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Date: 20 November 2024

## Notice of meeting

### Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee

**Date:** Thursday, 28 November 2024

**Time:** 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames TW18 1XB

#### To the members of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee

Councillors:

S.M. Doran (Chair)	C. Bateson	A. Gale
O. Rybinski (Vice-Chair)	M. Bing Dong	R.V. Geach
M. Arnold	L.H. Brennan	K.M. Grant
M.M. Attewell	S.A. Dunn	A. Mathur

Substitute Members: Councillors S.N. Beatty, M. Beecher, T. Burrell, R. Chandler,  
S. Gyawali, S.C. Mooney, J.A. Turner and  
P.N. Woodward

*Councillors are reminded that the Gifts and Hospitality Declaration book will be available outside the meeting room for you to record any gifts or hospitality offered to you since the last Committee meeting.*

**Spelthorne Borough Council, Council Offices, Knowle Green**

**Staines-upon-Thames TW18 1XB**

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## Agenda

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- 1. Apologies and Substitutes**

To receive apologies of absence and notification of substitutions.
- 2. Minutes** **3 - 18**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024 as a correct record.
- 3. Disclosures of Interest**

To receive any disclosures of interest from Councillors in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for members.
- 4. Questions from members of the Public**

The Chair, or their nominee, to answer any questions raised by members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 40.

At the time of publication of this agenda no questions were received.
- 5. Forward Plan** **19 - 22**

To consider the Forward Plan for committee business.
- 6. Community Wellbeing & Housing - Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings for 2025/26** **23 - 46**
- 7. Household Support Fund Phase 6** **To Follow**
- 8. Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy** **47 - 150**

To review the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for public consultation.
- 9. Placement Policy for Emergency Accommodation** **151 - 160**

To review the placement policy for emergency accommodation.
- 10. An update from the Environmental Health Department on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** **161 - 172**

To note the update report from the Environmental Health Department on Houses in Multiple Occupation.

**Minutes of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee  
24 September 2024**

**Present:**

Councillor O. Rybinski (Vice-Chair)

**Councillors:**

M. Arnold	L.H. Brennan	K.M. Grant
M.M. Attewell	S.A. Dunn	
C. Bateson	A. Gale	

**Substitutions:** Councillors S. Beatty, T. Burrell, and S.C. Mooney

**Apologies:** Councillors S.M. Doran, M. Bing Dong, R.V. Geach and A. Mathur

**26/24 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2024 were agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

**27/24 Disclosures of Interest**

There were none.

**28/24 Questions from members of the Public**

There were none.

**29/24 Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities 2024-2026**

The Community Safety Manager presented the report on the creation of a new Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities 2024-2026. This plan replaced the previous plan and incorporated statutory and local crime and disorder reduction measures through the Spelthorne Safer Stronger

Partnership. The plan had recently been sent out for public consultation to assess the community perception of crime and disorder.

Members acknowledged that this was an informative report which provided useful information for residents. The Committee queried how long the consultation on community safety will be open to the public. The Community Safety Manager confirmed the survey will be open for six weeks from 9 September until 18 October 2024. Thereafter, a noting report on the results of the consultation will be published.

The Committee raised there had been significant increases in Spelthorne this year in acquisitive crimes compared to last year, and queried whether targeted plans to resolve these crimes, particularly in established hotspots was being considered. The Community Safety Manager confirmed that the current defined hotspots for retail crimes was Staines Town Centre and Sunbury Cross. Plans for dealing with priority areas including acquisitive crime were outlined within the report.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Note the report; and
2. Approve the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities 2024-26.

### **30/24 Q and A with Borough Commander**

The Borough Commander, Inspector Matthew Walton introduced himself and invited members to raise any issues that they or residents may be concerned about.

The Committee noted that incidents of violent crimes had heightened recently with concerning reports regularly being shared on social media. The Borough Commander explained that violent crimes had increased nationally, however arresting and charging perpetrators of serious violent crimes was a priority. Various violent crime reduction projects were also ongoing across the country and there were aspirations for Surrey Police to progress these ideas in our borough.

The Committee acknowledged that many of those engaging in crime within Spelthorne were travelling by train from outside the borough into stations such as Sunbury and Ashford where there was no manned presence or barriers to prevent them from leaving. The Committee queried whether Surrey Police could trial a manned presence around these stations and see if it makes any difference to wider offending. Inspector Walton clarified that safety in train stations fell into the remit of the British Transport Police, however, Surrey Police were in regular contact to raise concerns with this force as well as British Rail. Consideration would be given to initiating a targeted operation in future on certain stations together with British Transport Police.

Members raised that residents were often reluctant to report crimes due to lengthy response times and asked what steps were being taken to improve this situation. The Borough Commander detailed that ever increasing demands, lack of staff and funding, the increasing number of incidents and prioritisation of incidents was collectively contributing to slower response times. Generally, physical risk was prioritised over property risk however Surrey Police were making all efforts to mitigate delays for all reports.

The Committee questioned whether Surrey Police had sufficient resources to support staff, particularly in relation to wellbeing. Inspector Walton identified that there were budget and resourcing challenges within the force, which had knock on effects on staff physical and mental health. There were a number of wellbeing services which police staff and officers could access for support.

Members highlighted that recent plain clothes patrols in Shepperton High Street had been useful in developing intelligence related to shopliftings to support local businesses. Members insisted that similar proactive operations should follow as many small shops were losing stock and customers were intimidated. Inspector Walton reinforced that a number of targeted operations were in place to reduce retail crimes in Spelthorne's high streets.

The Committee asked how understaffing was impacting the force. The Borough Commander responded that although recruitment into the force was doing well in some areas, there was still a lack of PCSOs and Police Staff which resulted in warranted officers spending more time in office rather than on the street. There were further issues with retention and the fact there was a growing young force who were less experienced in policing.

The Committee stated that drugs offences were taking place regularly in the same locations across the borough, and asked whether a breakthrough on identifying repeat offenders was approaching. The Borough Commander informed that drug dealing reporting had gone up by 13-14 percent in the last year which was positive as intelligence from the community was necessary to carry out arrests and enforce closure orders on residences.

The Committee discussed growing concerns around knife crime, particularly for the parents of children transitioning into Secondary Schools as this was their first experience of independence. The Committee agreed youth programs were good forums to educate and deter younger people from engaging in knife crime, and the police should communicate any available opportunities to parents and schools. The Borough Commander concurred that Youth Clubs and projects were useful and similar groups were being piloted in organisations across the borough. For instance, the recent Junior Citizen event was well received and further sessions were due to be scheduled.

The Community Development Manager presented the report on the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy 2024-2028.

The current safeguarding policy had been updated to comply with statutory requirements. The main amendments to the policy included a revised continuum of support, updated guidance on referrals and captured new information on data sharing when dealing with safeguarding incidents.

The Committee queried the scope of Spelthorne's Strategic Safeguarding Board and how it fed into the wider County safeguarding function. The Community Development Manager advised that the board was held quarterly with agenda items featuring training updates, learning from serious case reviews and any concerns around referrals. The current focus was on developing appropriate safeguarding training for Councillors. Spelthorne worked in partnership with the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and the Surrey Adult Safeguarding Board (SSAB) and referred all safeguarding concerns to Surrey County Council as they had the statutory responsibility for this in Surrey.

The Committee asked whether communications between all safeguarding agencies in Surrey were sufficient enough to ensure a streamlined reporting process. The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that at Spelthorne there was a streamlined procedure for Safeguarding Champions to make referrals however it was for Surrey County Council as the lead authority to comment on the investigation of referrals.

The Committee requested an indicative timeline of when Councillor safeguarding training will be scheduled. The Community Development Manager suggested there were a number of training options to consider and logistical points to clarify including choosing a provider and whether they could facilitate online training. Lisa agreed to explore training options and anticipated this will be confirmed in the next three to six months.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Make a recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee to approve the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy 2024-2028.
2. Make a recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee to delegate authority to the Strategic Safeguarding Lead in consultation with the Chair of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee to approve minor amendments and updates to the Policy.

### **32/24 Group Training Licences in Parks**

The Committee considered a report from the Leisure Development Manager on Group Training Licences in parks. The report set out the objective to adopt a new procedure and invite applications to ensure fitness instructors who use

our parks have licences in place. This would also include a new pricing structure, offering a lower price for groups with less participants.

The Committee initially expressed that this was a proactive arrangement which would regulate activity in our parks, particularly as all fitness trainers will be required to provide risk assessments and public liability insurance.

Other members raised that the proposal to issue licences along with fees and charges was not a priority for the Council. This new arrangement was seen to disadvantage self-employed individuals and would potentially discourage trainers from using our parks. It was suggested that an alternative process should be implemented to instead register with a one off nominal fee and allow trainers to carry digital passes for identification purposes. The Leisure Development Manager emphasised that this procedure was intended to safeguard residents as well as trainers. The pricing structure had been moderated since this report was previously presented at Neighbourhood Services Committee in March 2024 and was also based on other authorities, presenting good value for money.

The Committee considered whether there was a risk that associated fees and charges may increase in future to cover the costs to supervise the activity in parks. The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that he did not expect the fees and charges to increase.

It was proposed by Councillor Bateson, and seconded by Councillor Arnold to approve the preferred recommendation subject to reviewing this arrangement after one year and reporting back to Committee to ensure this new arrangement was working well and that fees and charges remained the same.

The Committee voted on the amended recommendation and by majority vote, the Committee **resolved** to approve the issuing of licences for fitness training including the proposed pricing structure whereby instructors pay a nominal fee subject to reviewing this arrangement after one year and reporting back to Committee.

### **33/24 Establishment of Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group and Terms of Reference**

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Lead, Housing on the establishment of a Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group and Terms of Reference which was intended to support the on time delivery of the strategy. Four members had already volunteered to sit on this Working Group, and approval will allow them to continue playing an active role from the outset.

The Committee considered whether the task group was required as it was unnecessarily involving members in strategic activities and creating extra work for Officers involved. The Strategic Lead, Housing confirmed that the

working group will allow expertise to be shared by colleagues to inform new strategic priorities and will facilitate ongoing engagement with members outside of formal committee meetings. Other members noted that it was good practice to facilitate a working group to involve interested councillors.

The Committee requested that further details on the timeline and implementation of the strategy be provided and to clarify whether the strategy will be referred to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for final approval.

Committee **resolved** to:

1. Agree the establishment of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group ('the Working Group').
2. Agree the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group, outlined in Appendix A.
3. Agree membership of the Working Group, including the nomination of any Elected Members.

#### **34/24 Forward Plan**

The Committee **noted** the Forward Plan

#### **35/24 Exclusion of Public and Press**

It was proposed by Councillor Bateson, seconded by Councillor Gale and resolved to exclude the public and press in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **36/24 Bringing the service at White House and Harper House in house**

#### **37/24 Actions arising from the meeting**

-Lisa Stonehouse, Community Development Manager agreed to explore Councillor Safeguarding training Options and schedule a session in within three to six months.

-Mary Holdaway, Leisure Development Manager agreed to explore alternative Group Training Licensing procedures suggested by members that could be considered in future.

-Steph Green to provide further details on the timeline and implementation of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy.



-The Deputy Chief Executive agreed to provide a more detailed service plan on bringing the service at White House and Harper House in house with further financial breakdown to be provided to committee members during the budget setting process (To be actioned by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Group Head Assets).

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## Spelthorne Borough Council Services Committees Forward Plan and Key Decisions

This Forward Plan sets out the decisions which the Service Committees expect to take over the forthcoming months, and identifies those which are **Key Decisions**.

A **Key Decision** is a decision to be taken by the Service Committee, which is either likely to result in significant expenditure or savings or to have significant effects on those living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the Borough.

Please direct any enquiries about this Plan to [CommitteeServices@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteeServices@spelthorne.gov.uk)

## Spelthorne Borough Council

### Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee Forward Plan for 28 November 2024

Anticipated earliest (or next) date of decision and decision maker	Matter for consideration	Key or non-Key Decision	Decision to be taken in Public or Private	Lead Officer
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 28 11 2024	Community Wellbeing & Housing - Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings for 2025/26	Non-Key Decision	Public	Mahmud Rogers, Joint Financial Services Manager
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 28 11 2024	Draft Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	Non-Key Decision	Public	Stephanie Green, Housing Strategy and Policy Officer
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 28 11 2024	Emergency Accommodation Placement Policy	Non-Key Decision	Public	Stephanie Green, Housing Strategy and Policy Officer
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 28 11 2024	Household Support Fund Phase 6	Non-Key Decision	Public	Stephen Mortimer-Cleevely, Strategic Lead, Independent Living
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 28 11 2024	Houses in Multiple Occupation	Non-Key Decision	Public	Fidelma Bahoshy, Senior Environmental Health Manager
Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 07 01 2025  Council 27 02 2025	Annual Grant Awards 2025/2026	Non-Key Decision	Public	Lisa Stonehouse, Community Development Manager

Date of decision and decision maker	Matter for consideration	Key or non-Key Decision	Decision to be taken in Public or Private	Lead Officer
<p>Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 07 01 2025</p> <p>Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee 11 03 2025</p>	Leisure Strategy	Non-Key Decision	Public	<p>Kamal Mehmood, Strategic Lead for Leisure and Community Development</p> <p>Mary Holdaway, Sports and Active Lifestyle Officer</p>

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# Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee

28<sup>th</sup> November 2024



<b>Title</b>	Community Wellbeing & Housing - Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings for 2025/26
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision and recommendation to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Report Author</b>	Mahmud Rogers Joint Financial Services Manager
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	n/a
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Community Addressing Housing Need Resilience Service Delivery
<b>Recommendations</b>	Committee is asked to: 1. Review the budget, Fees and Charges, Growth and Savings proposals for Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee 2. Approve the Budget, Fees and Charges, Growth and Savings proposals for Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee 3. Recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee that they approve the proposed budget, Fees and Charges, Growth and Savings proposals for Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	Councils have a statutory duty to balance their budgets. It is important that we take a medium-term approach in ensuring that we can take action sufficiently early to ensure the Council's Revenue Budget remains financially sustainable.

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A robust budget planning process helps organisations to manage their resources with economy, efficiency and effectiveness</li> <li>Once the Outline Budget has been considered by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in December it is anticipated that further savings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have a robust and sustainable 2025/26 budget that meets the needs of the service and provides a resilient financial position to the Council as a whole.</li> <li>The 2025/26 Budget planning process commenced in May 2024 and must be completed and</li> </ul>

across the Committee will need to be identified and that Committees will be asked to address this in the January/February cycle	approved by Council in February 2025.
<b>This is what we want to do about it</b>	<b>These are the next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee reviews and agrees provisionally revenue growth &amp; savings bids, fees &amp; charges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That this Committee review the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, Growth and Savings proposals</li> <li>Approve the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, Growth and Savings</li> <li>Recommend that Corporate Policy &amp; Resources Committee approve the proposed fees and charges, Growth and savings for 2025-26</li> </ul>

This report seeks to present the draft Budget, Fees and charges, Capital, Growth and Savings bids for Community Wellbeing & Housing for review & consultation. The purpose is giving the Committee an early opportunity to comment and shape the Budget before it is further refined after Christmas

## 2. Key issues

The attached appendixes give full detail of the Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings proposed.

### Fees and Charges

2.1 A general uplift in discretionary fees and charges of 4% has been applied as the default, except where managers have undertaken benchmarking and provided a rationale for a different uplift, with figures rounded.

Note that currently an uplift for Meals on Wheels from £4 to £5 is included for the Committee to consider. It is acknowledged that this is a 25% increase, but this would be the first increase in the charge for five years, during which time there has been significant inflation in food and fuel costs. Our meal charges are now significantly less than nearby councils (one charging £7 and another nearly £6). Salary uplifts have had a small impact on viability, increasing our staffing costs by £13,000 over 5 years, by far the biggest contributor is food price inflation. We currently deliver 163 meals per day. The table below shows how the deficit or subsidy has been growing over the years:

Fin Year	Deficit	Food Purchases	Vehicle Lease Costs
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20/21	£46,800	£60,000	£22,100
21/22	£49,507	£82,987	£22,100
22/23	£66,657	£96,922	£22,100
23/24	£84,000	£111,787	£22,100
24/25	£105,000	£100,000	£22,100
25/26	£147,800	£100,000	£54,000 (new greener fleet)

2.2 It is estimated that a £1 increase in the meal charge would reduce the deficit to £100k for 2025-26.

### **Revenue Growth and Savings Bids**

Of particular note is the £345k per annum we are currently assuming insurance premium sure to the quantum of Cross Laminated Timber in the new Eclipse Leisure Centre. It should be noted that is very much a worst case, as London Borough of Sutton (who manage our insurance) who are currently evaluating bids for new insurance cover, are optimistic that this will reduce significantly – we will know the outcome in December. Also note increased income from community centre food sales due to a greater volume of sales.

### **3. Options analysis and proposal**

3.1 The Committee has the opportunity to comment on any of the fees and charges, savings or growth items

### **4. Financial management comments**

4.1 The higher the proportion of growth items accepted at this stage and the lower the proportion of savings items accepted at this initial stage of the Budget the more savings are likely to be asked of the Committee in the January cycle. Equally if the proposed fees and charges are trimmed back more income or savings will need to be found elsewhere.

### **5. Risk management comments**

5.1 When considering savings proposals, we need to consider the risk of any adverse impact on service delivery capacity.

### **6. Procurement comments**

6.1 Not applicable

### **7. Legal comments**

7.1 Not applicable

### **8. Other considerations**

8.1 Not applicable

### **9. Equality and Diversity**

9.1 When savings involve reductions to service appropriate Equality Impact Assessments need to be undertaken

### **10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

10.1 Not applicable

## **11. Timetable for implementation**

- 11.1 An aggregated report of all the Committees approved *Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings will be sent to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for final approval, before a report recommending the 2025-26 Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings is sent to Council for their approval at the 27 February 2025 Council meeting.*
- 11.2 Once agreed by Council, the fees and charges proposed are to be implemented from 1 April 2025.

## **12. Contact**

Mahmud Rogers, Joint Financial Services Manager [m.rogers@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:m.rogers@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Background papers: There are none.**

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Community Wellbeing & Housing - Fees and Charges 8.11.24

Appendix 2 - CWB - Revenue Growth at 15.11.24

Appendix 3 - CWB - Revenue Savings 15.11.24



# Fees and Charges

## 2025/26

Printed Date: 08/11/2024

Last modified: 08/11/2024

### A full schedule of the fees and charges for all Council services for the coming year

## Community Wellbeing & Housing

### Day Centres

#### Greeno & Fordbridge Centres (Community Use)

##### Committee/Meeting Rooms

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	558	£17.50	£19.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday (per hour)	561	£19.70	£25.00	E	Discretionary

##### Large Hall

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	551	£26.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Day Time Rates before 6.00 PM (per hour)	553	£30.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening after 6.00 PM (per hour)	554	£48.00	£50.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday (per hour)	555	£48.00	£50.00	E	Discretionary

##### Quiet Lounge

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	562	£17.50	£19.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Day Time Rates before 6.00 PM (per hour)	564	£26.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening after 6.00 PM (per hour)	565	£31.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary

#### Greeno & Fordbridge Centres (Semi Commercial Use e.g. Weight Watchers and Dance Classes)

##### Large Hall

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon - Fri Evening (per hour)	1,222	£34.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary

## Fees and Charges

Printed Date: 08/11/2024 Last modified: 08/11/2024

Appendix 1

				VAT	Statute
Saturday Day Time Rates before 6.00 PM (per hour)	1,223	£37.00	£40.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening after 6.00 PM (per hour)	1,224	£62.00	£65.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday (per hour)	1,225	£63.00	£65.00	E	Discretionary

## Older Peoples Services

### Membership Fees

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Joint Day Centre/Spelride	959	£28.00	£30.00	S	Discretionary
Non SBC Resident	604	£28.00	£30.00	S	Discretionary
SBC Resident	603	£18.20	£19.00	S	Discretionary

## OPAL Group (High Needs)

### Attendance Fees (Daily Charge)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
OPAL	1,692	£42.00	£45.00	O	Discretionary
OPAL	1,691	£42.00	£45.00	O	Discretionary

## Staines Community Centres (Community Use)

### Upstairs meeting room

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	1,435	£17.50	£19.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Daytime (per hour)	1,436	£19.70	£25.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening (per hour)	1,437	£31.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday all day (per hour)	1,438	£31.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary

### Upstairs or downstairs area

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	1,431	£21.30	£25.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Daytime (per hour)	1,432	£28.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening (per hour)	1,433	£43.00	£45.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday all day (per hour)	1,434	£43.00	£45.00	E	Discretionary

## Fees and Charges

Printed Date: 08/11/2024

Last modified: 08/11/2024

Appendix 1

VATII

### Staines Community Centres (Semi-Commercial Use)

#### Upstairs meeting room

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	1,443	£23.00	£25.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Daytime (per hour)	1,444	£26.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening (per hour)	1,445	£42.00	£45.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday all day (per hour)	1,446	£42.00	£45.00	E	Discretionary

#### Upstairs or downstairs area

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri Evening (per hour)	1,439	£28.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Daytime (per hour)	1,440	£31.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary
Saturday Evening (per hour)	1,441	£53.00	£55.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday all day (per hour)	1,442	£53.00	£55.00	E	Discretionary

## Environmental Health

### Licensing

#### Street Trading

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
New Application Submission Fee - Deducted From Licence Fee If Application Is Approved	1,243	£101.00	£105.00	S	Discretionary

#### Street Trading - Per Annum

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
a) Consent For Mobile Shops, Ice Cream Vans And The Like For Not More Than 30 Minutes In Any One Place: All Residential Areas Where Streets Are Not Classified Roads	101	£1,036.00	£1,080.00	S	Discretionary
b) Consent For Mobile Shops, Ice Cream Vans And The Like For Not More Than 30 Minutes In Any One Place: Sites In Classified Roads Which Are Not Prohibited Streets	102	£1,036.00	£1,080.00	S	Discretionary
c) Consent For Sites Adjacent To The Public Highway (Static Sites), for Specified Periods From Identified Sites During Street Trading Hours	103	£1,036.00	£1,080.00	S	Discretionary

## Food Safety

### Food Safety

## Fees and Charges

Printed Date: 08/11/2024

Last modified: 08/11/2024

Appendix 1

### VATII

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Voluntary Surrender Of Foodstuffs Certificate	308	£87.00	£90.00	S	Discretionary

### Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Request for re-inspection under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	1,592	£240.00	£250.00	S	Discretionary

### Foodstuffs For Export

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Per Certificate (If Visit Needed)	307	£185.00	£195.00	O	Discretionary
Per Certificate (If Visit Not Needed)	306	£93.00	£100.00	O	Discretionary

## Health and Safety

### Health and Safety

#### Health And Safety At Work Act 1974

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Officer Statement Of Facts - hourly rate	314	£74.00	£77.00	O	Discretionary

## Homelessness

### Homelessness

#### Bed & Breakfast

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Charge Is Maximum Eligible For Housing Benefit (2 Bed Rate, Per Week, Per Individual)	550	£288.46	£288.46	O	Statutory
Charge Is Maximum Eligible For Housing Benefit (4 Bed Rate, Per Week, Per Individual)	1,320	£413.01	£413.01	O	Statutory

## Licensing

### Animal Welfare

#### New or renewal application (Plus all associated vet fees and charges)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Arranging for the Provision of Boarding (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,585	£548.00	£568.00	O	Discretionary



## Fees and Charges

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				VATII	
Boarding for cats (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,577	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Boarding in dogs in kennels - (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,575	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Dog Breeders - (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,569	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Dog Day Care (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,579	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Each additional licensable activity/inspection	1,588	£120.00	£125.00	○	Discretionary
Each additional site visit to hosts as part of the arrangers licence application/ renewal	1,610	£117.00	£125.00	○	Discretionary
Hiring out horses (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,571	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Home boarders (dogs only) (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,573	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Keeping or training animals for exhibition (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,583	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary
Replacement Licence	1,591	£61.00	£65.00	○	Discretionary
Re-rating Inspection.	1,587	£273.00	£285.00	○	Discretionary
Selling Animals as Pets (Application Fee 444, Grant Fee 124)	1,581	£548.00	£568.00	○	Discretionary

## Gambling Act 2005

### Gambling Act Fees

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Adult Gaming Centres: a) New Applications	488	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: b) Annual Fees	489	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: c) Variations	490	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: d) Transfers	491	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: e) Reinstatements	492	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: f) Provisionals Statements	493	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: g) Licence Application (Provisional Statement Holders)	494	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: h) Copy of licence	927	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Adult Gaming Centres: i) Notification of change	926	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): a) New Applications	467	£2,700.00	£2,700.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): b) Annual Fees	468	£600.00	£600.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): c) Variations	469	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): d) Transfers	470	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): e) Reinstatements	471	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory

## Fees and Charges

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Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): f) Provisionals Statements	472	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	○	Statutory
Betting Premises (Excluding Tracks): g) Licence Application (Provisional Statement Holders)	473	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Betting premises (Excluding Tracks): h) Copy of licence	921	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Betting premises (Excluding Tracks): i) Notification of change	920	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: a) New Applications	460	£3,500.00	£3,500.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: b) Annual Fees	461	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: c) Variations	462	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: d) Transfers	463	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: e) Reinstatements	464	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: f) Provisionals Statements	465	£3,500.00	£3,500.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: g) Licence Application (Provisional Statement Holders)	466	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: h) Notification of change	918	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Bingo Clubs: i) Copy of licence	919	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): a) Application Fee (New Permit)	519	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): b) Application Fee (Conversion Of Part 2 / Part 3 Registration)	520	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): c) Annual Fee	521	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): c) Renewal Fee	522	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): e) Variation Fee	523	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit (Where The Applicant Holds A Club Premises Certificate Under The Licensing Act 2003): f) Copy Of Permit	524	£15.00	£15.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: a) Application Fee (New Permit)	513	£200.00	£200.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: b) Application Fee (Conversion Of Part 2 / Part 3 Registration)	514	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: c) Annual Fee	515	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: d) Renewal Fee	516	£200.00	£200.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: e) Variation Fee	517	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Club Gaming Permit: f) Copy Of Permit	518	£15.00	£15.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: a) New Applications	481	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	○	Statutory

## Fees and Charges

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				VATII	
Family Entertainment Centre: b) Annual Fees	482	£750.00	£750.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: c) Variations	483	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: d) Transfers	484	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: e) Reinstatements	485	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: f) Provisionals Statements	486	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: g) Licence Application (Provisional Statement Holders)	487	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: h) Copy of licence	925	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Family Entertainment Centre: i) Notification of change	924	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises - Notification Of Intent To Use Automatic Entitlement (1-2 Machines)	495	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): a) Application Fee (New Permit)	496	£150.00	£150.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): b) Application Fee (Conversion Of S34 Permit)	497	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): c) Annual Fee	498	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): d) Variation Fee	499	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): e) Transfer Fee	500	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): f) Change Of Name	501	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit (3+ Machines): g) Copy Of Permit	502	£15.00	£15.00	○	Statutory
Prize Gaming Permit: a) Application Fee (New Permit)	508	£300.00	£300.00	○	Statutory
Prize Gaming Permit: b) Application Fee (Conversion Of S34 Permit)	509	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Prize Gaming Permit: c) Renewal Fee	510	£300.00	£300.00	○	Statutory
Prize Gaming Permit: d) Change Of Name	511	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Prize Gaming Permit: e) Copy Of Permit	512	£15.00	£15.00	○	Statutory
Small Society Lotteries: a) New Registration	525	£40.00	£40.00	○	Statutory
Small Society Lotteries: b) Annual Fee	526	£20.00	£20.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: a) New Applications	474	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: b) Annual Fees	475	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: c) Variations	476	£1,250.00	£1,250.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: d) Transfers	477	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: e) Reinstatements	478	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: f) Provisionals Statements	479	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: g) Licence Application (Provisional Statement Holders)	480	£950.00	£950.00	○	Statutory

## Fees and Charges

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				VAT	Statute
Tracks: h) Copy of licence	923	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Tracks: i) Notification of change	922	£50.00	£50.00	○	Statutory
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit: a) Application Fee (New Permit)	503	£300.00	£300.00	○	Statutory
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit: b) Application Fee (Conversion Of S34 Perm	504	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit: c) Renewal Fee	505	£300.00	£300.00	○	Statutory
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit: d) Change Of Name	506	£25.00	£25.00	○	Statutory
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit: e) Copy Of Permit	507	£15.00	£15.00	○	Statutory

## HMO Licensing Scheme

### HMO Licence

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Cancelled licence application (to cover aborted work on processing the application)	1,695	£166.00	£175.00	○	Discretionary

## Licensing Act 2003

### Licensing Fees

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Application For Provisional Statement Where Premises Are Being Built etc (Sec 29)	444	£315.00	£315.00	○	Statutory
Application For Transfer Of A Premises Licence (Section 42)	447	£23.00	£23.00	○	Statutory
Application To Vary Licence To Specify Individual As Premises Supervisor (Section37)	446	£23.00	£23.00	○	Statutory
Change Of Relevant Registered Address Of Club (Section 83,(1) Or ( 2)	451	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Duty To Notify Change Of Name Or Address (Section 127)	454	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Interim Authority Notice Following Death Etc Of Licence Holder (Section 47)	448	£23.00	£23.00	○	Statutory
Notification Of Change Of Name And Address (Section 33)	445	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Notification Of Change Of Name Or Alteration Of Rules Of The Club (Section 82)	450	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Personal Licence	423	£37.00	£37.00	○	Statutory
Personal Licence Grant Or Renewal (Section 117)	442	£37.00	£37.00	○	Statutory
Right Of Freeholder Etc To Be Notified Of Licensing Matters (Section 178)	455	£21.00	£21.00	○	Statutory
Temporary Events Notice	422	£21.00	£21.00	○	Statutory
Temporary Events Notice (Section100)	441	£21.00	£21.00	○	Statutory
Theft, Loss etc Of Certificate Or Summary (Section 79)	449	£21.00	£21.00	○	Statutory

