number of Awards		
	2015	2016	2017
To help secure and move to alternative accommodation (e.g. rent deposit)	10	6	5
To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant secures and moves to alternative accommodation	43	14	5
To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant seeks employment	205	234	189
To help with ongoing rental costs for disabled person in adapted accommodation	57	73	80
To help with ongoing rental costs for foster carer	0	1	2
To help with on-going rental costs for any other reasons	77	134	191
Total	392	462	472

- The Council helped over 1,000 households through DHP 2015-17.

6.7 Housing Support

Currently in East Staffordshire only the following service is provided:

Provider	Who for
East Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Service	Women or Men suffering or at risk of domestic violence

This service is funded by Staffordshire County Council. Information is also available on its [website](#).

There are a number of voluntary organisations offering housing and homelessness support; including Burton HOPE¹¹, Burton YMCA¹², Love Inspire Foundation¹³, Humanity Unites¹⁴ and The Eaton Foundation¹⁵.

6.8 Target Hardening

Target hardening provides security enhancement works to the homes of people at risk of violence so that they are safe to stay living in the home rather than having to leave and become homeless. The Staffordshire Police Partnerships Sergeant manages the scheme. The Crime Reduction Officer and the Fire Service assess the property and identify what works are needed. The Partnerships Sergeant commissions the works from the contractor and the Council pays the contractor once works have been carried out. The scheme has typically assisted 20 households pa.

6.9 Mortgage Repossession Letters

Mortgage companies are required to notify the Council whenever they have scheduled a date at court for mortgage repossession. They provide the name and address of the borrower and the date of the hearing. The Council writes to all borrowers with advice and encouraging them to contact Housing Options for assistance.

6.10 Activities to Increase Housing Supply

The Council engages in a number of activities which aim to increase housing supply.

- Landlords Forum meetings are held 2-3 times per year
- Promotion of lodging on ESBC's website and with a dedicated information pack for householders letting out their properties
- Promotion of the bond scheme

See ESBC's [2015-2020 Housing Strategy](#) for the Council's overall strategy for housing supply.

¹¹ <https://www.facebook.com/HelpingOurPeopleEat/>

¹² <http://www.burtonymca.org/>

¹³ <https://loveinspire.wpengin.com/>

¹⁴ https://www.facebook.com/Humanityunitesuk/?hc_location=ufi

¹⁵ <http://www.theeatonfoundation.org.uk/>

6.11 Supported Accommodation

Table 11: Supported accommodation places in East Staffordshire

Service	Provider	Client Group	Units
Epworth House	Sanctuary Housing Association	People with Learning Disabilities	13
Staffordshire Additional Housing Management Service (Bradley Court, Uttoxeter)	Rethink	People with Mental Health Problems	7
Refuge Asian Women's Service	Refuge	Women at Risk of Domestic Violence	3
YMCA Housing	Burton YMCA	Mixed Homeless aged 18-35	40
YMCA Reconnect	Burton YMCA	Mixed Homeless aged 18-64	31

- The number of supported housing units has severely decreased.
- There was an additional night shelter provision for rough sleepers from the YMCA (15 beds) which was available Dec 2017 – March 2018.

6.12 Citizens Advice

East Staffordshire Citizens Advice offers free civil legal advice for people living or working in East Staffordshire. The CA receives funding from the Council, from Staffordshire County Council and from the Money Advice Service Financial Inclusion Fund.

6.13 Family Mediation Scheme

Burton YMCA deliver a scheme providing mediation between young people and their parents with the aim of preventing homelessness. The Scheme has now obtained funding from Burton Breweries Charitable Trust until 2019, and saw 148 clients in 2017. Outcomes reported in the 2012 annual report are as follows:

Remains living at home	20
Returned home after leaving	3
Planned move to YMCA	8
Planned move elsewhere	1
Mediation ongoing	10

The Scheme reports that it needs to recruit and train volunteer mediators to continue the growth in the service and that it also needs to reach ethnic minority families.

7 Resources available to the council for tackling homelessness in East Staffordshire

7.1 The Council's Budget

The Council's budget for homelessness over the coming years is as follows:

	Approved Budget 18/19	Approved Budget 19/20	Approved Budget 20/21
Staff Costs	177,095.00	179,618.00	182,179.00
Running Costs	12,350.00	12,350.00	12,350.00
Homeless Prevention Grants	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Accommodation Costs	185,500.00	185,500.00	185,500.00
Accommodation Income	-123,840.00	-123,840.00	-123,840.00
Total Budget	252,105.00	254,628.00	257,189.00

7.2 Council Reserves

The Council holds £286,440.80¹⁶ in homelessness reserves. These funds are earmarked as follows:

- Funding is held in reserves to cover liabilities under the New-tenancy Finance Scheme. At the end of 2017 clients owed Money Spider £9,214.95 which is guaranteed by the Council. The Council aims to hold monies to cover 50% of the sum owed at any one time.
- One off payments such as those made under the Target Hardening¹⁷ and the Homeless Prevention Fund¹⁸ are drawn from reserves.
- The Council is using these funds to perform the additional duties to homeless households created by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017¹⁹, in particular²⁰:
 - The Council has recruited 2 new staff on fixed term contracts to increase the frontline assistance available.
 - The Council will be expanding the New-tenancy Finance Scheme to offer loans which address rent arrears, enabling households to remain in the home from which homelessness is threatened.
 - The Council will be improving the offer to private landlords so they are more willing to let their properties to households where they require alternative accommodation. The offer will be identical within & outside the selective licensing area.

¹⁶ Figure is correct as at 9 May 2018

¹⁷ Details at paragraph 6.8

¹⁸ Details at paragraph 6.3

¹⁹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

²⁰ <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/council-democracy/committees/Cabinet/2018-02-12-000000>

- The Council will increase the provision of self-contained temporary accommodation.

The Council will receive additional new burdens funding²¹ and the flexible homelessness support grant²² up to 2019/20 to support the delivery of new duties to the homeless. These funds will be added to the reserves when received, and drawn down as required.

7.3 Council Staffing and Buildings

The Council's Housing Strategy and Housing Options Department provides housing advice and homelessness services, and comprises 8 full time staff (including the 2 staff on fixed term contracts).

The Council's Customer Service Centre in Burton hosts the Housing Options service, and Customer Service Centre staff in Burton and Uttoxeter support Housing Options in serving customers.

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-act-new-burdens-funding>

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flexible-homelessness-support-grant-2017-18-to-2018-19>