## Fees and Charges

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				VAT	Statute
Theft, Loss etc Of Personal Licence (Section 126)	453	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Theft, Loss etc Of Premises Licence Or Summary (Section 25)	443	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory
Theft, Loss etc Of Temporary Event Notice (Section 110)	452	£10.50	£10.50	○	Statutory

## Licensing Register Entries

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
For All Entries ( If Plans Are Required)	440	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	○	Statutory
For All Entries ( No Plans Are Required)	439	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	○	Statutory
Per Individual Copy	438	£26.00	£26.00	○	Statutory

## Premises Licence

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Minor Variation	917	£89.00	£89.00	○	Statutory

## Premises Licence - Annual Fee

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
A	431	£70.00	£70.00	○	Statutory
B	432	£180.00	£180.00	○	Statutory
C	433	£295.00	£295.00	○	Statutory
D	434	£320.00	£320.00	○	Statutory
E	435	£350.00	£350.00	○	Statutory

## Premises Licence - Annual Fee (For Town Centre Pubs Only)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
D X 2	436	£640.00	£640.00	○	Statutory
E X 3	437	£1,050.00	£1,050.00	○	Statutory

## Premises Licence - New And Full Variation Applications

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
A	424	£100.00	£100.00	○	Statutory
B	425	£190.00	£190.00	○	Statutory
C	426	£315.00	£315.00	○	Statutory
D	427	£450.00	£450.00	○	Statutory
D X 2	429	£900.00	£900.00	○	Statutory
E	428	£635.00	£635.00	○	Statutory
E X 3	430	£1,905.00	£1,905.00	○	Statutory

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## Mobile Home Site Licensing Scheme

### Mobile Home Site Licence

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
a) Application for a new site licence - 1 to 5 pitches	1,336	£579.00	£605.00	○	Discretionary
b) Application for a new site licence - 6 to 24 pitches	1,337	£676.00	£705.00	○	Discretionary
c) Application for a new site licence - 25 to 99 pitches	1,338	£747.00	£780.00	○	Discretionary
d) Application for a new site licence - 100+ pitches	1,339	£889.00	£925.00	○	Discretionary
e) Application to alter conditions to a site licence - 1 to 5 pitches	1,340	£277.00	£290.00	○	Discretionary
f) Application to alter conditions to a site licence - 6 to 24 pitches	1,341	£288.00	£300.00	○	Discretionary
g) Application to alter conditions to a site licence - 25 to 99 pitches	1,342	£302.00	£315.00	○	Discretionary
h) Application to alter conditions to a site licence - 100+ pitches	1,343	£326.00	£340.00	○	Discretionary
i) Application to transfer a site licence	1,344	£156.00	£165.00	○	Discretionary
j) Annual fee - 1 to 5 pitches	1,345	£220.00	£230.00	○	Discretionary
k) Annual fee - 6 to 24 pitches	1,346	£271.00	£285.00	○	Discretionary
l) Annual fee - 25 to 99 pitches	1,347	£306.00	£320.00	○	Discretionary
m) Annual fee - 100+ pitches	1,348	£380.00	£395.00	○	Discretionary
n) Recover of cost of enforcement - hourly rate	1,415	£74.00	£80.00	○	Discretionary
o) Fit and proper person register application fee	1,693	£417.00	£435.00	○	Discretionary

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## Pollution

### Scrap Metal Dealers

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Scrap Metal collector fee	1,307	£397.00	£415.00	○	Discretionary
Scrap Metal dealer site license fee	1,308	£629.00	£655.00	○	Discretionary
Scrap Metal Licence Variation	1,315	£71.00	£75.00	○	Discretionary
Scrap Metal replacement of Licence	1,316	£30.00	£35.00	○	Discretionary

## Retail

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VATII

### Registration for skin piercing treatments: acupuncture, tattooing, skin piercing, electrolysis, semi-permanent skin colouring

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Practitioner registration	458	£265.00	£280.00	○	Discretionary
Registration of premises	459	£265.00	£280.00	○	Discretionary
Replacement certificate	935	£61.00	£65.00	○	Discretionary
Variation of registration	1,430	£71.00	£75.00	○	Discretionary

### Sex establishment licence fee

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Change of licence details	1,269	£193.00	£205.00	○	Discretionary
New,Renewal,Intermediate,Temporary	1,268	£3,870.00	£4,025.00	○	Discretionary

### Sex Shop Registration

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
New,Renewal,Intermediate,Temporary	456	£3,870.00	£4,025.00	○	Discretionary
Transfer Of Licence	457	£3,870.00	£4,025.00	○	Discretionary

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## Meals On Wheels

### Luncheon Clubs

#### Service Fees

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Charge Per Meal	609	£4.40	£5.00	○	Discretionary

### Meals on Wheels

#### Service Fees

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Charge for Sandwich	1,683	£1.80	£2.00	○	Discretionary
Charge Per Meal	608	£4.00	£5.00	○	Discretionary

## Pavement Licensing

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### Pavement Licensing

#### Pavement Licensing

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Street Pavement License New	1,785		£500.00	0	Discretionary
Street Pavement License Renewal	1,679	£100.00	£350.00	0	Discretionary

### Public Halls

#### Shepperton Hall

##### Community Use (9am to Midnight) (Hire to local groups)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm per hour	641	£24.00	£25.00	E	Discretionary
Mon-Fri After 5pm per hour	642	£26.00	£30.00	E	Discretionary
Sat 9am to 6pm per hour	643	£30.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary
Sat After 6pm per hour	644	£52.00	£55.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday 9am to 10.30pm per hour	645	£52.00	£55.00	E	Discretionary

##### Semi Commercial Use (9am to Midnight) (Commercial firms providing a community benefit)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm per hour	1,006	£33.00	£35.00	E	Discretionary
Mon-Fri After 5pm per hour	1,016	£36.00	£40.00	E	Discretionary
Sat 9am to 6pm per hour	1,021	£39.00	£40.00	E	Discretionary
Sat After 6pm per hour	1,031	£66.00	£70.00	E	Discretionary
Sunday 9am to 10.30pm per hour	1,221	£66.00	£70.00	E	Discretionary

### Public Health

#### Water Testing Charges

##### Private water supply

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
a) Private water supply sample (each visit)= officer hourly rate plus PLUS all associated external sampling, laboratory and reporting costs	1,027	£100.00	£104.00	0	Statutory



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Analysing a sample taken during monitoring of Group B parameters and monitoring under regulation 11,= office hourly rate PLUS all associated external sampling, laboratory and reporting costs	1,034	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory
b) Risk Assessment (each assessment) = officer hourly rate, PLUS all associated costs for commissioning appropriately trained and competent specialists	1,028	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory
c) Investigation (per investigation) = officer hourly rate, PLUS all associated costs for commissioning competent specialists (including sampling, laboratory analysis, risk assessment and engineering	1,029	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory
d) Granting an Authorisation (per authorisation) = officer hourly rate, PLUS all associated external costs	1,030	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory
e) Analysing a Sample Taken Under Regulation 10 (for parameters referred to in paragraph (1)(a) to (e) of that regulation) = officer hourly rate, PLUS all associated external sampling, laboratory and reporting costs	1,032	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory
f) Analysing a Sample Taken during monitoring of Group A parameters = officer hourly rate, PLUS all associated external sampling, laboratory and reporting costs	1,033	£63.50	£66.00	○	Statutory

## Rodent & Pest Control

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### Rodent and Pest Control

#### Pest Control

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Bedbugs (based on a 3 bedroom property, more than 3 bedrooms subject to survey)	1,260	£128.00	£135.00	S	Discretionary
Fleas, Cockroaches etc. (based on a 3 bedroom property, more than 3 bedrooms subject to survey)	327	£100.00	£105.00	S	Discretionary
Mice (Up to 3 visits)	326	£76.00	£80.00	S	Discretionary
Rats (Up to 3 visits)	325	£58.00	£65.00	S	Discretionary
Wasps (per visit)	1,629	£74.00	£80.00	S	Discretionary

### Stray Dogs

#### Stray Dogs - Collection Fee (comprising of £25 statutory fee, contractor collection fee £187)

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Plus Kennelling of £30/day, if the owner wants their dog delivered back to them £35, and any vet fees incurred charged in addition	295	£223.00	£235.00	○	Discretionary

## SAT

## Fees and Charges

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VATII

### Spelride Accessible Transport (S A T)

#### Membership

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Annual	758	£23.40	£24.00	Z	Discretionary

#### Spelride

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
Per Single Trip	759	£4.70	£5.00	Z	Discretionary
Return Trip	760	£8.30	£9.00	Z	Discretionary

### Taxi Licensing

#### Taxi Licensing fee structure

##### Cancellation of booked appointment fee

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,718	£42.00	£44.00	O	Discretionary

##### Change of Vehicle

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,707	£175.00	£180.00	O	Discretionary

##### DBS

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,717	£47.00	£48.50	O	Discretionary

##### Discounted HC vehicle with wheelchair accessibility

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,709	£127.00	£128.50	O	Discretionary

##### Discounted PH vehicle with wheelchair accessibility

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,708	£125.00	£130.00	O	Discretionary

##### English & Numeracy Test & Retest

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,716	£31.00	£32.00	O	Discretionary

##### Hackney Carriage Conditions Test & Retest

	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
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	Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
	1,713	£52.00	£54.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Hackney Carriage Geographic Test &amp; Retest</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,712	£73.00	£76.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>New Driver Hackney Carriage (1 year)</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,696	£242.00	£249.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>New Driver Hackney Carriage (3 year)</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,697	£395.00	£429.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>New Driver Private Hire (1 year)</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,698	£242.00	£253.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>New Driver Private Hire (3 year)</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,699	£395.00	£429.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Operators 1 year</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,710	£366.00	£367.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Operators 5 year</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,711	£1,027.00	£1,030.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Private Hire Conditions Test &amp; Retest</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,714	£52.00	£54.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Private Hire Geographic Test &amp; Retest</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,715	£52.00	£54.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary
<b>Reissue of PH/HC driver or vehicle licence due to any other reason</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>2024/25 Charge</b>	<b>2025/26 Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Statute</b>
	1,719	£26.00	£29.00	<input type="radio"/>	Discretionary

## Fees and Charges

Printed Date: 08/11/2024

Last modified: 08/11/2024

Appendix 1

VATII

### Renewal Driver Hackney Carriage (1 year)

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,700	£210.00	£233.00	○	Discretionary

### Renewal Driver Hackney Carriage (3 year)

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,701	£452.00	£468.00		Discretionary

### Renewal Driver Private Hire (1 year)

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,703	£204.00	£236.00	○	Discretionary

### Renewal Driver Private Hire (3 year)

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,704	£431.00	£457.00	○	Discretionary

### Replacement of plates

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,720	£24.00	£27.00		Discretionary

### Upgrade Private Hire Driver to Hackney Carriage Driver (Includes 1 attempt at conditions test, 1 attempt at geographic test, vehicle check & processing & issuing driver and vehicle licence)

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,702	£212.00	£234.00	○	Discretionary

### Vehicle Hackney Carriage

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,705	£254.00	£260.00	○	Discretionary

### Vehicle Private Hire

Record	2024/25 Charge	2025/26 Charge	VAT	Statute
1,706	£251.00	£257.00	○	Discretionary

Details of Growth Bid	FTE	FTE / Statutory / Discretionary / Funding	Reason for Growth Bid	Service Area	Committee	Amount £	Funding £	Full / Part Year	Ongoing or one off	General Fund Net Cost 2025/26 £	General Fund Net Cost 2026/27 £	General Fund Net Cost 2027/28 £	General Fund Net Cost 2028/29 £
New CCTV Contract as existing contract is due to finish end of March 2025 with an option to increase by 1 year to March26. Worst case £100k increase.		Discretionary	New CCTV contract for renew in 26/27	Community Safety	Community Wellbeing & Housing	0		Full	Ongoing	0	100,000	100,000	100,000
Additional Resource (Data Team)	1.50	Discretionary	To bring additional resource of 1.5 FTE to the data team which is experiencing added pressure and demand for service. This will include bringing 1 FTE on fixed term contract into a permanent role.- we currently have 1 FTE whose contract is due to expire at the end of June 2025. This is the Data Officer role ,Post number 2767. That role also ensures all the claims to government for funding are submitted and followed up. At present this role is being paid out of the Afghan funding, but the role also covers large additional amount of work with producing data reports, dealing with data subject requests and file copy requests, all of which is incredibly time consuming, and the Council does not have an alternative resource to replace those functions. The demand is growing, and we need to ensure that this role is retained and the capacity further expanded by an additional 0.5 FTE to provide resilience to the team.	Housing Options	Community Wellbeing & Housing	56,000		Full	Ongoing	56,000	56,000	56,000	56,000
Replacement of CIVICA		Discretionary	Civica system will need to be replaced by the end of 2025 to avoid steep cost increases with cloud based operation. The alternatives have been considered and the cheapest option is to proceed with iDocs which is already known within the council. Growth bid is required to cover the cost of iDocs. £14.2k running cost	Housing Options	Community Wellbeing & Housing	14,200		Full	Ongoing	14,200	14,200	14,200	14,200
Locata Improvements		Discretionary	Locata system improvements – following Locata health check, numerous improvements to the way we use Locata are being proposed to improve efficiency and to improve user experience. This upgrade will also free up resources which are needed elsewhere. We request growth bid to unlock the potential and improve efficiency.	Housing Options	Community Wellbeing & Housing	39,000		Full	Ongoing	39,000	39,000	39,000	39,000
Regrade Income Recovery Officer		Discretionary	Regrade of Income Recovery Officer (post number 2758)– this is to provide an adequate financial reward for the work undertaken and dedication to the role. ensure consistency and staff retention.	Housing Options	Community Wellbeing & Housing	3,900		Full	Ongoing	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,916
Municipal Portfolio Insurance Premium		Discretionary	Due to the quantum of Cross Laminated Timber in the new Eclipse Leisure Centre, our insurers consider this produces a significant insurance risk and have increased the premium accordingly – there may be an option to reduce the premium to c. £345k with a mist suppression system installed in the sauna	Leisure Services	Community Wellbeing & Housing	345,000		Full	Ongoing	345,000	345,000	345,000	345,000
Fordbridge DC		Discretionary	Increases in food costs for producing centre meals. The budget is forecasted to be overspent so this is required to ensure the cost of food is fully budgeted for.	Independent Living	Community Wellbeing & Housing	16,000		Full	Ongoing	16,000	16,000	16,000	16,000
Greeno DC		Discretionary	A review of the rental income has resulted in a budget reduction. Historical budget under performance as there is reduced income from hire of the centre	Independent Living	Community Wellbeing & Housing	26,900		Full	Ongoing	26,900	26,900	26,900	26,900
Greeno DC		Discretionary	Increases in food costs for producing centre meals. The budget is forecasted to be overspent so this is required to ensure the cost of food is fully budgeted for.	Independent Living	Community Wellbeing & Housing	6,400		Full	Ongoing	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
Staines DC		Discretionary	Increases in food costs for producing centre meals. The budget is forecasted to be overspent so this is required to ensure the cost of food is fully budgeted for.	Independent Living	Community Wellbeing & Housing	4,000		Full	Ongoing	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Staines DC		Discretionary	A review of the rental income has resulted in a budget reduction. Historical budget under performance as there is reduced income from hire of the centre	Independent Living	Community Wellbeing & Housing	20,500		Full	Ongoing	20,500	20,500	20,500	20,500
	1.50					531,900	0			531,900	631,900	631,900	631,916

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<b>Details of Savings Offered</b>	<b>Explanation of proposed saving</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Full / Part Year</b>	<b>Ongoing / one off</b>	<b>General fund 2025/26 £</b>	<b>General fund 2026/27 £</b>	<b>General fund 2027/28 £</b>	<b>General fund 2028/29 £</b>
Leisure Centre NNDR	Not required anymore - an old contribution made to the old contract provider. Under the new contract the operator covers the costs.	Leisure Centre	Community Wellbeing	Full Year	Ongoing	25,600	25,600	25,600	25,600
Fordbridge DC	Increase in sale of food. Bringing budget in line with income expected from sale of food.	Independent living	Community Wellbeing	Full Year	Ongoing	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Greeno DC	Increase in sale of food. Bringing budget in line with income expected from sale of food.	Independent living	Community Wellbeing	Full Year	Ongoing	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Staines CC	Increase in sale of food. Bringing budget in line with income expected from sale of food.	Independent living	Community Wellbeing	Full Year	Ongoing	18,900	18,900	18,900	18,900
						<b>79,500</b>	<b>79,500</b>	<b>79,500</b>	<b>79,500</b>

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# Community Wellbeing and Housing



28 November 2024

<b>Title</b>	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a Key Decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Steph Green, Assistant Strategic Housing Lead
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Addressing Housing Need
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b> Approve the draft Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for public consultation.
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The Council has a statutory duty to publish a new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every 5 years. The next publication is due by Spring 2025. Officers are looking to take a draft version to public consultation to gauge views.

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group (the 'Working Group') have agreed on a first draft to be considered by the Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1(4) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to publish a new Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of a Homelessness Review, every 5 years.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive feedback from the Committee on the first draft and look to progress to public consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pending Committee's decision, Officers will look to run a public consultation on the first draft. The Working Group will reconvene and make any suggested final amendments to the Strategy before recommending a final draft to Committee for approval.</li> </ul>

1.1 This report seeks the Committee's view on the first draft of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Working Group reviewed the findings from the Homelessness Review (Appendix C), the responses from a survey that was circulated to Housing Options service users from the

last 5 years, and feedback from stakeholder breakout groups. Using these findings, the Working Group has proposed some new strategic priorities for the Committees consideration. Officers are now looking to progress to public consultation to capture final views of residents and stakeholders.

## **2. Key issues**

2.1 The existing Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will expire in Spring 2025. As per the statutory duty to publish a new Strategy every 5 years, Officers have been liaising with the Working Group to formulate a new set of strategic priorities. The draft Strategy is provided in Appendix A with a proposed Action Plan provided in Appendix B.

2.2 Following pre-engagement with stakeholders and service users, combined with findings from a Homelessness Review that analysed data from the last 5 years, the Working Group proposes 3 key strategic areas:

- (a) Partnership working: A multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness.
- (b) Identifying opportunities to address housing need.
- (c) Proactive homelessness prevention and an effective service response.

These strategic priorities are supported by a detailed Action Plan that will act as a working document throughout the Strategy's existence.

2.3 The Government's Homelessness Code of Guidance states that the Council must consult public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate before adopting a Homelessness Strategy. The Council will also wish to consult with service users and specialist agencies that provide support to homeless people in the borough.

2.4 The Council's Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) adviser suggested that they recommend public consultation as best practice, as it is a way to capture the views of groups that may not have been captured in the stakeholder event undertaken prior to the draft being completed. If the Council chooses not to run a public consultation, there is a risk that there may be a community group, faith group in addition to the general public who would not have necessarily had an opportunity to contribute. MHCLG suggested that the Council may wish to undertake a shorter consultation to reflect the early pre-engagement work that has been done.

## **3. Options analysis and proposal**

Option 1: Approve the draft Strategy and run a public consultation for 6 weeks (recommended)

3.1 The draft Strategy has been proposed by the Working Group based on the data from the Homelessness Review and views of the Council's stakeholders and service users. Running a public consultation for a minimum of 6-weeks will ensure the Council has captured these views correctly and it also provides an opportunity to consult with others who may like to contribute.

Option 2: Approve the draft Strategy and run a shorter public consultation for less than 6 weeks

3.2 As Officers have already done some pre-engagement with service users and stakeholders prior to the draft being formed, the Committee may choose to

run a shorter consultation as a way to capture all. However, best practice from the Local Government Association suggests that a Council should plan for up to 6 to 12 weeks for a consultation exercise, to give people enough time to respond.

Option 3: Approve the draft Strategy but do not run a public consultation – propose adoption to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

3.3 There is a requirement to undertake some statutory consultation as noted in 2.3. Whilst Officers have already done some pre-engagement, this option is not recommended as some stakeholders and residents may not have had an opportunity to contribute their thoughts.

Option 4: Approve the draft Strategy with amendments and run a public consultation for 6 weeks

3.4 As noted, the draft Strategy proposed has been formed using supporting data collated in the Homelessness Review and views from stakeholders and service users. The priorities have been formed by the Working Group who have all been briefed on the findings. Any amendments should aim to meet the key themes, otherwise they could risk not being data-led. A full public consultation will capture views that may have been missed from the pre-engagement activities.

Option 5: Approve the draft Strategy with amendments and run a shorter public consultation for less than 6 weeks

3.5 As above, amendments should be in keeping with the themes otherwise they risk not being data driven. It is best practice to run a consultation for a minimum of 6-weeks.

Option 6: Approve the draft Strategy with amendments but do not run a public consultation – propose adoption to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

3.6 There is a risk that amendments may not be in keeping with the data reviewed or of the views collected from service users and stakeholders. If a public consultation is not held, stakeholder and residents would not have had the opportunity to comment on these new suggested amendments.

Option 7: Do not approve the draft Strategy

3.7 This is not recommended due to the timescales involved to approve and adopt a Strategy by Spring 2025. The proposed draft Strategy has been formed following extensive data analysis and pre-engagement with stakeholders and service users.

**4. Financial management comments**

4.1 This will be dependent on actions that arise from the Strategy Action Plan and funding opportunities that may be announced by the Government within the next 5 years. Consideration may need to be given on the resources to support the delivery of the actions throughout the lifetime of the Strategy; these will be reflected in Service Plans.

**5. Risk management comments**

5.1 Should the Council miss the 5 year deadline to approve and publish a new Strategy by Spring 2025, Officers will liaise with MHCLG to request an extension.

## **6. Procurement comments**

- 6.1 Not applicable at this stage. The Council's procurement obligations will be followed should the need arise from actions noted in the Action Plan.

## **7. Legal comments**

- 7.1 Section 1(4) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to publish a new Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of a homelessness review, every 5 years.
- 7.2 The definition of "Homelessness Strategy" is a strategy formulated by a local housing authority for preventing homelessness in their district, securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless, securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district who are or may become homeless, or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again. It further states that a Homelessness Strategy may include specific objectives to be pursued, and specific action planned to be taken.
- 7.3 There is a requirement in Section 3 (8) of the 2002 Act for the local authority to consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate.

## **8. Other considerations**

- 8.1 The Strategy was drafted at a time when the Working Group and the Council were awaiting announcements from the new Government. The Strategy Action Plan is designed to be a working document to allow for additional projects to be weaved in that will help the Council achieve its strategic priorities.
- 8.2 The Action Plan will be monitored by Officers and Strategic Housing Group (made up of Officers and the Committee Chair and Vice Chair). Officers will publish an annual update on the progress made.

## **9. Equality and Diversity**

- 9.1 A full Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken and provided as a background paper. This assessment has not identified any significant impact on equalities.

## **10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

- 10.1 Due regard will be given to any climate change implications that may arise out of the actions from the Strategy Action Plan.

## **11. Timetable for implementation**

- 11.1 If the Committee chooses to consult, a full public consultation can commence earliest from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024. When the consultation closes, the consultation responses will be analysed and a report will be formed. The Working Group will consider the responses and make revised changes to the draft Strategy as appropriate. The final draft Strategy will then be presented to the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee for an approval decision in March 2025. Once a draft has been agreed by the Committee, adoption will then need to be recommended to the Corporate Policy and Resources

Committee (targeting May 2025). The Council's Strategy is due to be refreshed by Spring 2025 and Officers have made MHCLG aware of the Committee meeting dates that are being targeted.

## **12. Contact**

12.1 HousingStrategy@spelthorne.gov.uk

**Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

### **Background papers:**

- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Plans ([Housing Homelessness Rough Sleeping Strategy Plans.pdf](#))
- Establishment of Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group and Terms of Reference ([Establishment of Homelessness Strategy.pdf](#))
- [Appendix A Terms of Reference.pdf](#)
- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Working Group Minutes (October and November 2024 Committee Briefing Packs)
- [Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.pdf](#)

### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A: Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Appendix B: Action Plan
- Appendix C: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review 2019 - 2024

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## **Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030**

April 2025

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## Foreword

I am pleased to introduce you to Spelthorne Borough Council's new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2025-2030. It outlines in detail how we propose to address housing need and prevent and tackle homelessness in Spelthorne using 3 key strategic priorities.



Housing and homelessness are key parts of the Government's domestic agenda, pledging to build 1.5m homes in 5 years and having a cross-government taskforce to tackle homelessness. We are committed partners in this effort and are committed to ensuring residents of Spelthorne have somewhere to call home that is both suitable and affordable. It is vital that our residents have access to effective, specialist support at the earliest opportunity to prevent them from becoming homeless.

This strategy offers exciting opportunities for collaborative working across the statutory and voluntary sector, to maximise the delivery of homelessness prevention and support services in Spelthorne. Its primary aims include:

- Partnership working: A multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness.
- Identifying opportunities to address housing need.
- Proactive homelessness prevention and an effective service response.

We also plan to continue monitoring our service delivery through Strategic Housing Group, a group made up of Officers and Councillors. We plan to continue delivering a regular multi-agency network via our Homelessness Prevention Forum which consists of community partners and other statutory agencies, this will help to highlight areas for continued improvement.

I would like to extend my thanks to our residents, service users, partners and staff members who fed into this ambitious Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which sets the foundations for housing options, homelessness, and rough sleeping prevention services over the next five years.

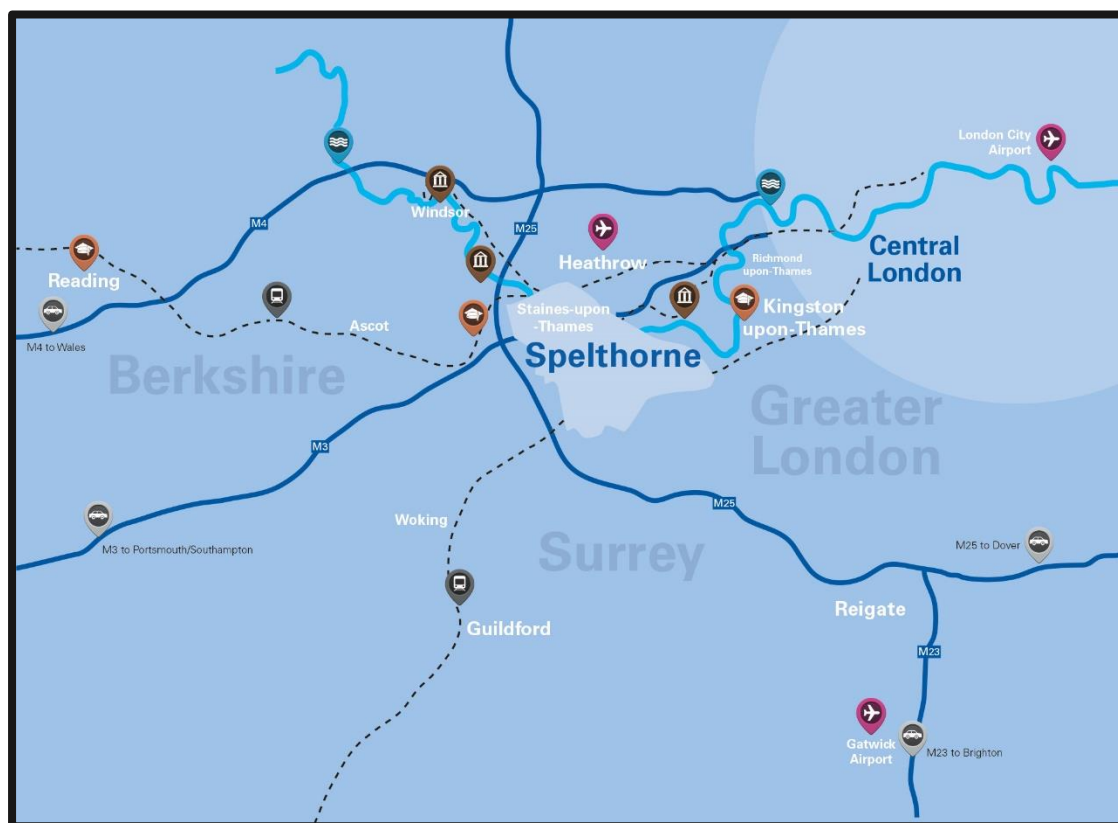
**Councillor Susan Doran**

**Chair for Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee**

## Introduction and overview of Spelthorne

Spelthorne is located on the south-west edge of London and in the north-west of Surrey, neighbouring the boroughs of Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead, Runnymede, Elmbridge, and the London Boroughs of Richmond upon Thames, Hounslow and Hillingdon. The north of the borough borders London Heathrow airport. Spelthorne is densely populated and has five main urban areas: Ashford, Shepperton, Staines-upon-Thames, Stanwell and Sunbury. Outside these urban areas:

- 65% is green belt,
- 30% of the total area is either flood plain or reservoir, and
- We have 12 miles of River Thames frontage.



As of the 2021 Census, Spelthorne has a population of approximately 103,000 and is the 14<sup>th</sup> most densely populated of the South East's 64 local authority areas.

Spelthorne has a slightly lower population of under-30s (33%) compared to the rest of the country (36%), and a slightly higher population of 30-69 year olds (53%) compared with the national average of (51%), The number of residents 70+ is 14%, which is broadly in line with the rest of the nation.

According to the indices of deprivation 2019, the most deprived borough in Surrey is Spelthorne. Spelthorne has the highest number of lone parent

families and the highest level of child poverty in Surrey; it also has the highest under-18 conception rate in the county. The Indices of Deprivation have not been updated since 2019. However, the recent 2021 Census highlights that Spelthorne has the highest level of hardship in Surrey; 33.6% of households experienced at least one category of deprivation in either employment, education, health or housing. That said, residents are largely healthy, with life expectancy for both males and females slightly above the national average.

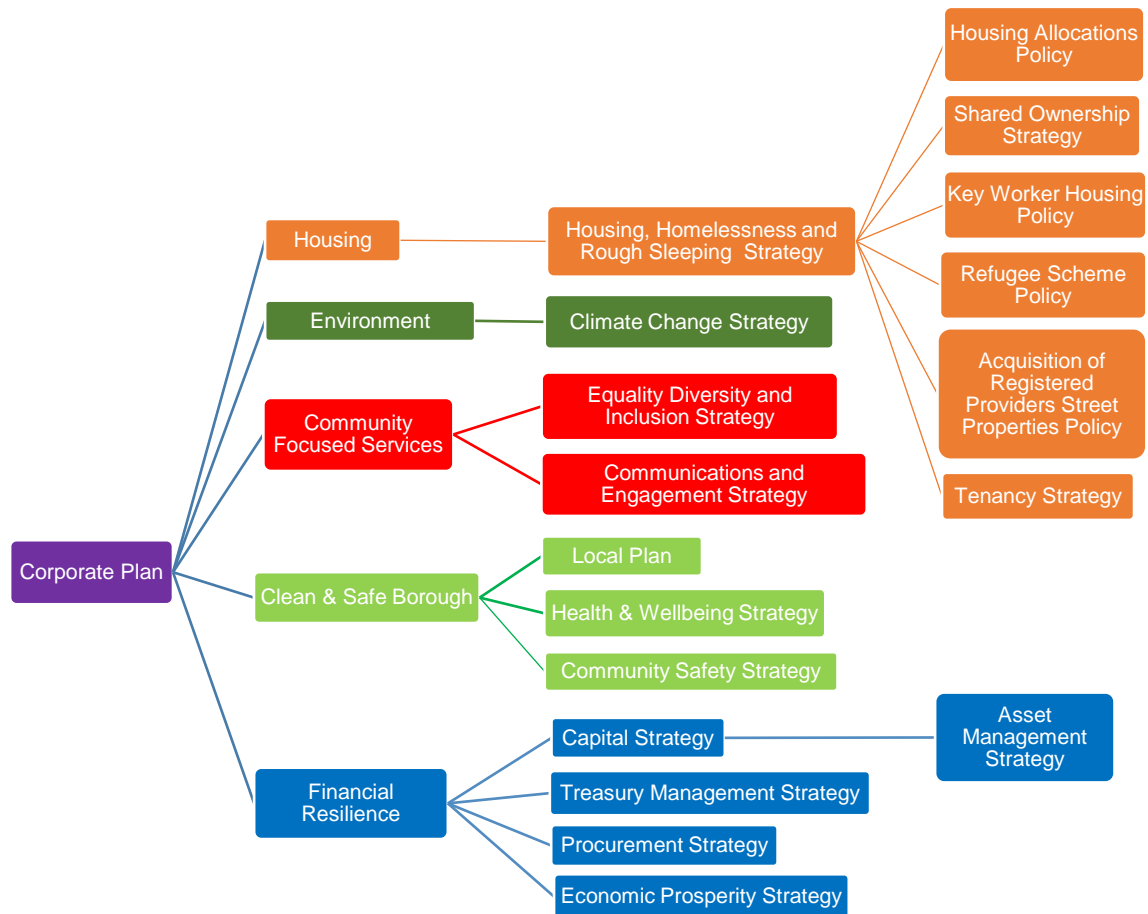
Spelthorne has a relatively low rate of unemployment: 3.3% of those economically active aged 16 to 64, compared to the South East (3.7%). Average wages are £709 per week for full-time employees, slightly above the South East regional average of £685.

Whilst house prices remain well above the national average, most residents are owner-occupiers (68%), followed by private rent tenants (18%) and social rent tenants (13%).

## How the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy links in with the Council's wider work

Addressing housing need is one of the Council's five corporate priorities within its Corporate Plan 2024-2028. Our Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is the foundation for our approach to meeting our corporate aim:

*"To support the delivery of high-quality housing and solutions to allow residents to live independently which meets the need of all sections of the community at every stage of life, addressing the challenges around availability, affordability and homelessness."*



*\*Note that links above between priorities / strategies do not accurately represent the relationships between the different documents as many strategies interlink with multiple areas of the Council's work.*

## How the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was developed

The Housing Options Strategy and Policy team at the Council carried out a Homelessness Review which looked extensively at data from the period 2019 to 2024, specifically:

- The levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness within Spelthorne.
- How Spelthorne works to:
  - Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
  - Secure appropriate accommodation for those who are or may become homeless.
  - Provide support for those who are homeless or who may become at risk of homelessness, including those who experience repeat homelessness.
- The resources available to Officers for providing homelessness and rough sleeping prevention services.

A summary of the findings from the Homelessness Review were presented to stakeholders at a joint event between Spelthorne Healthy Community Partners and Spelthorne Homelessness Prevention Forum. The event saw over 80 attendees from various statutory and voluntary organisations. The second half of the joint forum was held as a workshop, in order to provide an opportunity for other agencies to offer feedback on our services and suggestions on how we can work together in the future to address housing need and homelessness.

A working group of key Officers and Councillors representing the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee was formed. The working group considered the initial homelessness review findings, stakeholder feedback and the results of a client feedback survey. Using available data, the working group formed some suggested strategic priorities recommended to the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee for a decision.

Following Committee, these initial strategic priorities were formed into a draft strategy framework which was made available for public consultation. This ran for 6 weeks through December 2024 to January 2025. The public consultation went live online and hard copies were made available at the Council offices.

The Working Group considered the public consultation responses before formulating a draft action plan, drawing together proposals from across the Council as well as from partner agencies and other statutory bodies. Final recommendations were made to the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee for approval.

Our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy has also been cross referenced against:

- Local Government Association's 'Making Homelessness Strategies Happen' guidance;

- Crisis' 'Local Housing Authority Checklist: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies';
- "Bleak Houses: Tackling the crisis of family homelessness in England" report from the Children's Commissioner, August 2019; and
- Royal British Legion's "Supporting the Armed Forces Community with Housing in England: a Best Practice Guide".
- Homeless Link's No Homeless Veterans Toolkit 2022.
- Surrey Joint Housing Protocol for Care Leavers 2023.

We have used these resources to ensure that we have covered key areas of homelessness prevention and relief in our new strategy and considered any new and innovative ways of working.

In formulating this strategy, we have considered our obligations under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, case law, best practice and the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (updated 10 June 2024).

## Our current housing, homelessness and rough sleeping challenges

We need a long-term plan for housing, as decent homes that people can afford provide a firm foundation for families living in Spelthorne. Many people face huge challenges accessing and maintaining an affordable, decent home that meets their needs. For example, many people are being forced to pay a massive portion of their income on rent due to increased housing costs.

Access to a range of good quality affordable housing options is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of residents. If our homes are poorly maintained, with problems like damp and mould, it's putting residents' physical health at risk. The Government needs to properly resource the enforcement of housing standards in the private rented sector to provide residents with the decent homes they need for good health.

Whilst homelessness is linked to one of our main corporate priorities (addressing housing need), a number of factors influence our ability to deliver our housing and homelessness advice service. Many of these are as a result, both directly and indirectly, of national government policy and legislation.

Spelthorne's overall level of homelessness and use of emergency accommodation is fuelled by:

- Affordability of the private rented sector for local residents.
- Demand on the limited supply of social housing.
- The limited number of active affordable housing providers actively developing in the borough, and lack of affordable housing supply through private developments.
- Impact of welfare reform policies.

In common with other areas across the country, homelessness has been a growing issue. Since 2019, the number of homeless households in Spelthorne has fluctuated slightly but has steadily started to increase back to pre-pandemic levels.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of households threatened with homelessness – prevention duty owed	305	219	242	272	287
Number of households already homeless – relief duty owed	152	175	174	135	151
<b>Grant Total:</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>438</b>

Over the same period, the average number of households in emergency and temporary accommodation has seen a correspondingly significant increase,

meaning that the authority's gross spend on emergency accommodation is now regularly over £1million per year and rising.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Gross spend on temporary accommodation	£1.21m	£1.14m	£0.91m	£1.17m	£2.3m

Source: In-house monitoring

There has been a lack of affordable housing delivery over the past five years, with only 65 affordable rented homes<sup>1</sup> being delivered.

Year	Affordable dwelling completions (Gross)	Affordable dwellings lost (Gross)	Affordable dwellings completed (Net)	Rented (Gross)	Shared Ownership (Gross)
2019-20	0	0	0	0	0%
2020-21	177	0	177	22	155
2021-22	104	0	104	0	104
2022-23	0	0	0	0	0
2023-24	43	0	43	43	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>259</b>

Source: In-house monitoring

This performance pales in comparison to the need. The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update Report, prepared for the purposes of revising the Council's Local Plan, suggests an overall need of 459 additional homes per year to 2035 – the vast majority being affordable or social rented instead of affordable home ownership<sup>2</sup>.

The availability of existing social housing stock is severely limited. In 2022/23, there were 20 applicants for every social housing vacancy, on average, almost double the levels from three years prior.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Number on Housing Register as at 1 April</b>	2,098	2,823	3,378	3,798	2,048 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Number of lettings</b>	195	175	177	193	149
<b>Ratio applicants to vacancies</b>	11:1	16:1	19:1	20:1	14:1

Source: In-house monitoring

<sup>1</sup> Affordable rents are 80% of market rent.

<sup>2</sup> Spelthorne Borough Council SHMA Update May 2019

<sup>3</sup> In 2023/24, a new Housing Allocations Policy was introduced which resulted in a full re-registration process. This figure represents the number of applicants who had successfully re-registered by 1 April 2024.



An additional pressure is that Spelthorne has a lack of diversity amongst Registered Providers. Over 90% of the social housing stock is with one provider, A2Dominion<sup>4</sup>, which results in us being overly-reliant on that provider's policies and activities. There is also a disproportionately high presence of large providers, with only one provider classified as 'small' (owning less than 1,000 units).

PRP name	Size of organisation	General needs, self-contained social stock	% of overall stock in area
A2Dominion	Large	4456	90%
Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing	Large	249	5%
L&Q	Large	94	2%
PA Housing	Large	86	2%
Catalyst	Large	34	<1%
Ability	Small	1	<1%
Notting Hill Genesis	Large	1	<1%
Mount Green	Large	1	<1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,922</b>	

It's important to note that A2Dominion's stock in Spelthorne accounts for roughly 25% of its low cost rented accommodation stock across its entire portfolio, with more than twice as many properties in Spelthorne as the next highest stock holding area in the London Borough of Ealing<sup>5</sup>.

Local Authority	No. of low rented homes
Spelthorne	4,922
Ealing	2,085
Hounslow	830
Hillingdon	668
Bromley	906

The Council's Corporate Plan 2024-28 sets out how the Council plans to engage with Registered Providers in a more proactive way on joint ventures in Spelthorne.

<sup>4</sup> Regulator for Social Housing Statistical Data Release 2023. Retrieved from: [Registered provider social housing stock and rents in England 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2022-to-2023)

<sup>5</sup> Regulator for Social Housing Statistical Data Release 2023. Retrieved from: [Registered provider social housing stock and rents in England 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2022-to-2023)

## Our strategic priorities for the next five years

Our strategic housing, homelessness and rough sleeping prevention priorities over the next five years will focus on 3 key areas:

- Partnership working: A multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness.
- Identifying opportunities to address housing need.
- Proactive homelessness prevention and an effective service response.

### Partnership working: A multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness.

The challenge of homelessness is undoubtedly complex. We can only advance our efforts by working across all sectors (housing, health, social care, voluntary and other statutory services) to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Collaborative working is critical to this strategy so that we can improve services and introduce interventions to deliver better outcomes for people who are most in need. With a number of local organisations having different priorities and funding constraints, it's important that integrated approaches have shared objectives and clear accountability measures.

Partnership working is fundamental for providing specialist services and delivering focused projects to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Spelthorne. A large amount of progress has already been achieved, such as a multi-partnership agreement for managing hospital discharge patients who don't have a suitable home to return to via a Step Down project, supporting clients with multiple and complex needs at 2 homeless hostels – White House and Harper House, partnership work with Rentstart who are based in our Council building and are able to take referrals to support single homeless people directly on site.

### How we will achieve this

- Engage with social care teams (adults and children's services and mental health support teams) to improve communication and referrals to achieve better outcomes for clients with health and welfare support needs.
- Work with the North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service to ensure support is offered to victims at risk of, or who are fleeing, domestic abuse. We will continue to utilise the 'Sanctuary Scheme' where suitable to create safe havens in existing homes of domestic abuse survivors.
- We will liaise with offender management services (probation, prisons and youth offending services) to identify people leaving custody who may be at risk of homelessness in order to provide targeted support at the earliest opportunity.
- Continue to lead on our local hospital discharge protocol via our 'Step-Down Scheme' to prevent homelessness and minimise discharge delays. This scheme is commissioned by the North West Surrey

Alliance and is delivered by Spelthorne Borough Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Runnymede Borough Council, A2Dominion, The Whitely Homes Trust, and Housing 21.

- Work with the Home Office and Surrey County Council to prevent and relieve refugee and asylum seeker homelessness.
- Liaise with the DWP on improving access to employment opportunities for our clients and make best use of the Staines Employment and Skills Hub.
- Develop further links with armed forces charities to ensure serving members and Veterans are offered suitable assistance to access and sustain settled accommodation.
- Work with registered providers (including A2Dominion) to address the quality of temporary accommodation, maximise local lettings and tackle under occupation of social housing.
- Continue to work effectively with Spelthorne Rentstart who support single homeless people with accessing the private rented sector.

### Identifying opportunities to address housing need

Homes are fundamental to our residents' health and wellbeing. When homes are of decent quality, the comfort and security they provide helps to support residents' mental and physical health. That's why it's essential for residents in Spelthorne to be able to access and afford a decent home.

Right now, we're facing a national housing crisis due to runaway housing costs. One of the symptoms of this crisis is people being forced to pay unaffordable rents for poor quality homes that put their health at risk.

Decent, affordable homes are the foundations for people's lives. We will identify opportunities to address housing need locally and maximise our efforts in promoting affordable housing delivery that focuses on both affordability and quality.

#### How we will achieve this

- Improve the quality and safety of housing stock. Work proactively with landlords and private housing providers of emergency accommodation to tackle poor conditions and anti-social behaviour.
- Work in partnership to deliver new homes for local need. Drive opportunities through a Development and Delivery Strategy for the Borough to bring publicly owned sites forward for affordable homes.
- Maximise the provision of affordable homes through the planning process through viability and s106 agreements.
- Work in partnership with key Registered Providers to bring forward regeneration opportunities which will secure housing for local needs.
- Proceed to Examination and adopt the Local Plan to guide how developments benefit the Spelthorne community over the next 15 years.

- Ensure our offer to private sector landlords is competitive, robust, affordable and suitable. We will encourage new landlords to work with us and ensure that we have a sustainable pipeline of properties to use.

### Proactive homelessness prevention and an effective service response

Everybody deserves a decent, safe and secure place to call home. Too many households still face the damaging consequences of becoming homeless. We must ensure we deliver change for some of our most vulnerable residents and ensure they get the help and support that they need.

We are committed to reducing all forms of homelessness through proactive homelessness prevention efforts. In instances where homelessness is unavoidable, we will deliver an effective service that assists residents with finding suitable alternative accommodation.

#### How we will achieve this

- Monitor demand for emergency accommodation. Ensure that there are sufficient resources identified and processes in place for assisting clients with move-on to suitable alternative accommodation.
- Identify opportunities for effective homelessness prevention ensuring that we are maximising the use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant.
- Review team capacity to respond to the increased number of approaches from refugees and asylum seekers, and potential impact of the Renters Rights Bill and Awaab's Law.
- Sustain our rough sleeper outreach service to offer support and advice at the earliest opportunity.
- Implement opportunities to collect customer feedback to monitor customer satisfaction and improve service delivery. Subsequently, provide opportunities for staff training and growth development.
- Improve housing software and systems to improve the efficiency of service delivery and improve the customer journey.
- Help residents stay in their own homes independently with the right tools and technology.
- Continue to have safeguarding at the centre of all Housing processes.

## Delivery and monitoring of the Strategy

### Monitoring of the strategy

#### Operational monitoring

The delivery of this strategy is a 'living' document which will adapt and develop over time. Officer leads will be responsible for implementing and monitoring progress. The Housing Options Strategy team will regularly monitor and publish an annual update on the progress made to achieve the strategic priorities.

#### Strategic monitoring

The strategic responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this strategy, in particular the resources available to deliver the strategy, is delegated to the Council's Strategic Housing Group (SHG).

SHG exists to ensure that Spelthorne Borough Council has a focussed strategic approach on housing matters, and to ensure that Spelthorne's housing needs are identified and met.

SHG meets monthly, and will commit to reviewing the strategy delivery at least every annum, making recommendations and decisions as necessary to ensure the delivery of the strategy.

## Glossary

**Affordable Rent** (also called intermediate rent) – rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent or is at least 20% below local market rents.

**Bed and Breakfast (B&B)** – Accommodation which the Council sources for homeless households to live in whilst longer term solutions are found. The Council usually pays for these placements on a nightly basis, and it cannot reclaim all of the cost of the placement from either the homeless household or the Government. As a result, it costs the Council a significant amount of money per year to pay for these placements.

**Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)** – Monetary grants for property adaptations to meet the needs of a person with a disability which prevents them from otherwise living comfortably day-to-day.

**Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)** – A payment that may be made at the discretion of the Council to help assist a resident with their housing costs.

**Duty to Refer** – Was introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Certain organisations are imposed to refer persons who are threatened with homelessness or who may already be homeless to local authorities. (Note: 'Commitment to Refer' has been adopted by other bodies that are not imposed to refer persons at threat of homelessness but do so voluntarily).

**Extra Care** - Specialist housing that offers care and support services on-site, generally for those aged 55+. Care levels are usually higher than sheltered accommodation.

**Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** – Legislation introduced to amend the legal duties placed on local authorities with an emphasis on earlier targeted homelessness prevention.

**Housing First** - Is a housing and support approach that offers settled accommodation to homeless persons with complex needs and a history of repeat homelessness in which they then subsequently address other support needs.

**Keyworker Accommodation** - Accommodation let to essential service public sector employees, usually at a discount of 10-20% off market rates.

**Knowle Green Estates** - A company wholly owned by Spelthorne Borough Council, set up to manage residential accommodation within the borough.

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA)** – These rates are used to calculate a tenant's entitlement for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit housing element. These levels are set by the Government and should be based upon the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile rents in the local area.

**Pathway Plans** – A detailed support plan developed for persons deemed vulnerable.

**Registered Provider (RP)** – Provider of social housing. For example, A2Dominion is a Registered Provider and owns the majority of social housing stock in Spelthorne.

**Sanctuary Scheme** – Where suitable, the scheme aims to create a 'secure sanctuary' for victims of domestic abuse by enabling property adaptations to existing accommodation.

**Sheltered** - Accommodation which usually comprises of self-contained units with some shared communal spaces. Schemes are generally designed for those aged 55+.

**Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme** – A two year rent guarantee scheme for private sector landlords.

**Supported Housing** – Accommodation that offers additional support. This type of accommodation is not usually age restricted, but specific schemes may be designed for residents with specific needs (i.e. alcohol, mental health).

**SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol)** – Aims to prevent rough sleeping during extreme cold weather.

**Temporary Accommodation** – Accommodation offered to homeless households who are subject to some form of duty under homelessness legislation. In Spelthorne, this is likely to be a 6 month tenancy of one of A2Dominion's properties.

**Universal Credit** – Assists with living costs and replaces six benefits by merging them in to one monthly payment. Universal Credit replaces Child and Working Tax Credits, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, and Employment Support Allowance.

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## Action Plan

### Partnership Working: A multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness

No.	Action	Aims/Outcomes	Lead Officer(s)	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Status / Comments
1.1	Improve joint working with Social Care specialist teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness about homelessness duties.</li> <li>• Understand the housing and health roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Ensure effective communication to deliver meaningful decisions.</li> <li>• Have a regular presence at joint team meetings with Adult and Children's Social services, and the Mental Health team.</li> <li>• Make contributions to the emerging Surrey Mental Health protocol. Implement recommendations and training.</li> <li>• Review demand for mental health support in the community and implement actions that may arise.</li> </ul>	<p>Group Head Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Adult and Children's Social Services. Community Mental Health Team. Surrey County Council.</p>	Summer 2025 and ongoing	
1.2	Review good practice learn from Surrey's joint strategic needs assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and look to implement recommendations from the joint strategic needs assessment co-produced with people who have lived experience with multiple and complex needs.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead	Surrey Public Health	December 2025	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retrieve feedback from the Bridge the Gap findings to learn good practice.</li> </ul>				
1.3	Retain local specialist support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to provide targeted support to residents in need.</li> <li>Focus on tenancy sustainment to prevent homelessness.</li> <li>Provide financial support during ongoing Cost-Of-Living Crisis. Where possible, expand capacity to help meet demand.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead	Citizens Advice Runnymede and Spelthorne. Look Ahead.	Summer 2026	
1.4	Identify opportunities for employment support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase access to employment opportunities by exploring joint working opportunities with DWP.</li> <li>Utilise benefits from Employment and Skills hub in Spelthorne (DWP, Mind and Surrey Work Well Programme operate here).</li> <li>Explore “added value” when procuring goods and services to create employment opportunities for homeless residents.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager, Strategic Housing Lead, Economic Development Manager, and Head of Procurement	DWP, Mind and Surrey County Council	April 2026	
1.5	Ongoing proactive fraud prevention work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate and where applicable prosecute those found to be unlawfully obtaining social housing which has deprived another in genuine need.</li> <li>Run a regular campaign to raise public awareness on how to report housing and benefit fraud.</li> <li>Ensure all staff undertake counter fraud training so that they are equipped with</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager, Strategic Housing Lead, and Assistant Strategic Housing Lead	Reigate and Banstead Council	Ongoing	

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		<p>the necessary skills for recognise fraudulent activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve software to monitor outcomes, record referrals data and run reports.</li> </ul>				
1.6	Engage with local drug, alcohol and gambling support groups and charities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore on-site joint working opportunities within homelessness support schemes.</li> <li>• Sign-post clients who need additional support.</li> <li>• Create a list of local groups with support date sessions that can be distributed to Housing Colleagues and Councillors.</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities that arise from the Surrey Drug and Alcohol Strategy.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager and Principle Licensing Officer	Local community groups, charities, and I-Access.	April 2026	
1.7	Use the Sanctuary Scheme and tri-borough Officer to support survivors of domestic abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access specialist support for vulnerable residents.</li> <li>• Create safe havens for survivors where it's appropriate for them to remain in their existing accommodation.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager	North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service and Surrey Police	Ongoing	
1.8	Work with probation and offending services to prevent prison leavers and ex-offenders from becoming homeless.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there is a planned pathway before prison release to ensure effective targeted support.</li> <li>• Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping prior to release.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager	Probation	Ongoing	
1.9	Explore the benefit of Integrated Neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure information is shared and that there are holistic contributions.</li> </ul>	Independent Living Manager	North West Surrey Health Alliance	April 2026	

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	emerging from the North West Surrey Health Alliance.					
1.10	Continue leading on a hospital discharge scheme providing access to step-down accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide wrap-around support for up to 6 weeks at one of the step-down units whilst suitable accommodation or a care package is sought for patients who are ready to leave hospital but require some additional support.</li> <li>• Prevent hospital admission for some residents who can access the scheme for step-up support instead.</li> <li>• Explore the opportunity for scheme expansion (subject to demand and funding).</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead and Independent Living Manager	North West Surrey Health Alliance, A2Dominion, Elmbridge Borough Council, Runnymede Borough Council, The Whiteley Homes Trust, and Housing 21.	Ongoing	
1.11	Develop further links with Armed Forces charities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure serving members and Veterans are offered appropriate support to access and sustain settled accommodation.</li> <li>• Ensure staff undertake Armed Forces awareness training.</li> <li>• Implement the recommendations that emerge from the Armed Forces Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager and Armed Forces Champion	Armed Forces Covenant and charities	April 2026 and Ongoing	
1.12	Continue accessing shared training events with other Surrey authorities and where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there are opportunities for staff learning and development.</li> <li>• Partner training will strengthen the joint services we offer and show a commitment to our partners</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		Ongoing	

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	appropriate, open these up to our partners.					
<b>1.13</b>	Sustain the Spelthorne Homelessness Prevention Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain opportunities for networking and for good practice and updates to be shared between stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Assistant Strategic Housing Lead	All statutory and voluntary organisations	Ongoing	
<b>1.14</b>	Explore cost efficient ways of meeting our duty to assist homeless clients with safely storing their possessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Knowle Green Estates to see which sites may be suitable for garage storage.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead and Principle Residential Property Manager	Knowle Green Estates	Winter 2026	
<b>1.15</b>	Raise awareness of youth homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase awareness of housing options and homelessness advice amongst our younger residents.</li> <li>Continue to participate in the Surrey Care leavers protocol and 16-17yr old protocol to prevent homelessness and maximise accessibility to support services.</li> </ul>		Children's Services  Care Leavers Service		

### Identifying opportunities to address housing need

No.	Action	Aims/Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Status / Comments
2.1	Regular marketing of local private sector access schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run a biennial landlord forum to engage and build rapport with landlords.</li> <li>Review scheme capabilities and advertise the Council's Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme.</li> <li>Promote the services offered by Spelthorne RentStart.</li> <li>Link residents with spare rooms to RentStart for advice on how to let.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager, and Assistant Strategic Housing Lead	Spelthorne RentStart	April 2026 and Ongoing	
2.2	Address quality of emergency and temporary accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve temporary accommodation offer by ensuring properties are in good condition, safe to occupy, and adequately maintained.</li> <li>Where supported by demand, actively work with Government to identify opportunities for funding and further delivery.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead and Senior Environmental Health Manager	A2Dominion, Knowle Green Estates, private landlords, and MHCLG.	April 2028 and Ongoing	
2.3	Work with registered providers to maximise local lettings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the opportunity of nominating to hard-to-let properties located outside of the borough.</li> <li>Monitor performance through an Annual Lettings Review to measure the number and type of lets made.</li> <li>Review the demand for Sheltered, Extra Care and retirement schemes.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager and Assistant Strategic Housing Lead	A2Dominion, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, PA Housing, London & Quadrant, and Peabody	April 2027 and Ongoing	

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2.4	Progress and deliver Development and Delivery Strategy to maximise the delivery of affordable housing schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint ventures with developers and registered providers to deliver affordable homes and adapted accommodation where possible.</li> <li>Progress development delivery on all Council owned land by considering partnership and disposal routes.</li> </ul>	Group Head Assets	Registered Providers and Developers	As per the strategy.	
2.5	Where there is no Registered Provider interest in s106 sites. Consider using Council owned land and a portion of commuted sums as part of a joint venture with a Registered Provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver much needed affordable rented homes in Spelthorne.</li> <li>Help to progress sites identified in the Development and Design Strategy.</li> </ul>	Group Head Assets  Planning Development Manager	Registered Providers and Developers	Committed sums negotiations immediately and joint venture 2025/26.	
2.6	Explore opportunities with Surrey County Council to secure affordable housing on publicly owned assets via the One Public Estate programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities via the Strategic Surrey Estates Network (SSEN). For example, adjoining land holdings or other Surrey County Council owned properties within Spelthorne.</li> <li>Maximise assets to achieve collaborative outcomes.</li> <li>Identify opportunities for affordable housing delivery from the 'Housing, Homes and Accommodation Strategy for Surrey'.</li> </ul>	Group Head Assets	Surrey County Council	2025-2027	
2.7	Explore the revised Tenancy Strategy to make more homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make best use of social housing stock to ensure that affordable homes are used effectively.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead	Registered Providers and MHCLG	2028	

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	affordable and encourage landlords to do the same. Explore opportunities for further delivery via Government funding opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet local housing needs and prevent homelessness.</li> <li>• To enable a range of tenure options to balance the local market.</li> </ul>				
<b>2.8</b>	Work in partnership with key registered social providers (including A2Dominion) to bring forward regeneration opportunities which will also secure housing for local needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that decanting of existing residents is carefully managed so that this does not create more of an issue with scarce supply of housing generally.</li> <li>• Ensure that schemes incorporate sufficient long term general needs affordable rented housing and not private sales.</li> </ul>	Group Head Community Wellbeing	A2Dominion and other Registered Providers operating locally.	2025-2027	
<b>2.9</b>	Small scale pilot to invest in properties that Knowle Green Estates can manage and let via Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate emergency accommodation savings as the Council subsidises the difference between Local Housing Allowance and market rent which is more cost effective than a nightly paid emergency accommodation.</li> </ul>	Deputy Chief Executive, Group Head Assets, and Strategic Housing Lead	Knowle Green Estates	Delivery 2025/26 (subject to necessary approvals and funding)	
<b>2.10</b>	Consider establishing Registered Provider status for Knowle Green Estates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to unlock Homes England funding which can be used as part of a joint venture to deliver affordable homes.</li> <li>• Make contributions to Knowle Green Estates' Business Strategy development.</li> </ul>	Deputy Chief Executive	Knowle Green Estates	Dependent on financial viability.	



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2.11	Review service provision to ensure the effective implementation of the Local Plan and emerging planning reform policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively implement the Government's changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.</li> <li>Proceed to Examination and adopt the Local Plan so that there is a clear overall vision and framework for future development in Spelthorne over the next 15 years.</li> <li>Have an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.</li> </ul>	Group Head Place, Protection and Prosperity		As and when timescales are revealed	
2.12	Work with A2Dominion to tackle under occupation of social housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free up larger sized social housing for families by liaising with A2D on their initiatives.</li> <li>Monitor impact of new Housing Allocations policy to measure impact of higher priority for under-occupiers.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager and Assistant Strategic Housing Leaf	A2Dominion	April 2026	

### Proactive homelessness prevention and an effective service response

No.	Action	Aims/Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Status/Comments
3.1	Review team capacity to respond to the increased approaches from refugees and asylum seekers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer bespoke support.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Surrey County Council on an emerging immigration strategy.</li> <li>• Explore joint working with the Home Office Housing Options Liaison Officer's.</li> <li>• Actively seek Government funding to support refugee and asylum seeker resettlement.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager and Strategic Housing Lead	Family Support Service, Home Office and MHCLG.	December 2025	
3.2	Sustain our rough sleeper outreach service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have effective reporting measures in place with a rapid response rate to ensure advice and support is offered as soon as possible.</li> <li>• A designated outreach service will allow for more detailed assessments.</li> <li>• Run a regular awareness campaign on how residents can report sightings of rough sleepers via Streetlink.</li> <li>• Use food banks to publicise services and encourage referrals.</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient SWEP provision.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead, Housing Options Manager, and Assistant Strategic Housing Lead	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.  Street Link  Food and Welfare Network	Spring / Summer 2025	
3.3	Provide opportunities for Housing Options team development and growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and enable staff training and learning opportunities.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		April 2026 and Ongoing	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement opportunities to collect customer feedback to improve service delivery.</li> <li>• Deliver an empathetic Housing Options service to residents in a time of crisis and provide a consistent service offer.</li> <li>• Implement effective outcome-based performance management.</li> </ul>				
3.4	Improve efficiency of housing software and systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide value for money.</li> <li>• Improve the customer journey.</li> <li>• Look to work more smartly and consider investing in staff technical skills training to ensure systems are used efficiently.</li> <li>• Have a dedicated system to manage and monitor the rent assure scheme.</li> <li>• Implement a housekeeping proposal for the Council’s Housing Register to help monitor demand more closely.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead		April 2028	
3.5	Bring the management of the homelessness support schemes in-house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a high quality service at White House and Harper House.</li> <li>• Work with residents to provide a support plan and achieve move-on to settled accommodation.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead, Housing Options Manager, and Group Head Assets		Summer 2025	
3.6	Review service provision to ensure the effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for the impact of a potential ban on no fault evictions and</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		2027-2028	

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	implementation of the Renters Rights Bill (if passed) and Awaab's Law.	<p>whether some landlords choose to leave the market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awaab's Law may be expanded to the private sector requiring landlords to investigate and fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes.</li> </ul>	Senior Environmental Health Manager			
3.7	Review the effectiveness of the use of the 'duty to refer' referral mechanism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of the 'duty to refer' by attending partner meetings and events.</li> <li>• Encourage a 'commitment to refer' from local Registered Providers to allow us more time to prevent homelessness.</li> <li>• Explore software options to monitor referrals.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager	Statutory Organisations and Registered Providers	Ongoing	
3.8	Actively respond and engage with public consultations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support lobbying the underlying causes of homelessness as part of our homelessness prevention efforts.</li> <li>• Maximise funding opportunities.</li> </ul>	Assistant Strategic Housing Lead		Ongoing	
3.9	Raise awareness of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and local handyman schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help residents to live independently in their own homes.</li> <li>• Seek an uplift on the DFG award based on performance and increased local resident need.</li> </ul>	Independent Living Manager		April 2027	
3.10	Deliver the SPAN personal alarm service and look at other technology tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue partnership working with Mole Valley to deliver SPAN.</li> <li>• Develop joint opportunities for health technology including Virtual Ward monitoring.</li> </ul>	Independent Living Manager		April 2027	

## Appendix B

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to secure homes for residents within any new Support Independent Living accommodation.</li> </ul>				
3.11	Sustain social prescribing programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote societal and community opportunities for residents with disabilities by removing barriers.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for joint working with health and social care, focusing on prevention, recovery and independent living.</li> </ul>	Independent Living Manager		Ongoing	
3.12	Safeguarding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement recommendations from serious case reviews.</li> <li>Review lessons learned from recent Coroner cases.</li> <li>Ongoing staff training.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		Ongoing	
3.13	Support residents in emergency and temporary accommodation with move-on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help residents to look for alternative sustainable accommodation.</li> <li>Review cot provision for families.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for working with landlords to enable housing residents with pets.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		Ongoing	
3.14	Continue to review the demand for emergency accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure suitable sufficient resources to manage demand in an ever-changing environment.</li> </ul>	Housing Options Manager		Ongoing	
3.15	Review the use of properties acquired under the Rough Sleeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the potential for a Housing First type scheme or equivalent support model.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead		April 2028	

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	Accommodation Programme.					
3.16	Closely monitor Housing Options commissioned contracts and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure high performance and value for money.</li> <li>• Provide an annual performance report to monitor progress and outcomes.</li> <li>• Implement service improvement changes where necessary.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing Lead		Ongoing	



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# Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review 2019-2024

May 2024

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## Introduction

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, local housing authorities have a statutory duty to conduct a Homelessness Review at least every five years, in order to formulate a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy that tackles and prevents homelessness in their borough. Spelthorne Borough Council last carried out its Homelessness Review in 2019 with a strategy for 2020 to 2025.

The purpose of a Homelessness Review is to establish the housing need in the borough and outline current and likely future levels of homelessness. It identifies what is currently being done to prevent and tackle homelessness and who the key stakeholders are in these activities. The review also considers what resources are available to the Council and its partners to support households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The last Homelessness Strategy outlined six key strategic priorities that we wanted to achieve in the last five years:

- End the use of private sector emergency accommodation.
- Reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation.
- Nobody sleeps rough in Spelthorne.
- Increase use of the private rented sector for homelessness prevention and relief.
- Invest in staff training and development in order to improve the customer journey within Housing Options service.
- Improve partnership working to prevent and relieve homelessness.

The following Homelessness Review highlights what we have achieved as a local housing authority and identifies gaps and key areas for improvement to inform the next Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

## Data analysed

This Homelessness Review has considered both national and local statistics to help inform the current levels and likely future levels of homelessness in Spelthorne. It has considered the current activities which are preventing homelessness in the borough and identified support for households who are experiencing or are threatened with homelessness. The review has also given some thought to the availability of securing temporary and settled accommodation for households threatened with homelessness. We have also considered the resources that are available to us for the activities noted above.

The following data has been used to help inform this Homelessness Review:

- Both national and local context of homelessness.
- Spelthorne Borough Council's casework records and locally recorded figures on homelessness approaches between April 2019 and March 2023. This includes information on the number of households that approached the council for help and the underlying reasons for the approaches. The figures also identify which duty, if any, was owed to the clients under homelessness legislation and how temporary or emergency accommodation was utilised (where applicable).
- Spelthorne Borough Council's recorded local statistics on housing register figures between April 2019 and March 2023. This indicates how social housing has been allocated by property type and bedroom size. It also gives an insight in to what proportion of social housing has been allocated to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Local context of the private rental sector including information on our Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme for private lettings.
- Recorded statistics on rough sleeping locally, and the options available to rough sleepers in the area; including the implementation of the Rough Sleeper Initiative in Spelthorne.
- Existing data on the resources available to use which includes expenditure on homelessness prevention activities. This is broken down by associated revenue costs and the workforce delivery costs.
- Contract performance and stakeholder data to highlight the local services available to assist homeless applicants with their wider and ongoing needs.

## National context

### Levels of and reasons for homelessness

Statutory duties have been placed on local housing authorities by the Housing Act 1977 and Housing Act 1996 to ensure advice and support is available to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 marks one of the biggest changes in homelessness legislation in 30 years. Local authorities are tasked with determining whether a household who has approached for help is homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. They must decide if the household is eligible for assistance from the Council and if they are eligible, take reasonable steps to help either prevent or relieve their homelessness.

In the last 5 years, just over 1.5m people have approached local authorities for housing or homelessness assistance in England. In 2020/21, there were fewer people approaching at a point where their homelessness could be prevented within 56 days meaning they were approaching when they had already become homeless. An increase in proactive prevention work has since followed in the following years. However, many households still approached at the point of already being homeless rather than seeking earlier assistance. It is much more challenging for local authorities to help, when a homeless application is made at the point of crisis; earlier indication of future homelessness allows more time for the authority to offer planned support to prevent eviction.

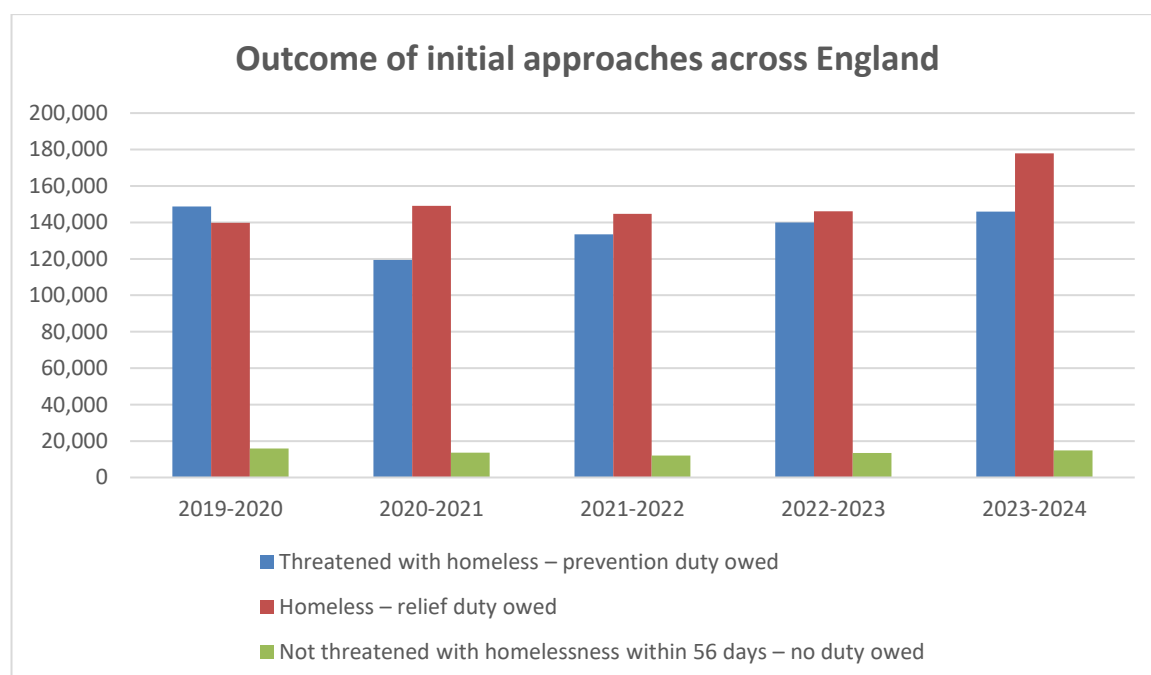


Figure 1: Outcome of initial homelessness approaches across England 2019-2024

The main causes of homelessness in England are outlined in figures 2 and 3, highlighting that the main cause for households approaching at the prevention stage (with 56 days of becoming homeless) is due to the ending of a private rented tenancy and the main cause for households approaching at the relief stage (already homeless) is due to friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodate.

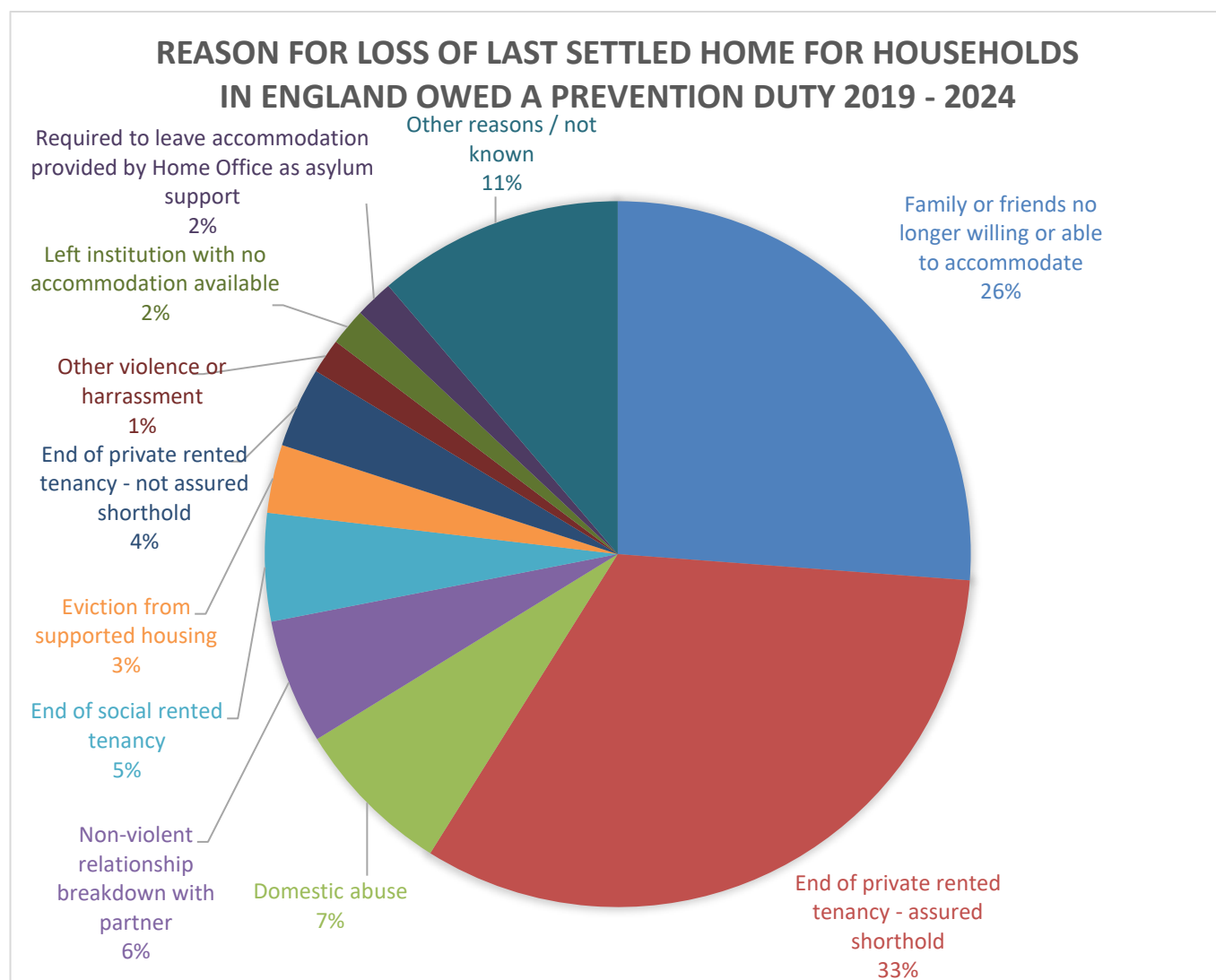


Figure 2: Reason for loss of last settled home for households in England owed a prevention duty 2019 - 2024

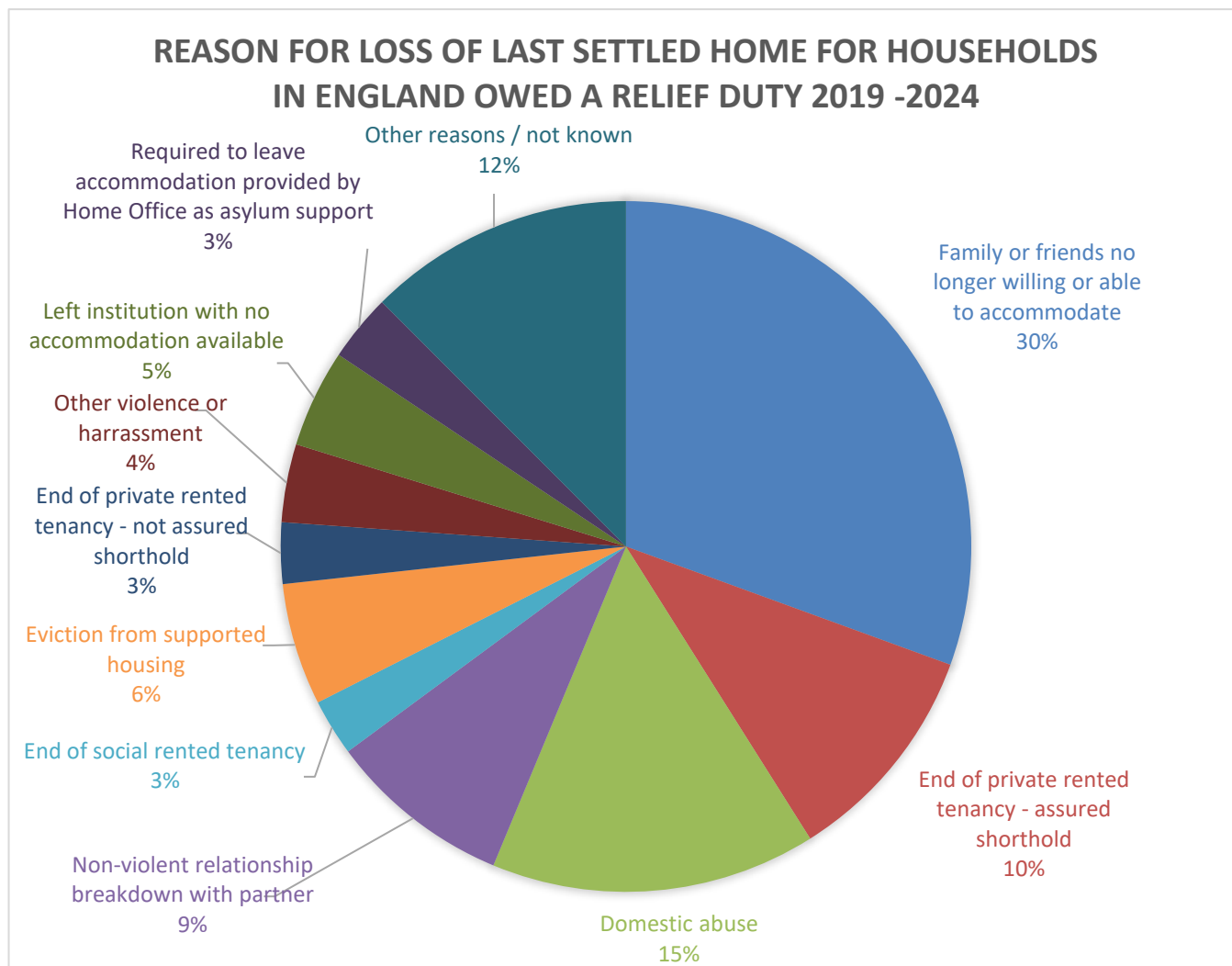


Figure 3: Reason for loss of last settled home for households in England owed a relief duty 2019- 2024

### Local Housing Allowance, private rents and Discretionary Housing Payments

As indicated by table 1, the local housing allowance rates for Spelthorne Borough Council marginally increased in 2020/21 and then remained the same for the following three years.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) monthly rates for Spelthorne	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
<b>Shared Accommodation</b>	£390.04	£476.72	£476.72	£476.72	£476.72
<b>One Bedroom</b>	£797.20	£850.02	£850.02	£850.02	£850.02
<b>Two Bedroom</b>	£989.60	£1,100	£1,100	£1,100	£1,100
<b>Three Bedroom</b>	£1,198.90	£1,349.98	£1,349.98	£1,349.98	£1,349.98
<b>Four Bedroom</b>	£1,658.11	£1,769.99	£1,769.99	£1,769.99	£1,769.99

Table 1: Local Housing Allowance rates for Spelthorne 2019 - 2024



LHA rates were frozen between 2020-2024, despite rental prices in the private housing rental sector increasing over the last 5 years<sup>1</sup>. Spelthorne in particular has median rents that are higher than the national and South East average but lower than London, making Spelthorne an appealing area for commuters which causes additional housing demand pressures.

Accommodation Type	Average Private Housing Rental Price (Spelthorne)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Room Only	£550	Not Given	£650	£680	-
Studio	£775	£798	£810	£850	-
One Bedroom	£925	£950	£950	£975	£1,079
Two Bedrooms	£1,175	£1,175	£1,250	£1,260	£1,403
Three Bedrooms	£1,400	£1,350	£1,450	£1,550	£1,628
Four+ Bedrooms	£1,680	£1,800	£1,800	£1,900	£2,257

Accommodation Type	Average Private Housing Rental Price (South East)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Room Only	£425	£450	£450	£525	-
Studio	£590	£600	£625	£650	-
One Bedroom	£725	£725	£775	£800	£884
Two Bedroom	£895	£900	£950	£1,000	£1,142
Three Bedroom	£1,100	£1,100	£1,200	£1,250	£1,394
Four+ Bedrooms	£1,650	£1,625	£1,733	£1,800	£2,038

Accommodation Type	Average Private Housing Rental Price (England)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Room Only	£400	£412	£425	£460	-
Studio	£550	£575	£615	£625	-
One Bedroom	£625	£650	£700	£725	£1,050
Two Bedroom	£695	£700	£769	£800	£1,178
Three Bedroom	£795	£800	£850	£900	£1,314
Four+ Bedrooms	£1,300	£1,350	£1,450	£1,500	£1,957

Table 2: Average private housing rental prices for England, South East and Spelthorne 2019-2024

In the 2023 Autumn Statement, central Government announced that LHA rates were to be increased to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of local market rents from April 2024.

The number of rental enquiries has tripled nationally since 2019<sup>2</sup> as outlined below in figure 4 and there has been a net decline in the number of private rental properties available in the last 5

<sup>1</sup> Source: ONS Private Rental Market Summary Statistic in England

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsine nland> and [Price Index of Private Rents, UK: monthly price statistics - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/priceindexofprivaterents)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Rightmove Enquiries <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-66246223>

years due to landlords selling their properties as indicated in table 3<sup>3</sup>. These highlight increased housing pressures on the market and the deflation of private rental available. An increase in landlord sales can be attributed to several factors including increased mortgage interest rates, higher rate taxes on landlord's mortgage interest payments, uncertainty around new Energy Performance Certificate laws, and concerns around the potential implications from the Renters Reform Bill.

## Rental enquiries have more than trebled

Enquiries per rental property in May 2019, 2022 and 2023

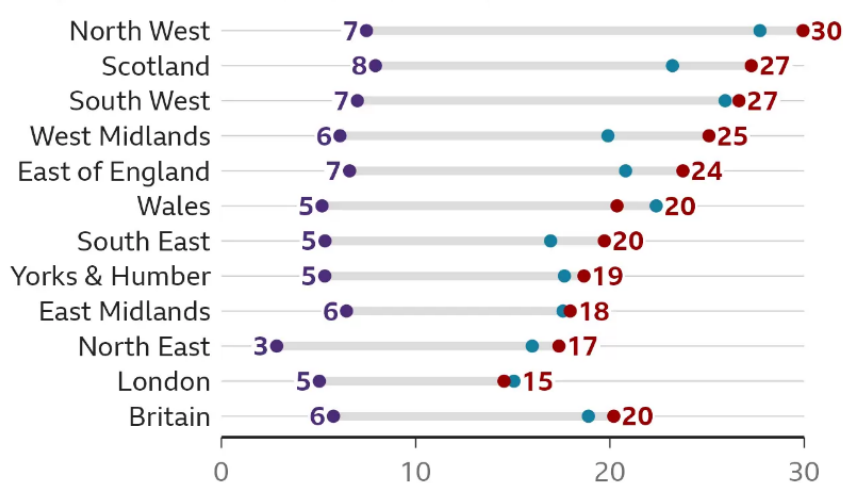


Figure 4 Private sector rental enquiries per property for 2019, 2022 and 2023

Year	Number of landlord purchases	Number of landlord sales	Net gain/loss
2019	123,750	160,380	-36,630
2020	110,920	132,190	-21,270
2021	172,060	201,640	-29,580
2022	145,880	192,650	-46,770
2023	112,510	143,060	-30,550

Table 3: Number of landlord purchases vs sales 2019 - 2023

Local Housing Allowance rates continue to remain below average rents causing a shortfall for many and a lack of local affordability in Spelthorne. Where a household is unable to top-up the full shortfall between the LHA and market rent from other income sources, they can make an application for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Spelthorne Borough Council is granted a DHP budget by the Government each year, which can be allocated to claimants who need further help with their housing costs. DHPs are at the discretion of the Council and are administered by the Housing Benefit department. DHPs are one method of supporting residents

<sup>3</sup> Source: ONS & Hamptons [Why are more landlords selling their properties? We look at the four main reasons \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com)

for a temporary period to prevent rent arrears and consequently eviction. Table 4 outlines Spelthorne Borough Council's total expenditure on DHP for the last 5 years.

<b>Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Budget</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Central Government Contribution	£234,682	£343,844	£286,321	£198,812	£202,932
Spelthorne Council additional top-up	£165,318	£56,156	£113,679	£201,188	£197,068
Total DHP budget	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000
Total DHP expenditure	£360,443	£475,716	£440,329	£381,443	£429,523

*Table 4: Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024*

From 2020, data has been captured on the number of referrals made by Housing Options staff requesting DHP for homelessness prevention. In total, 105 referrals were made and accepted between 2020-2024 with the vast majority being for families with one or two children who were struggling to afford their rental payments either due to the benefit cap or because their rent was above the LHA rate, and they could not afford the shortfall. Many residents self-refer for DHP assistance and the table above highlights the high demand for this fund.

### Universal Credit Migration

In 2019, DWP announced a managed migration of applicants claiming legacy benefits to Universal Credit with initial pilots. Universal Credit was introduced as a one monthly payment to replace Child and Working Tax Credits, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance. DWP have extended the deadline for final migration across several years, but it is expected that most applicants will be migrated by 2025.

### COVID-19

In 2020, the global pandemic caused increased housing challenges and increased living costs. It also had an impact on new build and affordable housing supply. In response to the lockdown, the Government introduced the 'Everyone In' initiative placing a duty on local authorities to move all those at risk of sleeping rough into accommodation to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (including those who would not normally be entitled to assistance under homelessness legislation); approximately 15,000 people were placed into emergency accommodation. University College London research estimated that the preventative measures imposed might have avoided over 266 deaths, 338 ICU admissions, 1,164 hospital admissions and 21,000 infections among the homeless population during the first wave<sup>4</sup>. The Government set up a rough sleeping taskforce to help support rough sleepers accommodated under Everyone In to find suitable move-on accommodation. Throughout the pandemic, the

<sup>4</sup> Source: UCL, COVID-19: Emergency homeless accommodation saved hundreds of lives: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2020/sep/covid-19-emergency-homeless-accommodation-saved-hundreds-lives>

Government provided several waves of additional short-term funding to support rough sleepers which totalled to over £700m in 2020/21 and £750m in 2021/22.

Following the pandemic, the UK entered a cost-of-living crisis in late 2021 where the cost of everyday essentials increased more quickly than the average household income. With increased rent levels, household bills and necessities, the Government introduced a temporary support package in the May 2022 budget announcement. The energy price guarantee capped the unit of cost of energy for households and the Government introduced cost of living support payments, including a Cost of Living payment for those with a qualifying low income benefit or receiving tax credits, a Disability Cost of Living Payment for those receiving a disability benefit, and a Pensioner Cost of Living Payment for those who received a Winter Fuel Payment. The Government also introduced the Energy Bill Support Scheme which gave every household a £400 discount on their energy bills for winter 2022/23.

COVID-19 and the cost living crisis has had a direct impact on the housing sector, the cost of building materials inflated, interest rates increased and there was a work skill shortage in the building sector. This has had a huge detrimental impact on the delivery of affordable housing both nationally and locally.

In response to the pandemic, Spelthorne Borough Council launched the Support4Spelthorne community hub where over 17,223 welfare calls and checks were made to vulnerable residents<sup>5</sup> and the community helpline supported 29,629 calls to residents. During the pandemic, Spelthorne Borough Council assisted 35 rough sleepers into settled accommodation.

### Refugee and Asylum Seeker Crisis

There was a record level of net migration in 2022 where 606,000 more people migrated to the UK than emigrated. This was attributed to the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees from Ukraine, Hong Kong and Afghanistan; and 7% of immigrants were asylum seekers<sup>6</sup>.

- **Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)** – welcome programme route opened January 2021 providing the opportunity for British National (Overseas) status holders from Hong Kong and their dependents to come to the UK to live, study, and work, on a pathway to citizenship. This is for Hong Kong nationals who chose to retain a form of British nationality by taking up BN(O) status at the point of Hong Kong's handover to

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Spelthorne Council Annual Report 2020/21

<sup>6</sup> Source: J. Perry (2023). 'The Refugee and Asylum Crisis is also a Housing Crisis' in 2023 UK Housing Review Autumn Briefing Paper. <https://www.cih.org/media/2hrbusok/ukhr-briefing-2023-final-version.pdf>

China in 1997. Since its launch, over 160,000 applicants have been supported via this visa route<sup>7</sup>.

Sadly, there have been several countries with humanitarian crises in the last several years. Consequently, the UK has offered resettlement assistance under various refugee schemes including:

- **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme** – launched in January 2014 to resettle 20,000 Syrians in need of protection by 2020. Resettlement was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic and final arrivals recommenced December 2020 – February 2021. A total of 20,319 refugees were supported under this scheme<sup>8</sup>.
- **Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy** and **Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme** – schemes opened January 2022 prioritising those who had assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan working with the UK Government as well as vulnerable people or members of minority groups at risk. Many Afghans were supported into bridging hotels by the Home Office and local authorities have assisted with longer-term resettlement plans. In Spring 2023, the Home Office announced a closure of the bridging hotels which were housing around 8,000 Afghan refugees.
- **Ukraine Family Scheme** – a visa scheme that opened March 2022 for people fleeing Ukraine who were the family member of either British Citizens or people with settlement rights in the UK. **Homes for Ukraine** – allowed people and organisations in the UK to become hosts and offer Ukrainians fleeing the war a home through sponsorship. In return, the Government offered monthly thank you payments to hosts.
- **Conflict in Israel and Gaza** – In October 2023, emergency legislation was laid out to ensure British citizens and those eligible for support fleeing the violence in Israel, or the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights or Lebanon were exempt from the habitual residence test and therefore, able to access benefits and services faster on arrival in the UK.

In February 2023, the Home Office introduced a ‘streamlined’ asylum processing model to address the backlog of asylum claims (applications made by people from Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Eritrea before June 2022)<sup>9</sup>. The aim of the model was to speed up decision making, for example, a positive decision could be taken based on evidence available without a personal interview. The Prime Ministerial commitment was to clear the legacy decision backlog by the end of 2023. The Home Office also changed their policy around application decision

<sup>7</sup> Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-a-third-year-of-support-to-help-hong-kongers-settle-into-life-in-the-uk#:~:text=Since%20its%20launch%20at%20the,on%20a%20pathway%20to%20citizenship>.

<sup>8</sup> Source: UK Visas and Immigration <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-resettlement-schemes-factsheet-march-2021/vulnerable-persons-and-vulnerable-childrens-resettlement-schemes-factsheet-march-2021>

<sup>9</sup> Source: Home Office <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/streamlined-asylum-processing>

making for asylum seekers. Once a person has their refugee status accepted, they are given notification to leave their asylum accommodation. This notice period used to be 28 days but from mid-2023, this period was reduced to 7 days. A reduction in the notice period allows less time for local authority intervention to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Figure 5 indicates the flow of households required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office as asylum support. There has been an increase in the number of households approaching as homeless in England following the withdrawal of home office asylum accommodation, with a particularly notable increase in 2023/24.

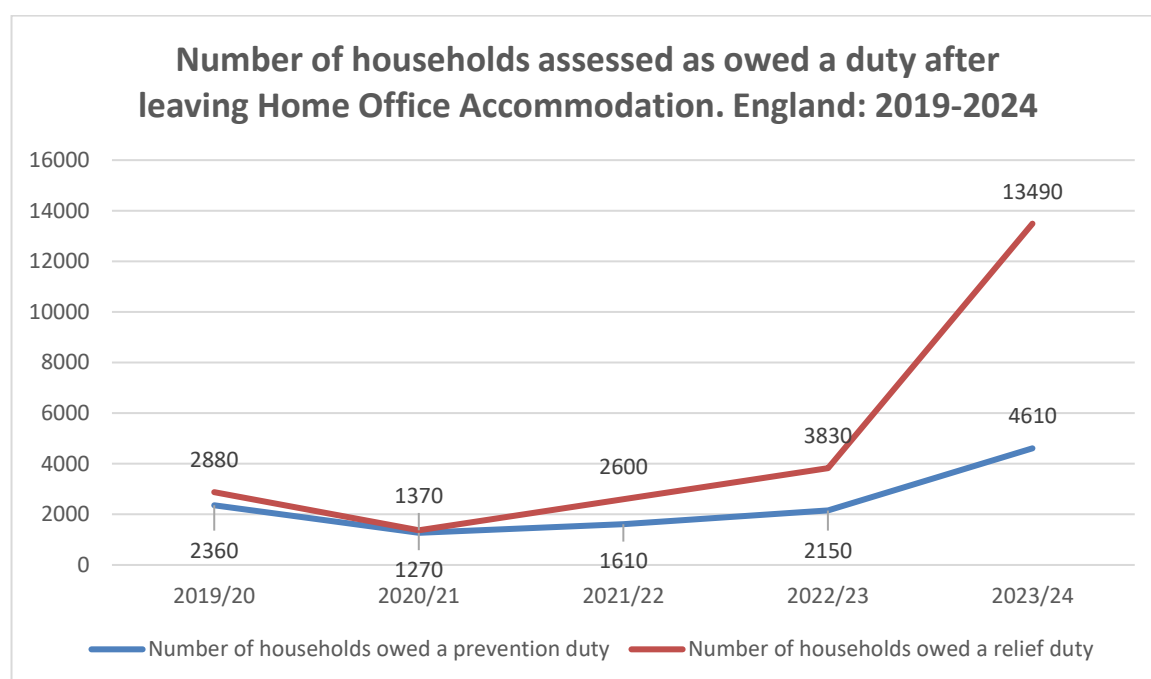


Figure 5: Number of households owed a homeless duty after leaving Home Office accommodation in England 2019 - 2024

## National Policy

### Tenant Fees Act

From 1 June 2019, the Tenant Fees Act was introduced in the private rented sector to ban most lettings fees and reduce the costs that tenants can face at the outset and throughout a tenancy. The only payments that tenants can be asked to make includes: rent, a refundable tenancy deposit capped at no more than 5 weeks rent, a refundable holding deposit capped at no more than 1 weeks rent, payments to change the tenancy when requested by the tenant capped at £50, payments associated with early termination of the tenancy by the tenant, payments in respect of utilities and council tax, and default fees for late payment of rent or loss of keys.

## Brexit

From January 2020, the UK withdrew from the European Union. New immigration rules meant EU nationals who wished to remain in the UK had to submit an application to the EU resettlement scheme by June 2021 in order to remain eligible for housing assistance and benefits. Brexit caused further challenges around labour shortages on top of increasing material costs and limited supply chains which has created barriers to housing delivery in the UK<sup>10</sup>.

## From Harm to Hope

In 2021, the Government launched a 10-year plan 'Harm to Hope' with the aim of breaking drug supply chains whilst reducing the demand for drugs by supporting people suffering from addiction into treatment and deterring recreational drug use. From 2022-2025, the Government allocated up to £53 million to 28 local authorities across England as part of a housing support fund strategy. The funding was allocated to provide housing workers to support people in drug and alcohol treatment to find suitable accommodation and maintain a tenancy. Spelthorne / Surrey were not identified by the Government as an area for funding allocation.

## Social Housing Regulation Act 2023

From July 2023, the new law strengthens the Regulator of Social Housing to carry out regular inspections of social housing providers. It also introduces additional Housing Ombudsman powers to publish best practice guidance to landlords following investigations into tenant complaints and gives powers to strict time limits for social landlords to address hazards. Social Housing Managers are also required to undertake housing qualifications. The Government has revised consumer standards, taken forward Awaab's law, made changes to the Decent Homes Standard and looked to professionalise the sector.

## Renters Reform Bill

The Renters Reform Bill aims to deliver improved standards in the private rented sector. The Bill proposes to (1) scrap section 21 'no fault' evictions; (2) make it illegal for landlords/agents to refuse renting to tenants who receive benefits; (3) create a national landlord register through a new property portal and introduce a Private Rented Sector Ombudsman; (4) reform landlord possession grounds.

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<sup>10</sup> Source: W Wilson & C Barton (2023). Tackling the under-supply of housing in England. House of commons: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7671/>

## Spelthorne context

Spelthorne is located on the south-west edge of London and in the north-west of Surrey, neighbouring the boroughs of Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead, Runnymede, Elmbridge, and the London boroughs of Richmond-Upon-Thames, Hounslow and Hillingdon. The north of the borough borders London Heathrow airport. Spelthorne is densely populated and has five main urban areas: Ashford, Shepperton, Staines-Upon-Thames, Stanwell and Sunbury. Outside these urban areas:

- 65% is green belt,
- 30% of the total area is either floodplain or reservoir, and
- We have 12 miles of river Thames frontage.

As of the 2021 census<sup>11</sup>, Spelthorne has a population of 103,000 and is the 14<sup>th</sup> most densely populated of the South East's 64 local authority areas, with 2,295 of residents per square kilometre.

Spelthorne has a slightly lower population of under-30s (33%) compared to the rest of the country (36%), and a slightly higher population of 30-69 year olds (53%) compared with the national average of (51%), The number of residents age 70+ is 14%, which is broadly in line with the rest of the nation.

According to the Indices of Deprivation 2019, the most deprived borough in Surrey is Spelthorne. Spelthorne has the highest number of lone parent families and the highest level of child poverty in Surrey; it also has the highest under-18 conception rate in the county. The Indices of Deprivation have not been updated since 2019. However, the recent 2021 Census highlights that Spelthorne has the highest level of hardship in Surrey; 33.6% of households experienced at least one category of deprivation in either employment, education, health or housing. That said, residents are largely healthy, with life expectancy for both males and females slightly above the national average.

Spelthorne has a relatively low rate of unemployment: 3.3% of those economically active aged 16 to 64, compared to the South East (3%) and UK as a whole (3.7%). Average wages are £709 per week for full-time employees, slightly above the South East average of £685.

Whilst house prices remain well above the national average, most residents are owner-occupiers (68%), followed by private rent tenants (18%) and social rent tenants (13%).

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<sup>11</sup> Source: ONS – Population and household estimates, England and Wales: Census 2021.



## Homelessness in Spelthorne

### Approaches for housing advice

The Homelessness Reduction Act places three specific duties on local authorities, this includes:

- **Prevention duty** – a 56 day prevention duty may be triggered when a client is threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This means the Council will try to prevent the client from becoming homeless within a 56 day period.
- **Relief duty** – if a client is already homeless or the Council has not been able to prevent a client from becoming homeless, a 56 day relief duty will commence. This means the Council will try to relieve homelessness by supporting the client to find alternative accommodation.
- **The ‘main’ duty** – if the Council has been unable to relieve a client’s homelessness the Council will consider whether a ‘main’ duty may be owed under homelessness law to help the client on a longer term. The Council will assess if the client is eligible, homeless, has a local connection, and has a priority need and whether the client has become homeless unintentionally. These are the original five tests undertaken prior to the Homelessness Reduction Act coming into force and were unchanged by the new legislation.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, a total of 7,185 households approached Spelthorne Borough Council seeking assistance as they were either homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is broken down in figure 6.

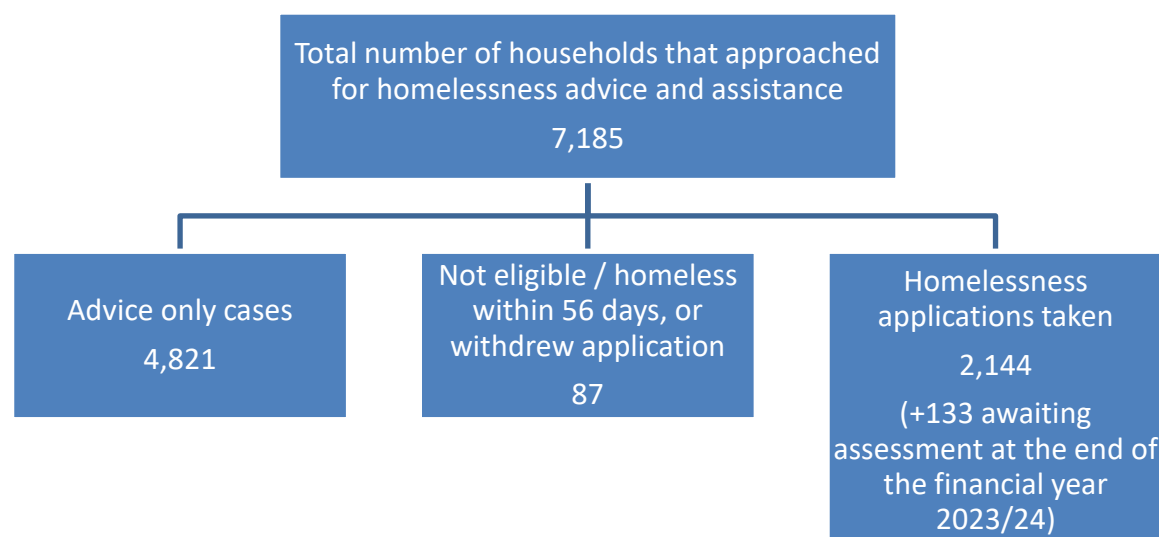


Figure 6: Number of households approaching Spelthorne Borough Council for housing or homelessness advice 2019 - 2024

Under s179 of the Housing Act 1996, the Council is required to provide free advice and assistance to residents who need help with their housing. Where we are approached and the issue is resolved purely through the provision of this s179 advice and assistance, we refer to these cases as 'advice only cases'. This will also include cases where we have carried out non-statutory preventative work, for example before the 56 day trigger we may request a discretionary housing payment to help cover the shortfall in rent as a temporary measure.

Once the trigger for taking a homelessness application is met, we carry out the assessment of circumstances and needs. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, a total of 2,181 applications were taken. Table 5 and figure 7 breaks down how each client was assessed upon acceptance of application.

<b>Assessment of Circumstances on Approach 2019-2024</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not threatened with homelessness within 56 days	37
Prevention duty owed	1,322
Already homeless, relief duty owed	787
'Legacy cases' assessed prior to the homelessness reduction act	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,181</b>

Table 5: Household assessment of circumstances following approach to Spelthorne Borough Council 2019 - 2024

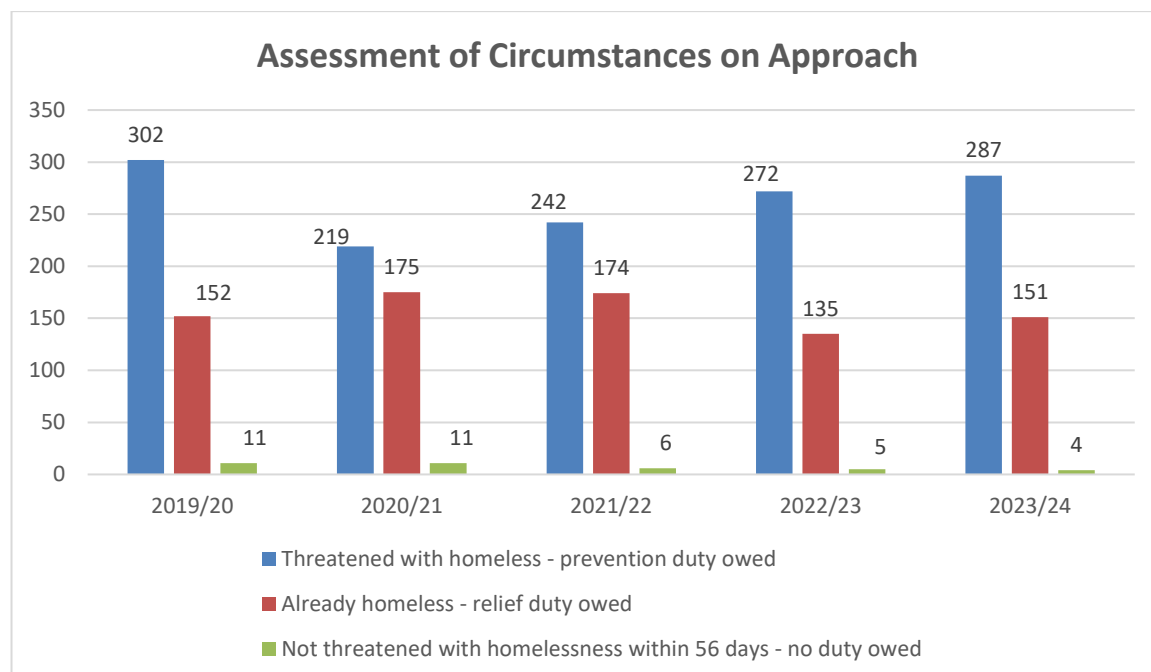


Figure 7: Household assessment of circumstances following approach to Spelthorne Borough Council - annual breakdown

Compared to the national data where more people were approaching at a point of already being homeless (relief stage). The picture is different in Spelthorne where applications are being made earlier at the point of prevention (homeless within 56 days) allowing more time for officers to mitigate an eviction or loss of accommodation.

The household make-up of households owed either a prevention or relief duty by Spelthorne Council is shown in figure 8. The majority of homeless households that approach for assistance are single adults followed by single parents with dependent children; with 71% aged 18-44.

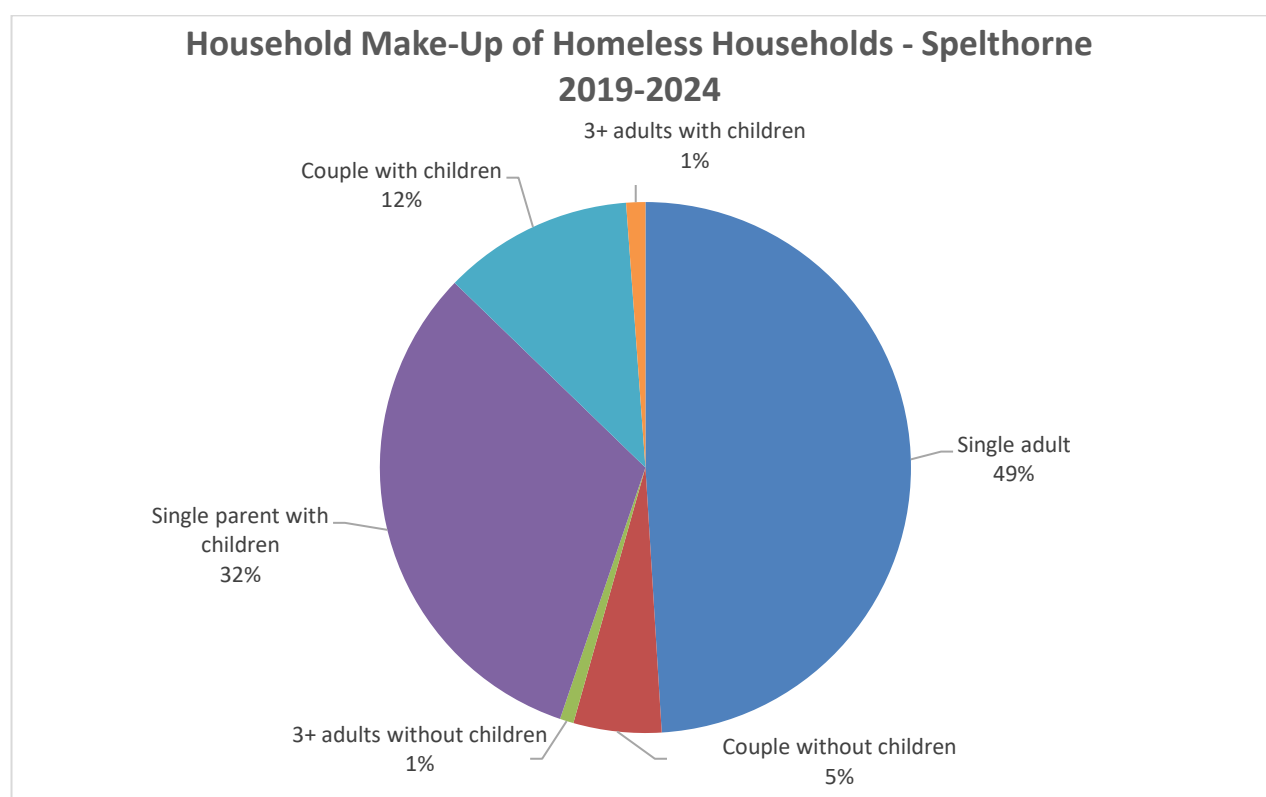


Figure 8: Household make-up of homeless households in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

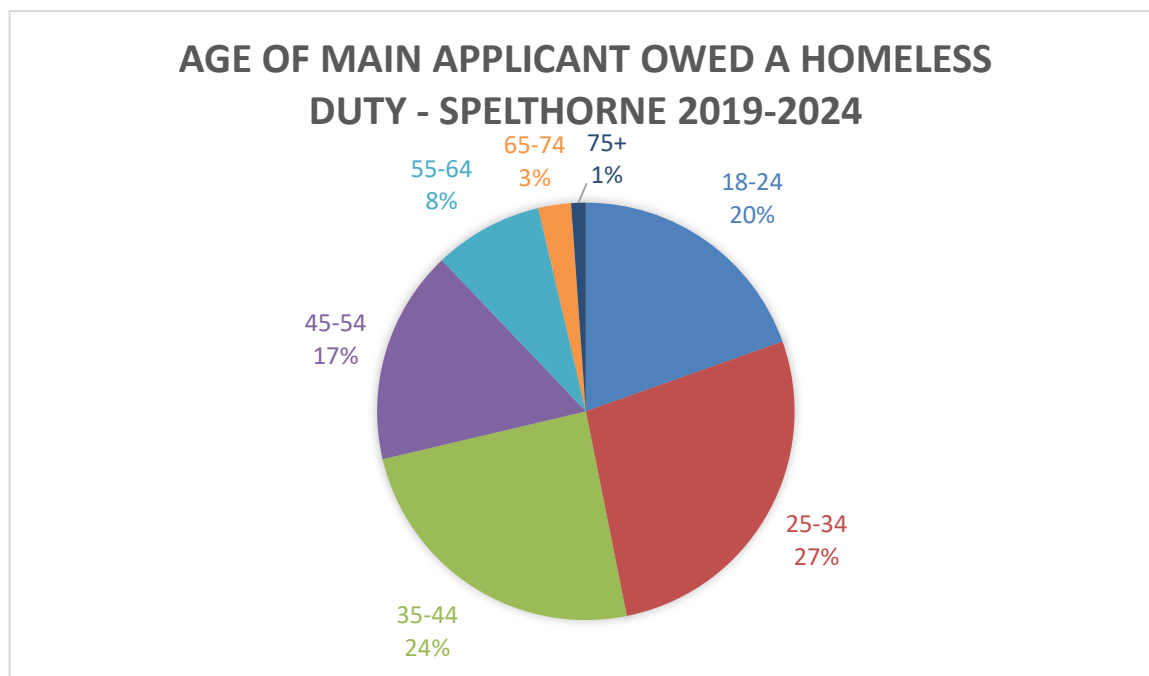


Figure 9: Age of main applicant owed a homeless duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

As shown in figures 10 and 11, the main reason for the loss of a household's last settled address for those owed a prevention duty (homeless within 56 days) was due to the ending of a private rented tenancy - assured shorthold tenancy, with the main cause for households approaching at the relief stage (already homeless) due to friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodate. This is similar to the national picture.

In both figures, examples for 'other reasons' include (non-exhaustive): property disrepair, emergencies such as fire or flooding, or mortgage repossessions. Another notable example for 'other' includes unsuccessful placements / exclusions from resettlement schemes or sponsorship. In 2019-2023 this accounted for 5 cases across the years, however, in 2023/24 this reason accounted for 28 cases. Similarly, there has been an increase in the number of cases opened due to applicants being required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office; across 2019-2023 this was the reason for only 2 applicants approaching, however, in 2023/24 a total of 21 cases approached due to this reason. These figures highlight an increased homelessness demand as a result of increased resettlement support for refugees both nationally and locally but also the increased pressures from the Prime Ministerial commitment to speed up the decisions on the backlog of asylum seeker applications awaiting decision.

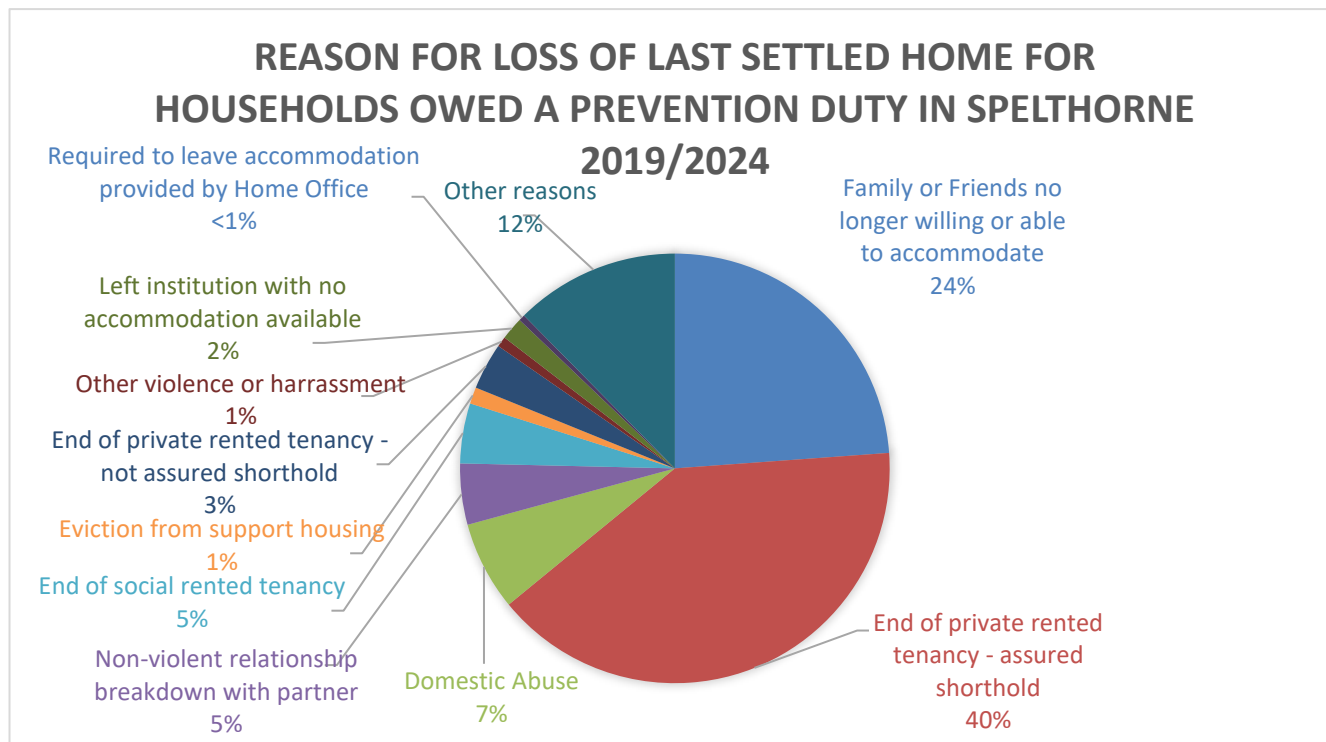


Figure 10: Reason for loss of last settled home for households owed a prevention duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

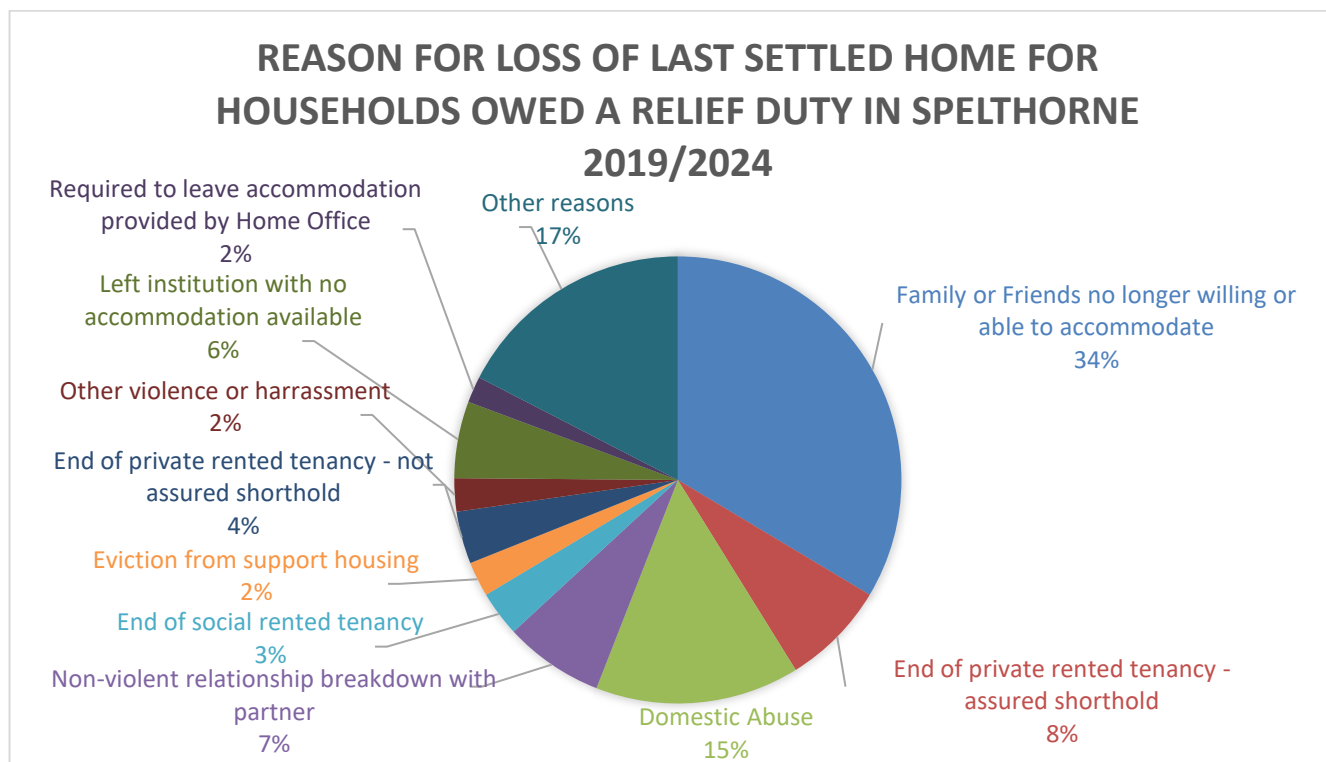


Figure 11: Reason for loss of last settled home for households owed a relief duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

## Meeting the support needs of homeless households

Throughout the course of 2019-2024, Spelthorne Council assisted a number of households with support needs. In total, 688 households owed either a prevention or relief duty had one or more support needs. Figure 12 below highlights a variety of support needs that a household may have, the most common support need over the last few years has been a history of mental health closely followed by physical ill health and disability.

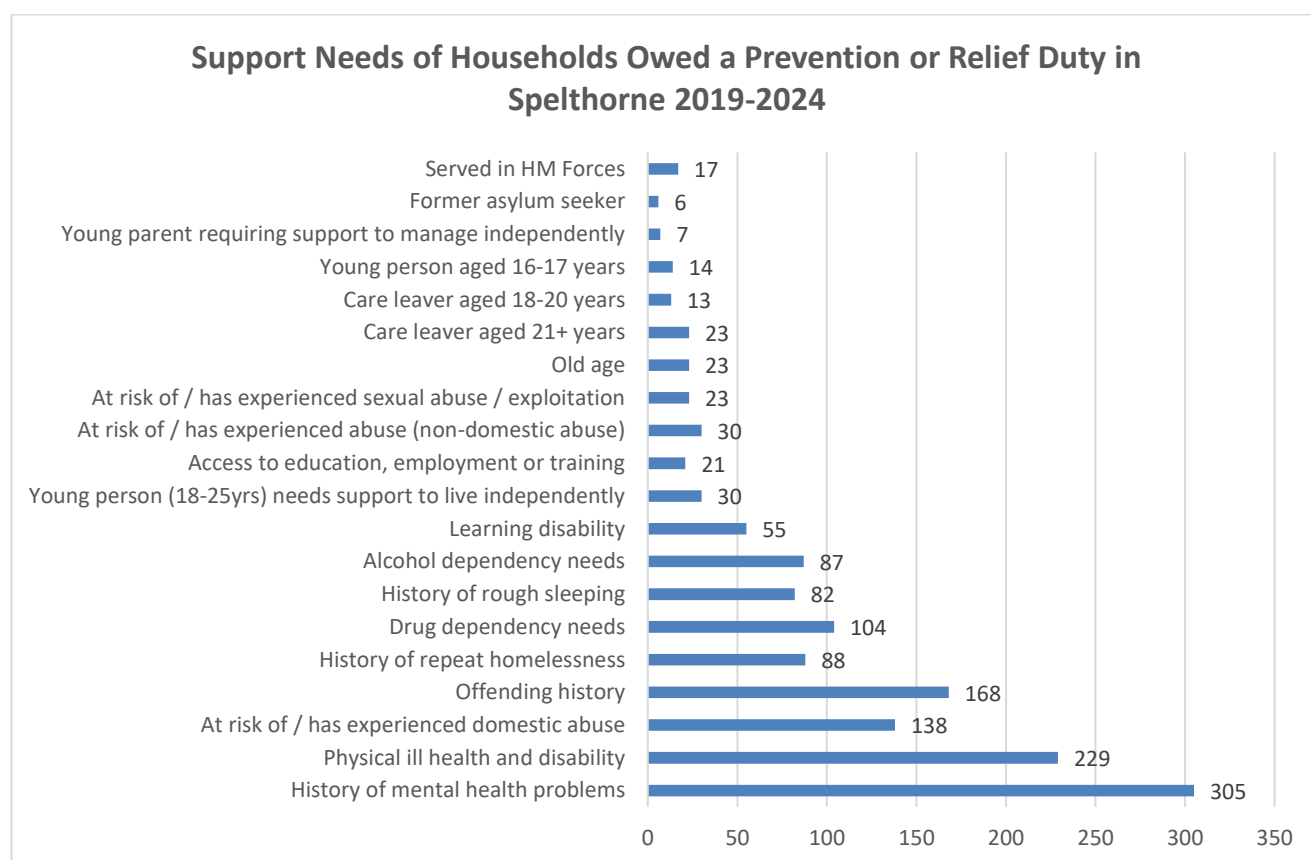


Figure 12: Support needs of households owed a prevention or relief duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

### Nationality and ethnicity of households

We continue to serve a diverse range of ethnicities in our community; however, the vast majority of households owed a duty were habitually resident UK nationals. Figures 13 and 14 shows this data in more detail.

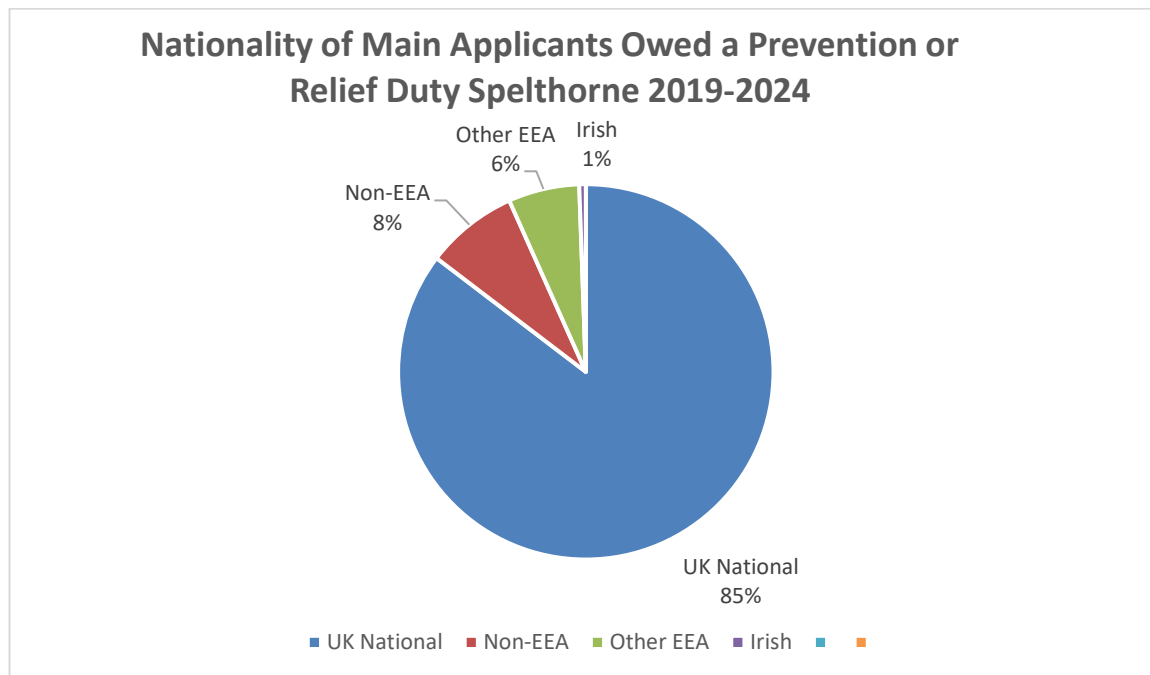


Figure 13: Nationality of main applicants owed a prevention or relief duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

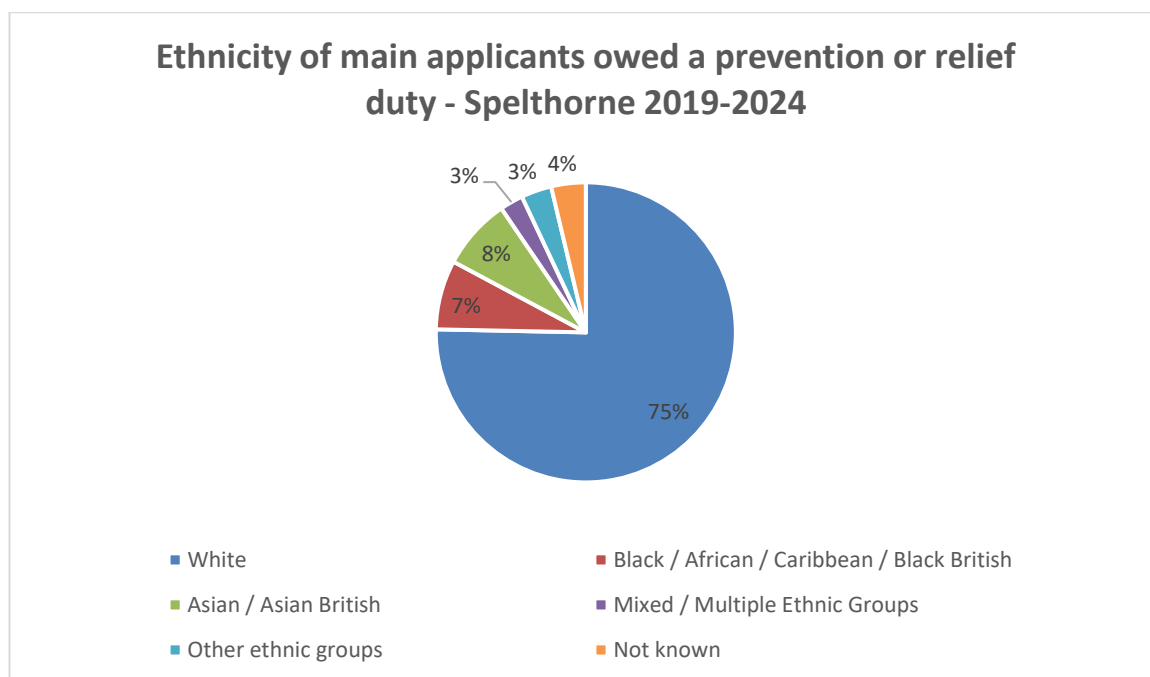


Figure 14: Ethnicity of main applicants owed a prevention or relief duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

## Employment status of households

The majority of households who approached us for assistance were unemployed, with approximately 28% in either part-time or full time employment. Figure 15 breaks down the employment status of households.

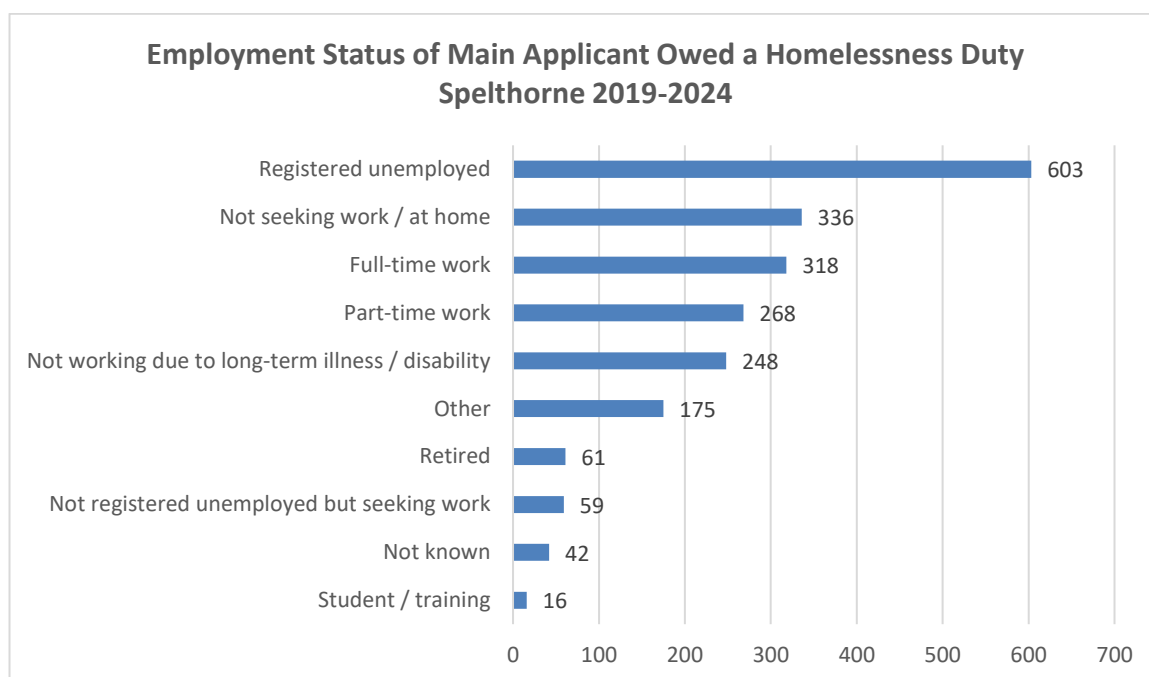


Figure 15: Employment status of main applicant owed a homelessness duty in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

## Outcomes of applications

The outcomes of these homelessness applications accepted are broken down by three main duty types: Prevention Duty in figure 16, Relief Duty in figure 18 and Main Duty in figure 19. The categories in green suggest a positive outcome for the applicant. This highlights that a significant proportion of households are assisted to either remain in their existing accommodation or are helped to secure alternative accommodation. However, it also indicates that we are still losing contact or applications are being withdrawn in many cases.

In summary:

- We successfully prevented homelessness in 55% of cases, with 64% of the accommodation secured for clients being in the private rented sector.
- We successfully relieved homelessness through securing suitable accommodation for clients in 38% of cases. 44% of the accommodation secured for clients was in the private rented sector.



- The Main Duty was discharged successfully in 91% of cases due to an offer of accommodation, with 24% of discharges into the private rented sector and 76% into social housing.

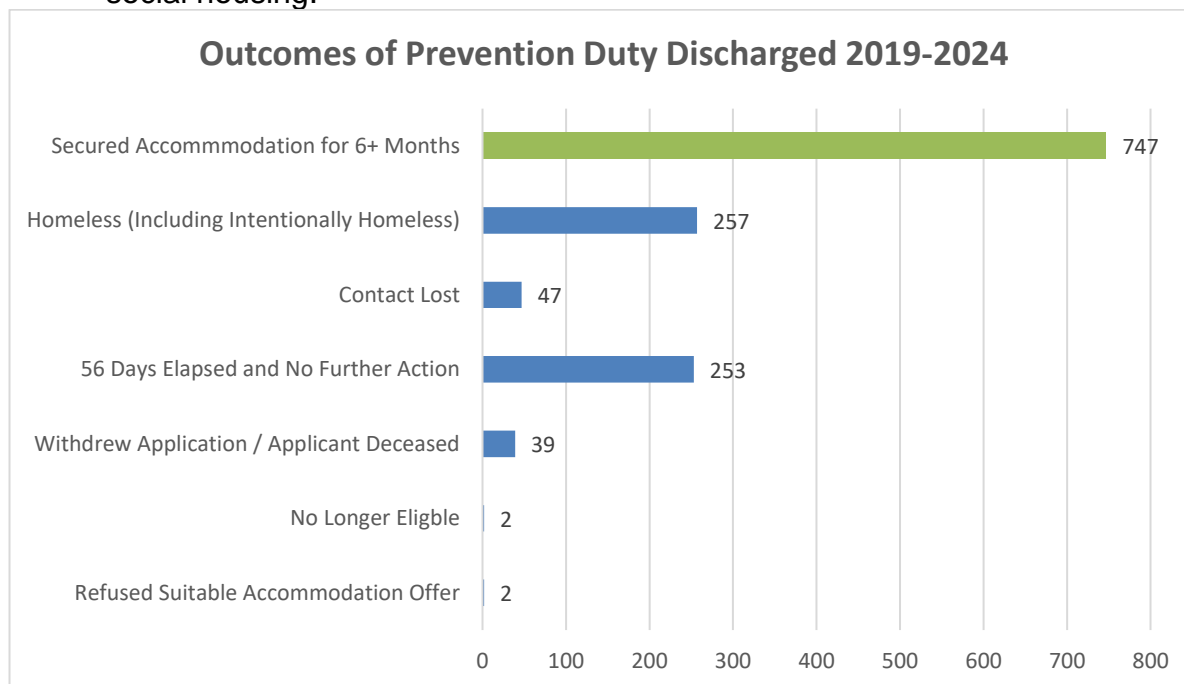


Figure 16: Outcomes of prevention duty discharged in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

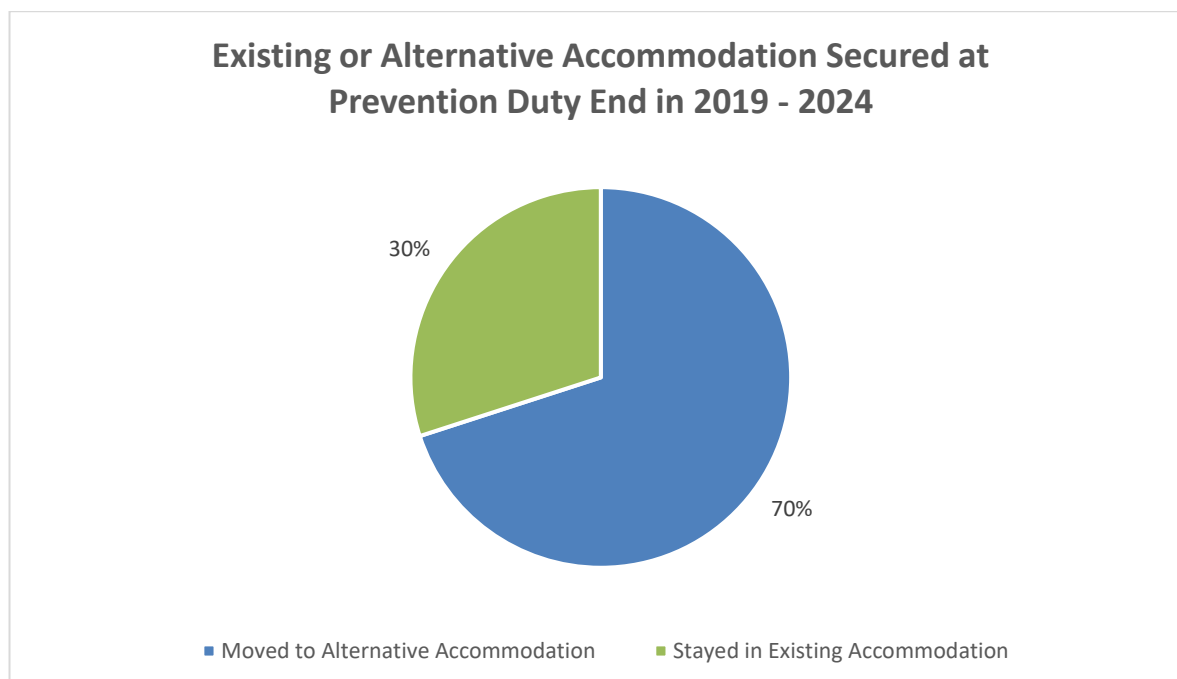


Figure 17: Breakdown of existing or alternative accommodation secured at prevention duty end in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

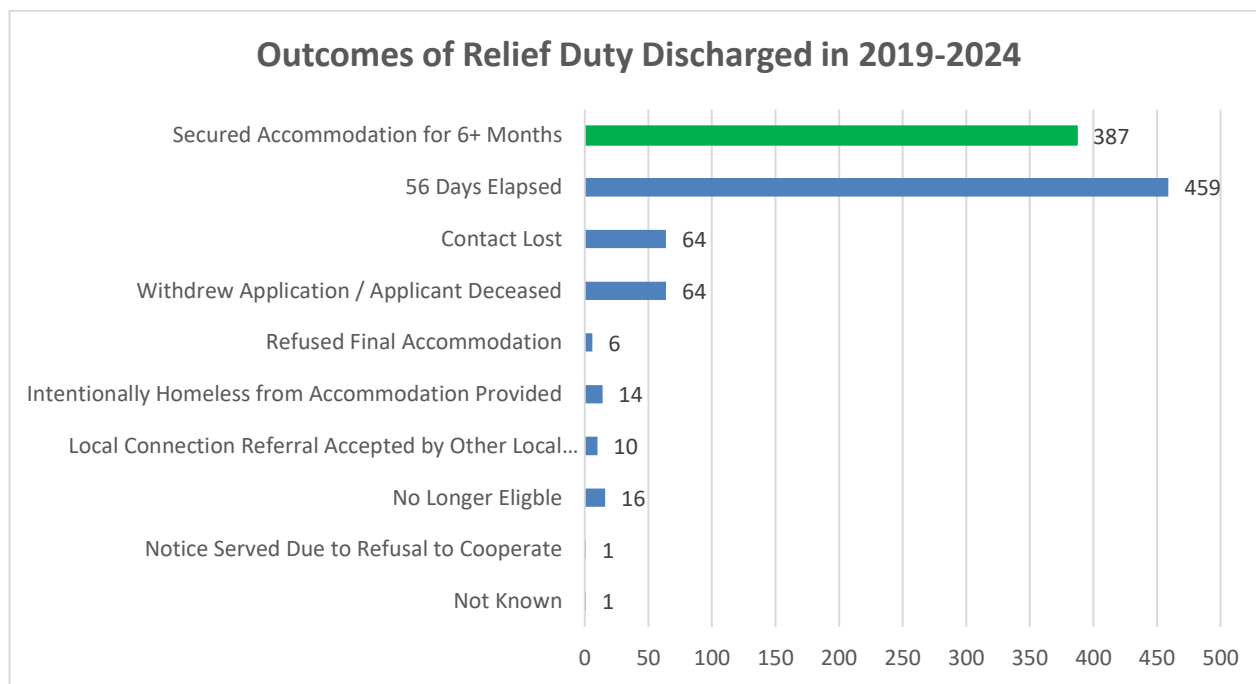


Figure 18: Outcomes of relief duty discharged in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

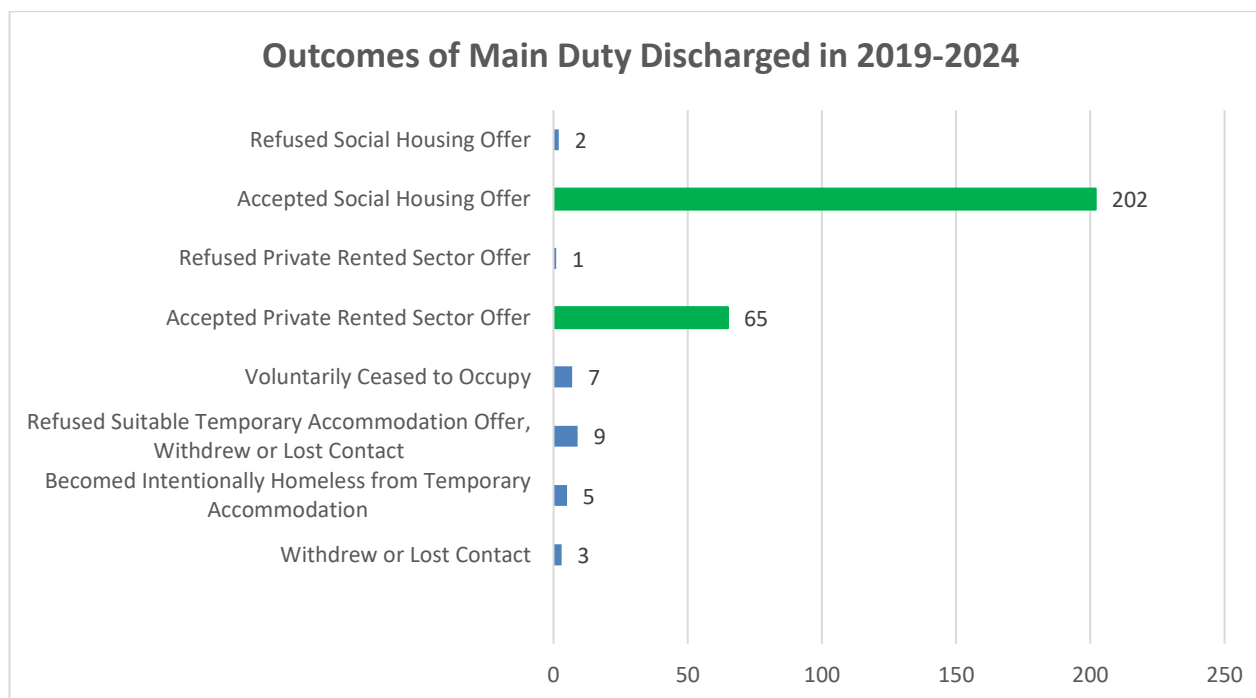


Figure 19: Outcomes of main duty discharged in Spelthorne in 2019 - 2024

Where we were unable to successfully relieve homelessness, we considered whether the household were owed the Main Duty under s193 (2) Housing Act 1996. This assessment involved considering whether the household was eligible, homeless, in priority need, had a local connection to Spelthorne, and that they had not become homeless intentionally. This assessment was carried out in 454 cases, and we accepted the Main Duty in 70% of cases. Where the Main Duty was accepted, 74% were in priority need because of dependent children within the household.

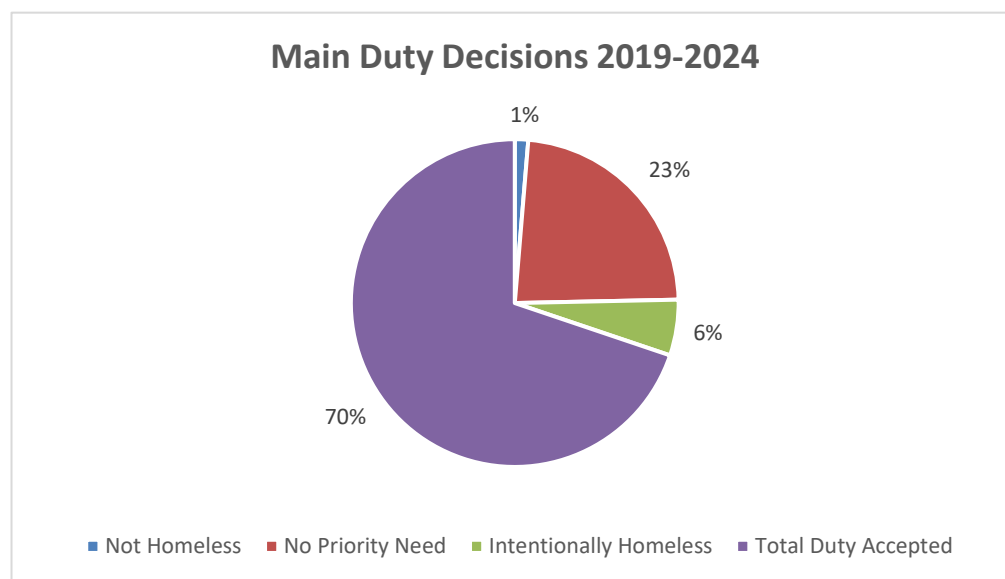


Figure 20: Main duty decisions in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

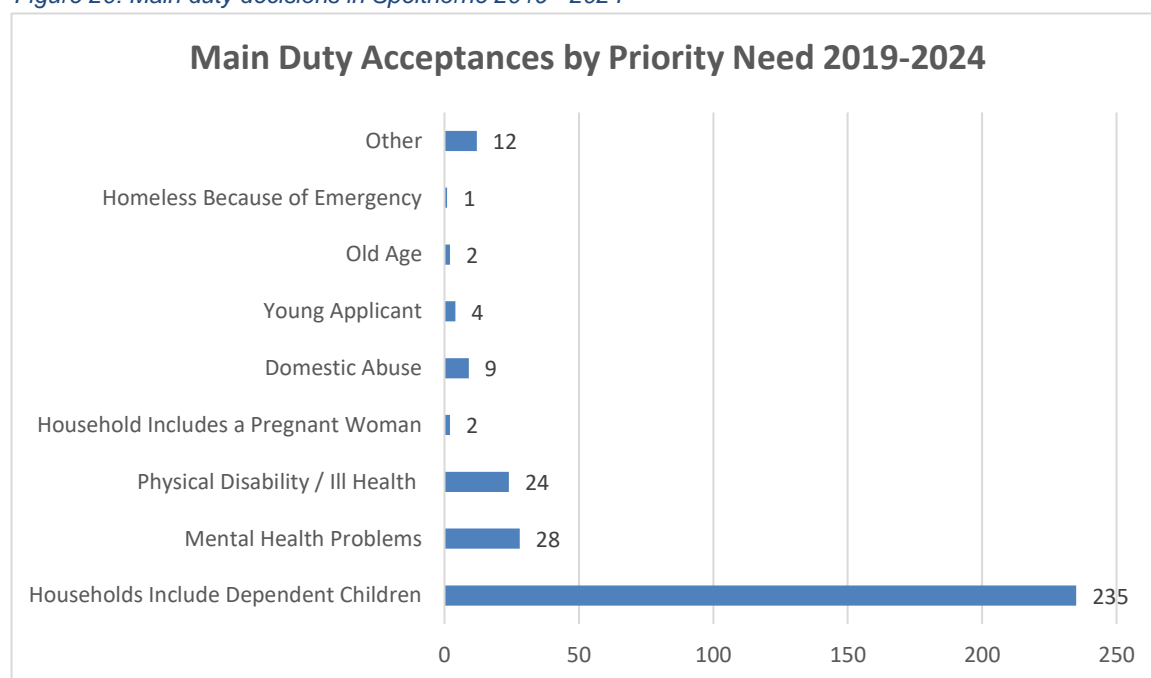


Figure 21: Main duty acceptances by priority need in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

## Supply vs demand of affordable and social housing

Spelthorne Borough Council does not own its own housing stock so instead works closely with housing associations in the borough who offer social rented accommodation. Spelthorne Council transferred its housing stock in 1996 to A2Dominion Housing Group. Social housing is extremely limited due to the high demand for affordable rented properties in the borough and nationwide. For residents to access social housing they must register with the Council's housing register by completing an online application on the Homes4Spelthorne Website:

[www.homes4spelthorne.org.uk](http://www.homes4spelthorne.org.uk). By joining the housing register, applicants can bid for properties in the local area. However, demand significantly outweighs the supply of social housing. Most applicants on the housing register will be unlikely to ever receive an offer of social housing.

### Housing register

Spelthorne Borough Council participates in a choice-based lettings scheme (i.e. a system allowing housing applicants to choose from a selection of available to let vacancies advertised openly or made known to registered applications in housing need).

Looking at the annual snapshot in figure 22, the number of households registered on the Spelthorne housing register has increased over the last 5 years, with a notable decrease in 2023/24 due to a reregistration process. A new Housing Allocations policy was introduced with a subsequent software update requiring all applicants to reregister to be assessed against the new policy. Generally, housing need and the demand for social and affordable housing has increased in Spelthorne over the last 5 years.

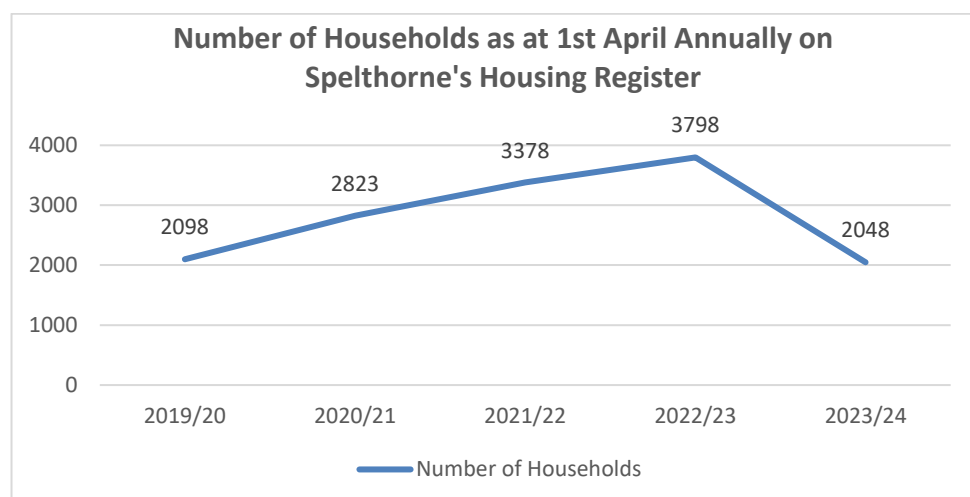


Figure 22: Annual snapshot of the number of households on Spelthorne Borough Council's Housing Register 2019 - 2024

Of the total number of applicants on the housing register, a consistent pattern from the last 5 years shows the majority require a one-bedroom property closely followed by demand for two-bedrooms. The 2023/24 data is the most recent data we have following the reregistration process and demonstrates that the demand for one bed homes is only slightly higher than the demand for two bed homes.

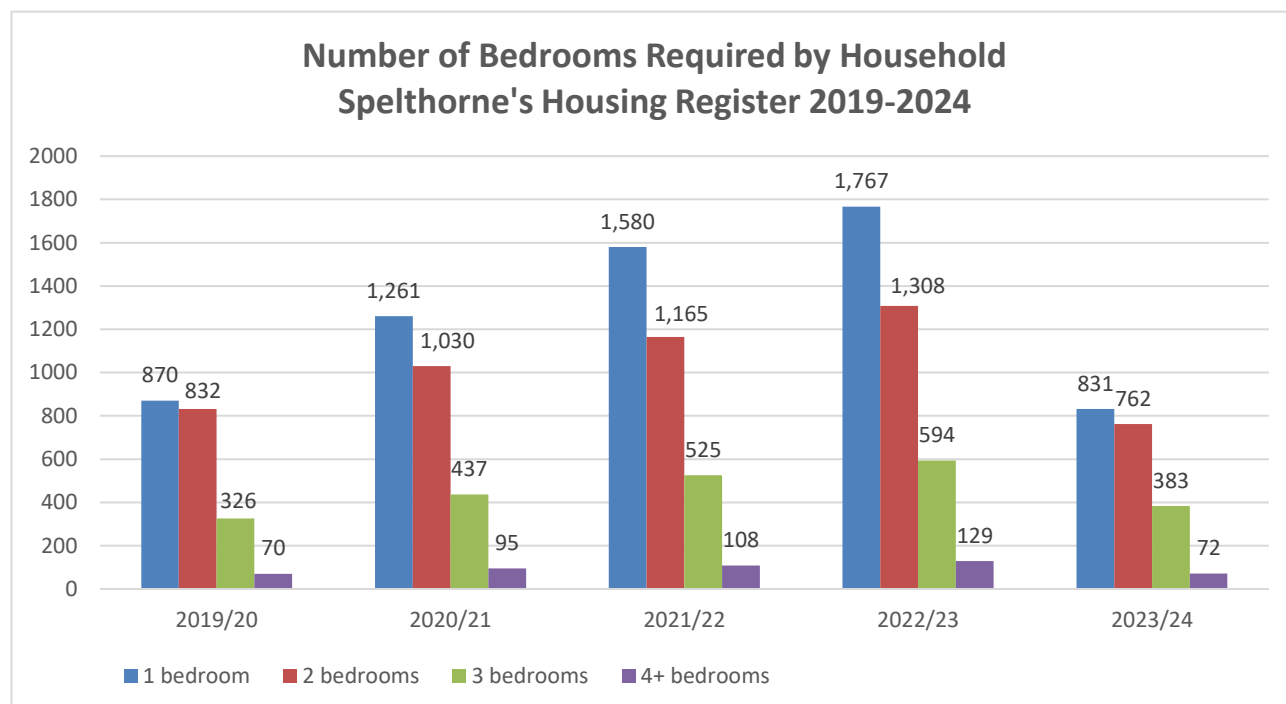


Figure 23: Number of bedrooms required by household on Spelthorne Borough Council's housing register 2019 - 2024

## Supply of affordable and social housing

Nationally, there is a shortage of homes being delivered, specifically, social and affordable rent. The number of new affordable properties being delivered in the borough of Spelthorne has fluctuated in the last 5 years as highlighted in figure 24. There is a huge lack of new affordable rented properties being delivered in the borough, with affordable housing delivery predominantly being made up of shared ownership units. This impacts on homelessness levels as there is a lack of suitable and affordable housing available for rent.

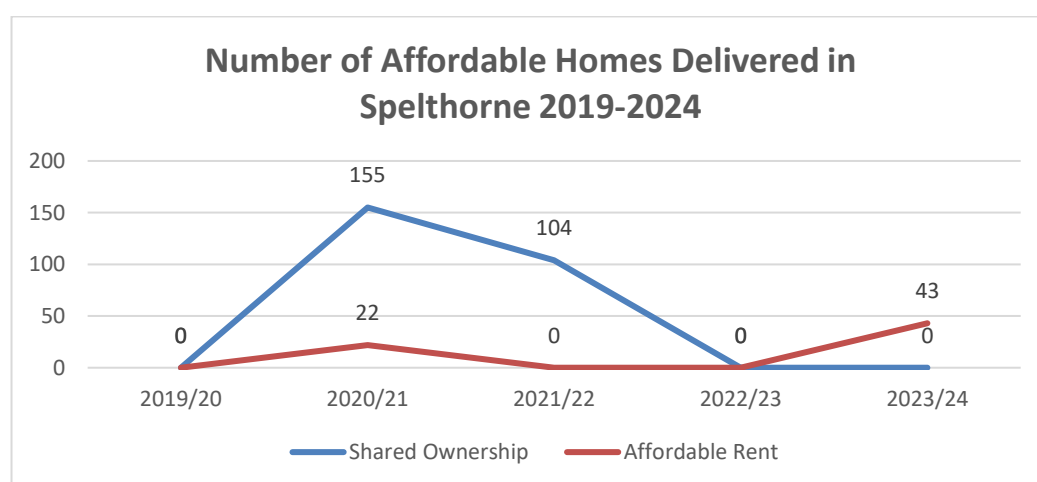


Figure 24: Number of affordable homes delivered in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

Spelthorne Borough Council's Authority Monitoring Reports highlight an increasing trend for developers to seek to reduce on-site provision of affordable housing on the grounds of viability and to promote off-site provision or an in-lieu financial contribution.

As Spelthorne Borough Council is a non-stock holding authority, lettings are only made through nominations to private registered providers with stock in Spelthorne. Over the last 5 years, a total of 889 properties were let via Spelthorne Borough Council, either through the previous website SEARCH Moves or new website Homes4Spelthorne. As shown in figure 25, Social lettings have fluctuated slightly in the last 5 years with a decline in 2020/21 and 2021/22 which could be an impact from the pause on evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic and lack of tenant movement across stock. There was also a decline in social lettings in 2023/24 (the lowest in the last 10 years), this is attributed to the break in lets due to the reregistration process but also due to housing providers needing to retain more stock for decanting existing tenants whilst necessary repairs were undertaken.

Of the 889 lettings, 89 properties were reserved for working households only. However, a total of 322 working households were let a property in the last 5 years, of which 97 were identified as key workers.

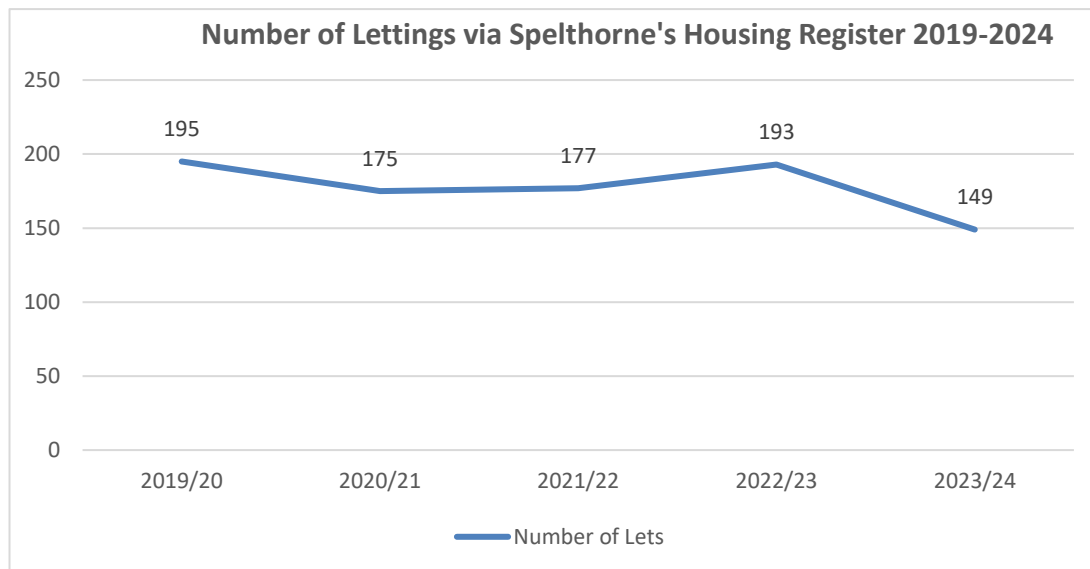


Figure 25: Number of lettings via Spelthorne Borough Council's housing register 2019 - 2024

Figures 27 and 28 identify the total number of Spelthorne lettings by bedroom size and property type between the financial years of April 2019 to April 2024. Just over 50% of the properties let, were one bedroom properties, this was the highest number of bedroom size let. Out of the total number of properties let, 296 were recorded as age restricted. Age restricted properties accounted for 66% of our one bedroom lets. The smallest number of properties let through Search Moves were 4 bedroom properties. This is mainly due to the limited availability of this property size. The vast majority of properties let were flats, which make up approximately 70% of the total number of lets between the financial years of 2019 to 2024.

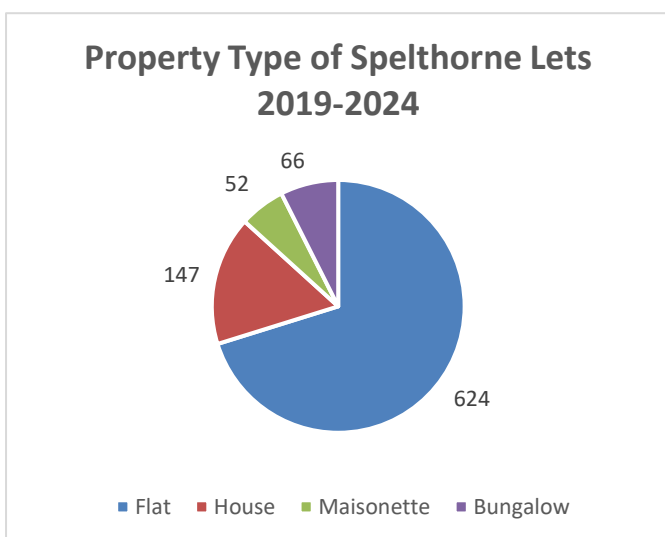


Figure 27: Property type of Spelthorne lettings 2019 - 2024

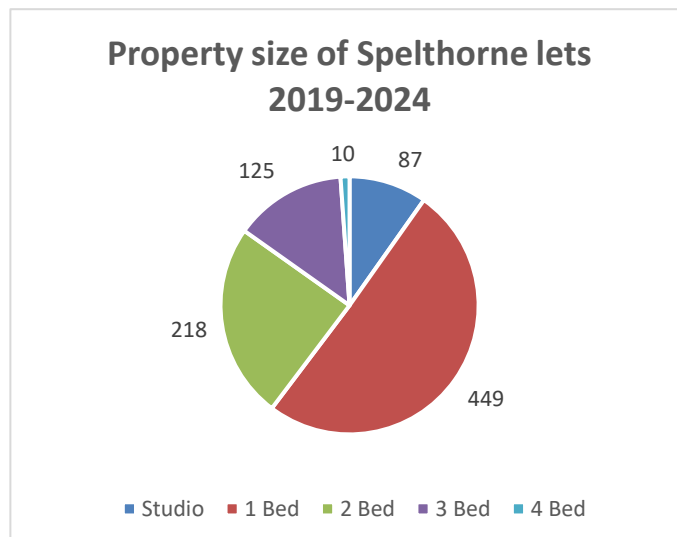


Figure 26: Property size of Spelthorne lettings 2019 - 2024

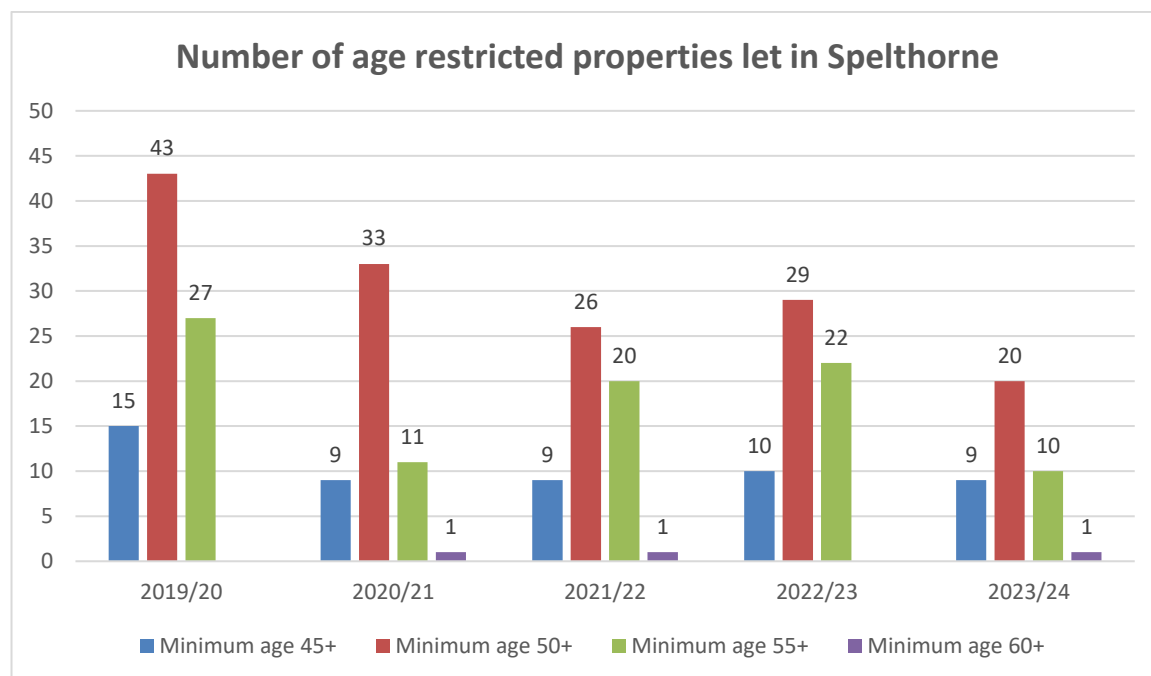


Figure 28: Number of age restricted properties let in Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

To illustrate the demand for age restricted properties, table 6 highlights the most recent snapshot of housing register applicants as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and the age band for applicants requiring a one-bedroom home. In 2023/24, a total of 149 lettings were made, of which 40 were age restricted. All of the age restricted properties were 1-bedroom flats meaning 48% of all 1-bedroom lets had age restrictions in place for that year.

Age Band of Main Applicant	Number of Applicants
Under 25	163
Between 25 and 39	254
Between 40 and 44	69
Between 45 and 49	40
Between 50 and 54	67
Between 55 and 59	65
60 and Over	173
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>831</b>

Table 6: snapshot of the age band of one-bedroom housing register applicants in Spelthorne as at 31st March 2024

Usually, the minimum age for sheltered or extra care accommodation is 50 or over. Out of the 831 households waiting for a one-bedroom property as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, 305 households were aged 50 or over. This means that approximately 63% of one-bedroom households would not be eligible for age restricted accommodation. However, it is worth noting that some of the



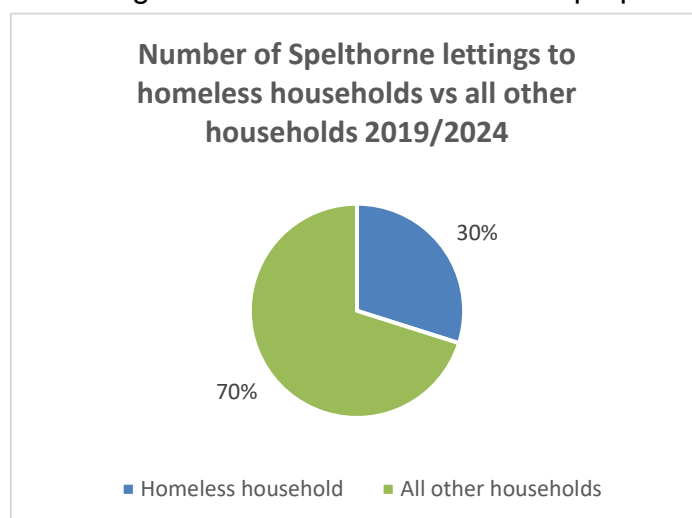
property age restrictions are reduced to aged 45+ for reasons including if they are 'hard to let'. Where this is considered for the year 2023/24, approximately 58% of 1-bedroom households were not eligible for properties with age restrictions of 45+. As noted, approximately half of one-bedroom properties let for 2023/24 were age restricted which further limits one-bedroom households aged 44 or under.

Overall, despite 889 properties being let in the last 5 years, there has been a large number of households registered on Spelthorne Council's housing register requiring affordable decent homes. There is an extremely limited number of social housing available in comparison to the number of households seeking assistance; demand continues to significantly outstrip supply.

### The allocation of affordable and social housing to homeless households

The allocation of social housing is one way of helping households that are facing homelessness. Due to its limited availability and high demand, it is not a realistic option to resolve a homelessness crisis. The number of housing register lettings to homeless households when compared with all other households on the housing register between the years of April 2019 to April 2024 is demonstrated in figure 29.

The data is broken down by those threatened or duty accepted as homeless versus all other households that were generally bidding for properties. A total of 266 homeless households were let properties through Spelthorne's housing register over this date period. This makes up approximately 30% of persons let properties in the last 5 years. Anyone who has an accepted homeless duty with Spelthorne Borough Council and is eligible to join the Spelthorne housing register, is set-up on auto bidding to ensure all bids on suitable properties are maximised.



*Figure 29: Lettings to homeless households vs all other households on Spelthorne's housing register 2019-2024*

## Knowle Green Estates

Knowle Green Estates (KGE) was established in 2016. KGE is a private housing company owned by Spelthorne Borough Council for the purposes of delivering homes to meet local housing need. The Council borrows funds from the Public Works Loan Board at a low interest rate fixed for 50 years and then lends the money with interest to KGE who buy and manage properties on a long-term basis. Funds generated are invested in more homes, regeneration opportunities and front-line services.

To date, a number of developments have been delivered and are being managed by KGE as shown in figure 30. KGE deliver a mixture of tenures including private rent, affordable rent and key worker homes. KGE operate a policy whereby affordable rent means either 80% of the market rent or capped at the local housing allowance (whichever is the lowest at the time of setting rent levels).

Tenants are referred to KGE from the Council's Housing Options team which includes both homeless households and those on the Council's housing register who are deemed to have a housing need.



Figure 30: Developments managed by Knowle Green Estates 2018-2021

Since initial delivery shown in figure 30, 23 properties have been re-let between 2022-2024 to applicants who are either on the housing register or who have a homeless application accepted by the Council.

KGE's aim is to provide local affordable homes for residents to help meet the demand for affordable housing which is not currently being met by other developers.

However, COVID-19 and the cost living crisis has had a direct impact on KGE's housing delivery plan. The inflated cost of building materials, increased interest rates and the work skill shortage in the building sector has had an impact on the delivery of affordable housing in Spelthorne. In October 2023, Council voted to suspend the Council's housing development programme following a report by officers outlining the increasing risks associated with residential development because of rising interest rates and construction inflation. As part of the new Corporate Plan, the Council are now exploring opportunities for joint housing delivery ventures to help meet the demand for local affordable housing. The Council is seeking to maximise the provision of affordable homes through the planning process via viability assessments and Section 106 agreements, and secure nomination rights for new development schemes to increase the range and variety of affordable homes.

The Council receive very few offers of affordable housing from developers and many developers challenge the requirements for affordable housing delivery on viability grounds. This leaves Spelthorne with very few new homes being delivered each year in parallel with increasing demand for affordable homes. The Council has also experienced further challenges with registered providers not wanting to take over the affordable rented units on sites subject to Section 106.

## Emergency and temporary accommodation

There are some instances where we as a Council are unable to prevent homelessness. A duty to provide interim accommodation arises where an applicant is assessed as homeless and there is a reason to believe that they are in priority need. This duty continues until the Council decides what further duty, if any, is owed to the household. There are two particular types of accommodation Spelthorne Borough Council use:

- **Emergency accommodation** (e.g. Bed and Breakfast): usually procured by the Council on a nightly basis. Although the Council has exclusive access to Harper House in Ashford, private providers are also used to help meet demand.
- **Temporary accommodation (TA)**: let on a longer term, although still temporary in nature. The Council owns 1 property which it uses as temporary accommodation; let on a non-secure weekly tenancy. We also have access to 40 properties owned by A2Dominion which are reserved exclusively for use as temporary accommodation. These properties are let on six-monthly assured shorthold tenancies.

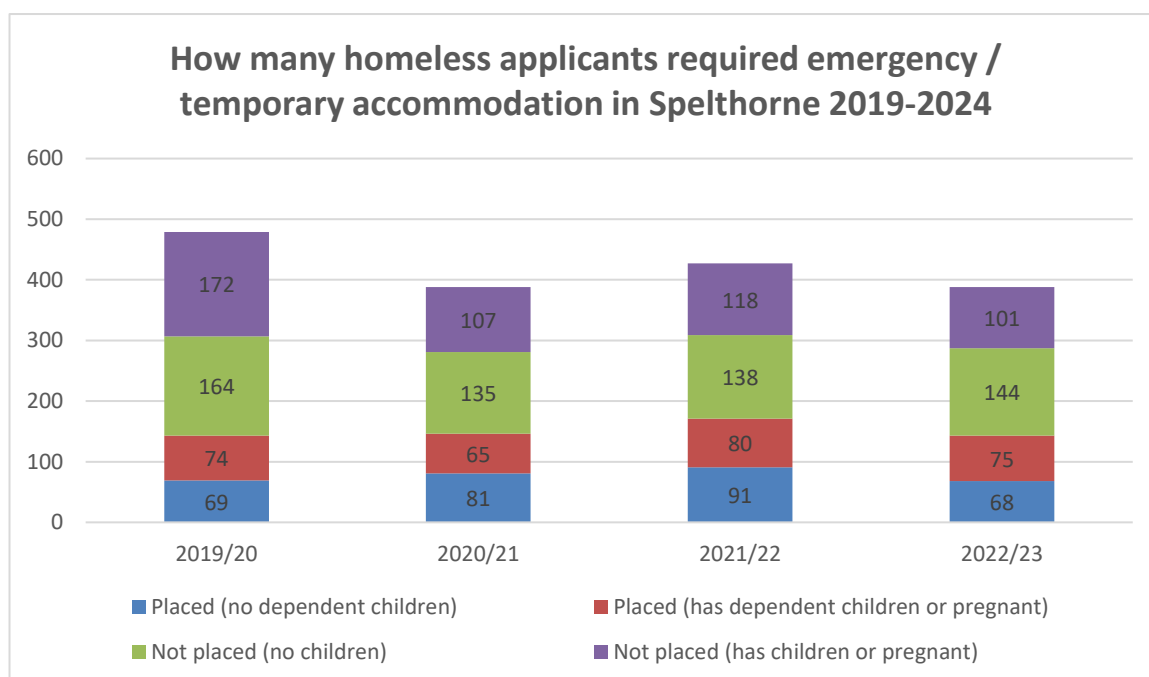


Figure 31: Number of homeless applicants who required emergency or temporary accommodation from Spelthorne Borough Council 2019 - 2024

### Type of emergency and temporary accommodation used

To give an indication of how Spelthorne Borough Council uses interim accommodation, the data in tables 7 and 8 gives a snapshot as at the 31st March 2024 to demonstrate this.

Accommodation type for properties within Spelthorne	Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	Total
B&B (Travelodge)	-	3	1	-	-	4
Other nightly paid (shared)	-	7	1	-	-	8
Other nightly paid (self-contained)	-	33	17	-	1	51
Directly with a private sector landlord		19	-	-	-	19
Temporary accommodation (registered provider)	2	26	6	4	-	38
Temporary accommodation (Spelthorne Council)	-	7	11	-	1	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>139</b>

Table 7: Emergency accommodation type for properties within Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

Accommodation type for properties outside of Spelthorne	Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	Total
Other nightly paid (shared)	8	-	-	-	-	8
Other nightly paid (self-contained)	3	3	2	1	-	9
Directly with a private sector landlord	-	2	3	8	1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>

Table 8: Emergency accommodation type for properties outside of Spelthorne 2019 - 2024

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the largest accommodation type that the Council arranged for eligible homeless applicants is self-contained nightly paid accommodation which was provided to 60 households. Under the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2003, B&B accommodation with shared facilities is not considered suitable for families with children or those who are pregnant where the placement is beyond six weeks. Therefore, this partly influences the number of self-contained accommodation units required.

### Location of emergency and temporary accommodation used

Where suitable, the Council aims to use accommodation within Spelthorne to reduce disruption to households and their community links to the borough. In 2024, the Council sourced over 30 units of good quality local temporary accommodation within Spelthorne to reduce the number of placements made out of borough. However, there are some instances where this is not possible or not suitable, so some households are placed out of borough. Figure 32 indicates that as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the majority of households were placed within the borough of Spelthorne.

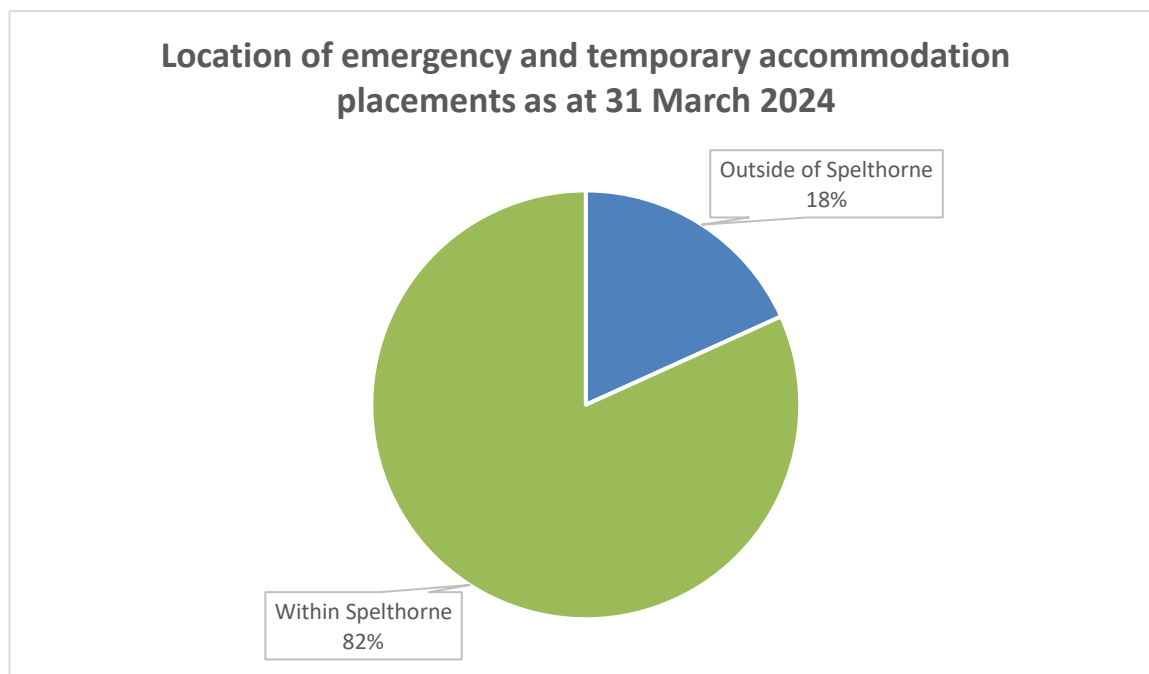


Figure 32: Location of emergency and temporary accommodation placements as at a snapshot of 31st March 2024

Figure 33 shows households in emergency and temporary accommodation as at the snapshot date of 31 March 2024, households were made up of predominantly families with one child.

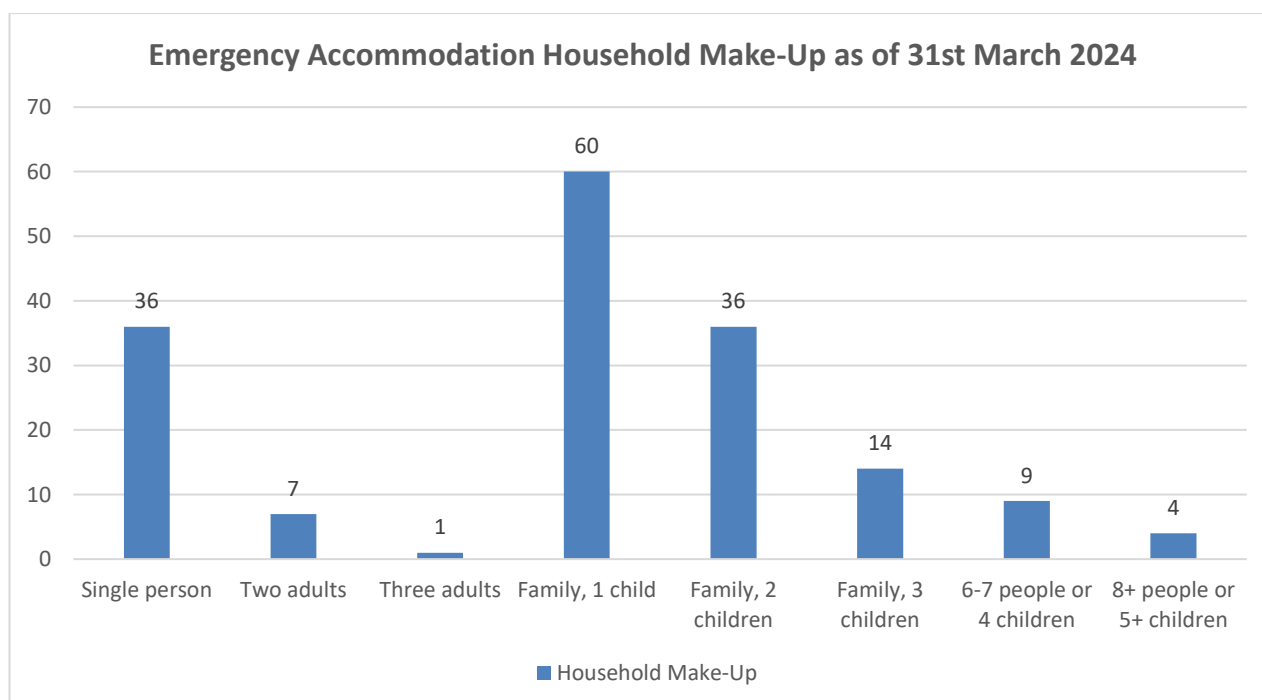


Figure 33: Make-up of households in emergency accommodation as at a snapshot of 31st March 2024

## Length of stay in emergency and temporary accommodation

We aim to minimise the length of time a household may have to live in emergency or temporary accommodation. However, this is strongly dependent on the availability of settled accommodation that meets the housing needs of the client to enable them to move-on. The average length of stay in temporary accommodation is shown in figure 34. Across the last five years, households have spent, on average, 38 weeks in emergency accommodation. This is based on 717 placements and the total length of stay after the household exited their temporary accommodation.

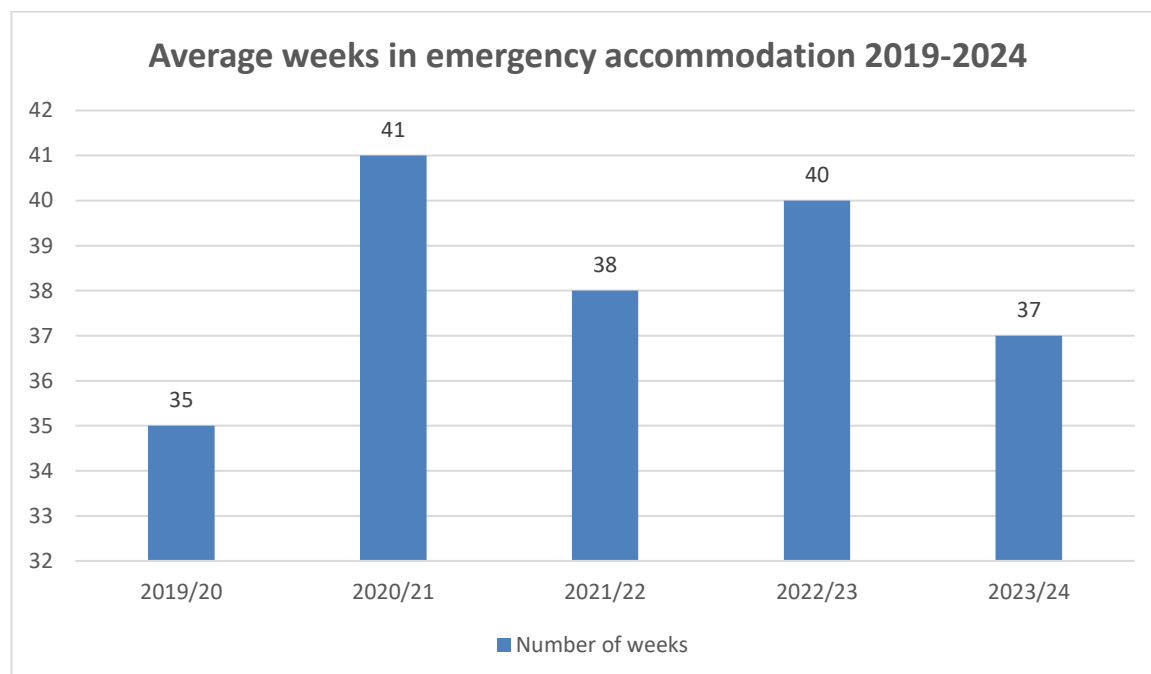


Figure 34: Average number of weeks spent in emergency accommodation 2019 - 2024

The average number of weeks accommodated in temporary accommodation has initially increased since 2019 but then fluctuated annually. This may be attributed to the various economic housing pressures caused by COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis, which have severely limited the number of affordable and suitable move-on options available to homeless applicants.

## Access to the private rented sector

Privately rented accommodation is our primary route to help relieve homelessness in the borough and is what we will use in the first instance to help prevent or relieve homelessness. One of the main issues our applicants have when securing privately rented accommodation is the large costs incurred up front by the tenant. This is usually one month's rent in advance and a 5 week deposit. When facing the threat of homelessness, these costs can cause pressures on households who may not be in a position to afford this.

To help our homeless applicants find and secure privately rented accommodation, Spelthorne Borough Council offers two main methods of support.

1. **Homeless Prevention Fund** – Central Government allocate a proportion of funding for the purpose of helping local authorities in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those at risk of homelessness. The fund is flexibly used but intended to enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act, reduce family temporary accommodation numbers, and eliminate the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for families. Spelthorne Council utilise the fund to help assist applicants in securing suitable accommodation through a grant or loaned deposit and rent in advance. If it's a loan, the applicant enters into an affordable repayment plan with the council to pay this money back. In the last 5 years, Spelthorne Borough Council has spent just under £1.95m towards homelessness prevention using allocated Government funding this includes £671,961 for rent in advance, deposits, rental and mortgage support payments.
2. **Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme** – Introduced in December 2016, the scheme offers a rent guarantee to landlords for up to 2 years in exchange for the Council nominating a homeless family directly to the property.

The scheme offers:

- Rent paid directly to the landlord at a fair market rent for up to 2 years
- A 5 week security repair bond agreement (operates like a deposit)
- Free preparation of tenancy agreements
- Free professional inventory service
- Free tenancy support service with ongoing support for landlord and tenant
- Free tenant training programme upon placement

### Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme

In the last 5 years, there have been 238 landlords enquiring about the scheme with 71 landlords signing up to the Rent Assure Scheme. The data below indicates the number of successful tenancies formed between homeless families and landlords. Spelthorne Council has demonstrated its good working relationships with landlords as it's noted that landlords who have started on the scheme have returned with other properties to rent through the scheme.



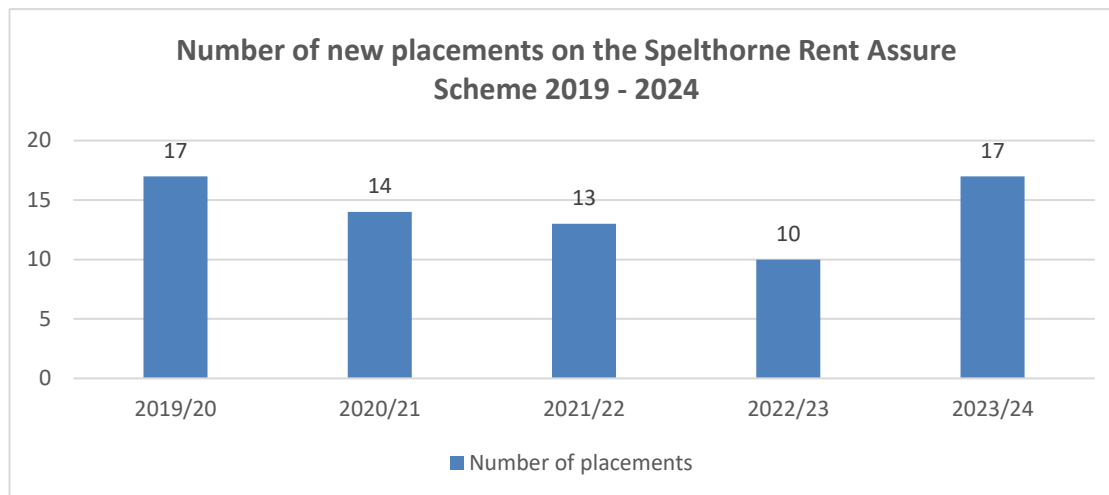


Figure 35: Number of new placements on the Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme 2019 - 2024

Figure 35 details the number of placements which have been made under the scheme. There was a slight decline across 2020-2023 as the scheme was placed on hold for 6 months during the COVID-19 pandemic and there was an increase in market rents during 2022/23 which were unsustainable to set-up. However, 2023/24 has seen a steady increase in the number of placements.

In the last 5 years, 71 tenants have finished the scheme, and the outcomes are highlighted in figure 36. The majority of tenants continue to sustain their tenancy beyond the initial 2 years.

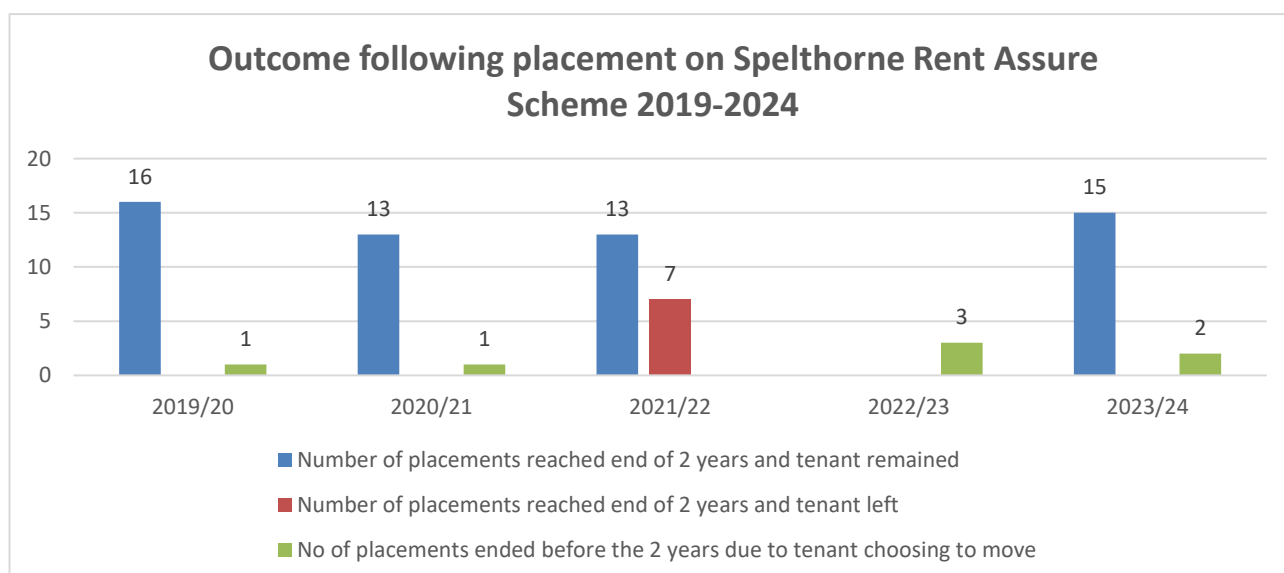


Figure 36: Outcome following placement on Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme 2019 - 2024

## Spelthorne Rentstart

Whilst the Rent Assure scheme helps families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, Spelthorne Council works closely with a local charity called Spelthorne Rentstart who are able to offer support to single persons and couples without children. Rentstart offer incentives to landlords and help tenant's secure privately rented accommodation through wholly or part funding a rent deposit through their deposit guarantee scheme and offer ongoing tenancy sustainment support. As highlighted in figure 37, Rentstart have successfully assisted a total of 2,056 clients between 2019-2024. Assistance was given through housing advice which was provided to 1,644 clients and an additional 412 were supported into accommodation through the deposit scheme.

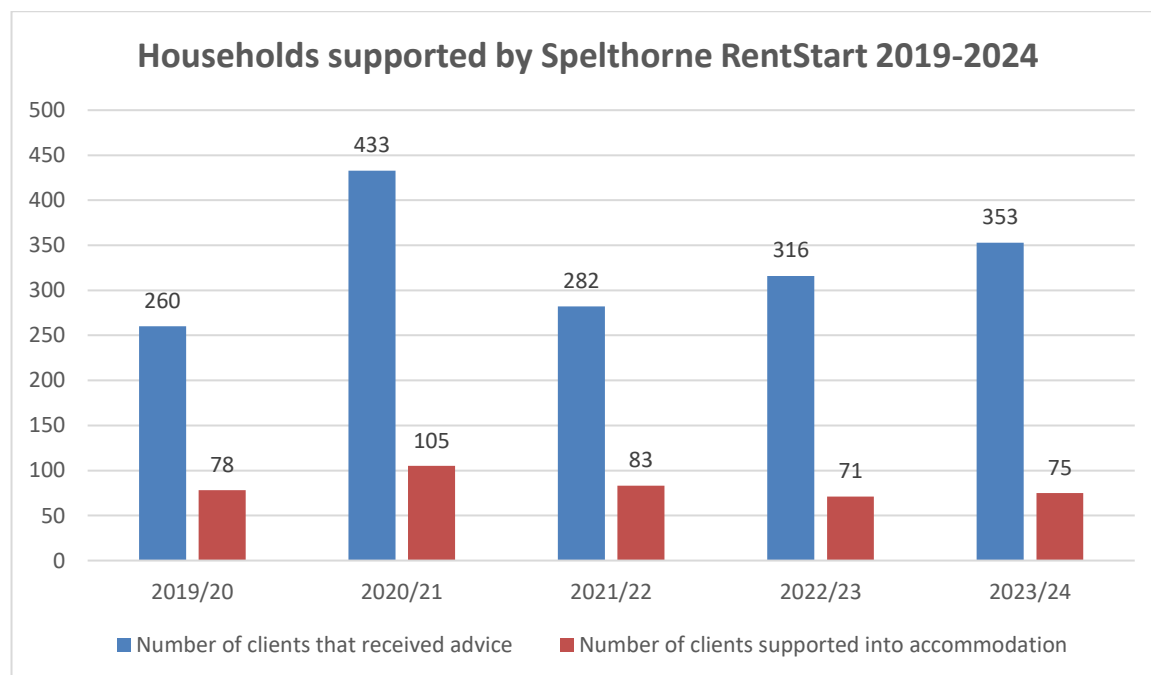


Figure 37: Total number of households supported by Spelthorne Rentstart 2019-2024

## Rough sleeping

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) conduct an annual snapshot of people rough sleeping on a single night. The snapshot uses street or spot counts and evidence-based estimates.

Figures 38 and 39 breakdown the number of rough sleepers recorded in England, South East and Spelthorne. The graphs show an initial reduction in the number of rough sleepers during 2020 and 2021 which may be attributed to the Government's 'Everyone-In' initiative during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, there has been a slight increase in the numbers recorded which may be a direct impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the Government's plan to speed up the backlog of asylum seeker decisions.

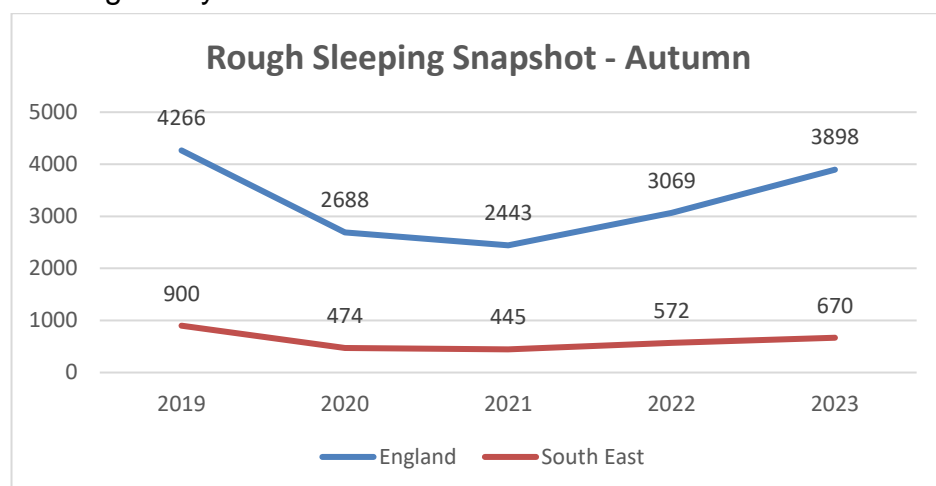


Figure 38: Annual snapshot of rough sleepers in England and the South East 2019-2023

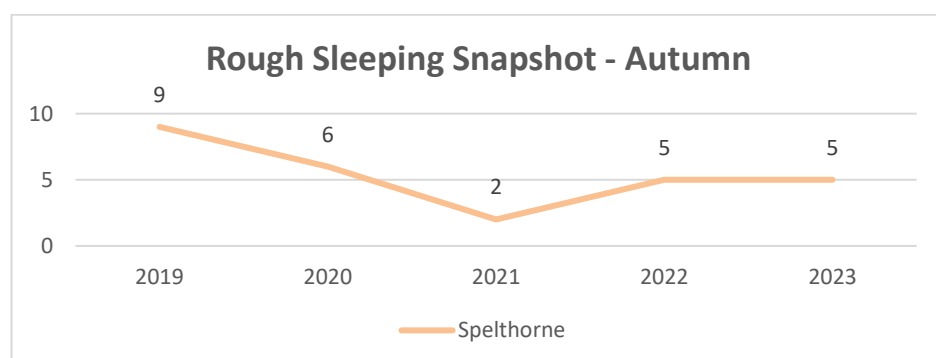


Figure 39: Annual snapshot of rough sleepers in Spelthorne 2019-2023

It is worth noting that the nightly count does fluctuate and, in some instances, Spelthorne has seen a nightly figure of 0 in the last 5 years. Spelthorne has also been able to eradicate entrenched rough sleeping (repeat homelessness for long-periods) in Spelthorne within the last 5 years and where possible, has adopted a 'no second night out' approach.

## Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI)

In December 2019, the Conservative Manifesto committed to ending rough sleeping by the end of the next Parliament through an extension of RSI which began in 2018. Local authorities were invited to bid annually for funding where £203 million had been allocated to provide local support those sleeping rough. In September 2022, the Government committed to a further £500m for RSI across 3 subsequent years.

Spelthorne Council made a successful bid for RSI funding in 2020/21 for £146,500 and in 2021/22 for £212,650 to set-up and sustain our rough sleeper outreach service. Spelthorne Borough Council made another successful bid of £568,300 for 3-year funding across 2022-2025. The funding has been used to expand our rough sleeper outreach service to maintain a significant reduction in the number of rough sleepers. Initially, some of the RSI funding had been intended for a Housing First programme. However, due to market pressures and economic uncertainty, we were unable to procure a housing provider to deliver the housing element of this service. Therefore, this proportion of the RSI funding was repurposed to provide an intensive 'housing led' support officer who manages a smaller caseload to provide wrap-around support to those with multiple and complex needs. Additionally, RSI funding contributed towards a floating supporting service provided by Look Ahead. The service supports private renters with sustaining their tenancies and assists prison leavers to access the private rented sector. There is uncertainty on future funding available so there is no guarantee that the service can be extended which will impact the Council's current service provision.

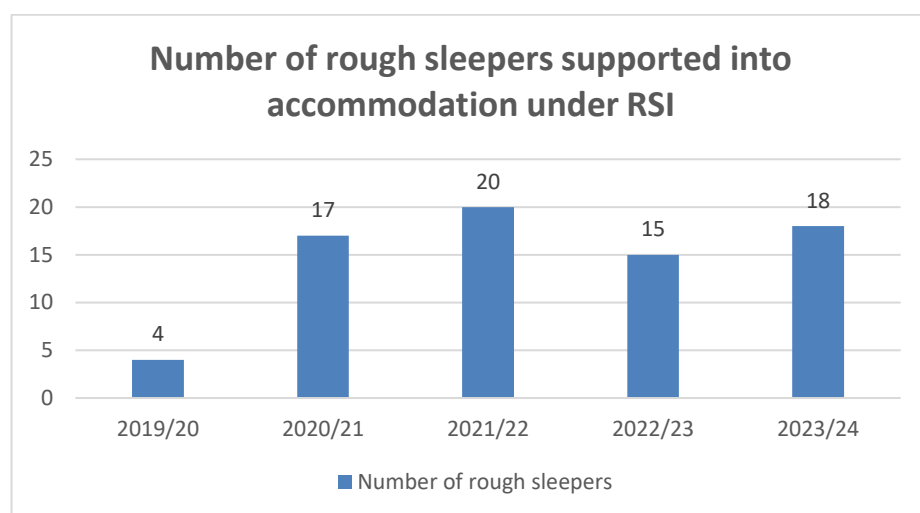


Figure 40: Number of rough sleepers supported into accommodation via RSI funding 2019-2024

As well as RSI, there have also been several other rounds of targeted Government funding over the last 5 years, including the following:

### Accommodation for Ex-Offenders

In July 2021, the Government introduced funding to support prison leavers with access to accommodation. The funding allowed local authorities to provide support to ex-offenders entering the private rental sector, typically consisting of rental deposits and landlord incentives. As part of a Surrey wide bid made by district and boroughs, £268,00 was secured to support ex-offenders into private rented sector tenancies; Spelthorne received an allocation of £33,104. The scheme aims to build a pathway from prison into the private rented sector, a total of 13 ex-offenders were supported into accommodation via this route.

### Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP)

In 2020, the Government launched NSAP in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help support the move-on of rough sleepers accommodated in emergency accommodation under 'Everyone In'. The programme was set-up to safeguard and prevent those accommodated from returning to rough sleeping. Financial resource of £105 million was made available for initiatives to support move-on into the private rented sector and extending interim accommodation. With a further £161 million in 2020/21 to support local authorities and partners with capital for property costs to deliver 3,300 units of settled accommodation and long-term revenue for tenancy support.

### Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP)

In 2020, the Government also introduced RSAP and allocated £435 million to support up to 6,000 rough sleepers into longer-term accommodation with additional support to assist with getting ready for independent living and move-on. The programme ran from 2021-2024. After a successful bid, Spelthorne Borough Council was allocated £360,000 towards the purchase of 6 one-bedroom flats and support provision. The funding was paid to Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, and in return, the Council nominates residents to these supported homes for the next 80 years.

### Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme

In December 2022, the Government announced a £200 million fund to deliver up to 2,400 homes and support services for rough sleepers with a focus on support housing, Housing First and housing-led accommodation. The target groups included young people at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping and for adults experiencing multiple disadvantages with a history of rough sleeping. Spelthorne Borough Council were not eligible to bid for this grant funding.

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers – Increased homelessness demand

There has been additional housing demand pressures locally due to the influx of refugees and asylum seekers requiring support from Spelthorne Borough Council within the last five years.

Spelthorne pledged to support up to 12 households arriving locally under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy into privately rented accommodation.

The Home Office held a bridging hotel for Afghans within Spelthorne which closed in 2023. Prior to closure, the Family Support Team and Housing Options Team within Spelthorne Borough Council were assisting families with move-on plans to find settled accommodation. The Home Office introduced a 'Find Your Own' pathway for Afghans to support them in finding privately rented accommodation. Spelthorne Borough Council were able to support Afghan households with deposits and rent in advance and then claim back funding from the Home Office. Spelthorne Borough Council also utilised a rent guarantee scheme by paying for 12 months' rent in advance and setting up a contract with the tenant to repay the rent in monthly instalments up to the local housing allowance rate. Spelthorne Borough Council then subsidised the rent shortfall via Home Office funding. Prior to the closure of the hotel, the Council supported 6 families onto the Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme and a further 4 households were prevented from becoming homeless as they were supported to secure privately rented accommodation.

Following the closure of the Home Office hotel in Spelthorne, Spelthorne Borough Council actively sourced additional emergency accommodation in preparation for the increased homelessness demand. In total, 22 households approached the Council for assistance following the closure of the Spelthorne bridging hotel. A further 5 households approached from bridging hotels that closed outside of the borough.

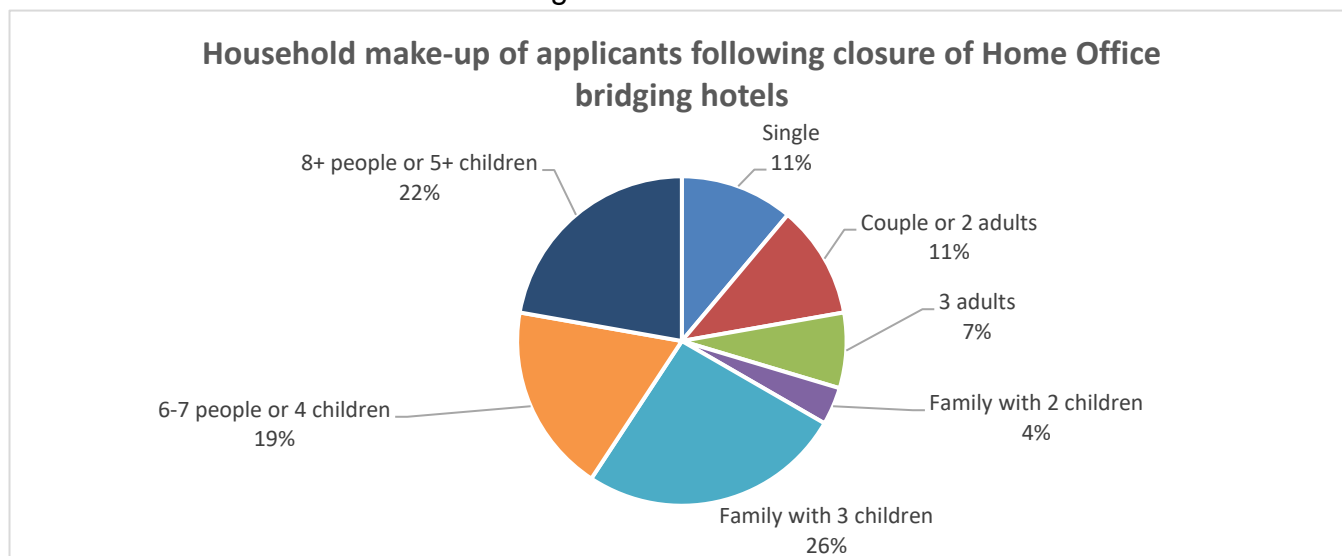


Figure 41: Household make-up of applicants approaching Spelthorne Borough Council following closure of Home Office Bridging Hotels in 2023

As shown in figure 41, these households generally had more household members, creating an additional challenge for the Council to find suitable move-on accommodation due to the severe lack of affordable larger sized properties available locally.

Since the hotel's closure, the Family Support team supported 38 families across emergency and privately rented accommodation. Families received a weekly contact (home visit / telephone call) to assist with identified needs and support to access community resources. The resettlement team ran a well-attended weekly women's group providing information and advice, a sewing class and Pilates. Additionally, they provided a weekly women's ESOL class.

The Council has also maximised move-on opportunities by identifying suitable MOD properties available and by utilising the Local Authority Housing Funding (LAHF) set-up by central Government. LAHF was introduced for the acquisition of properties for refugees which can then be later relet as affordable housing for general needs households. Spelthorne Borough Council were granted 40% of total capital costs to purchase 18 properties (which includes 14 for resettlement and 4 for temporary accommodation) under round 1 and round 2. The Council were also granted further funding under an extension of rounds 1 and 2 to purchase an additional 52 properties (50 for temporary accommodation and 2 for resettlement) and a further minimum of 8 properties (6 for temporary accommodation and 2 for resettlement) under round 3 funding. Round 3 funding enables the Council to purchase more properties than the indicated minimum number. This funding helps reduce the use of costly private emergency accommodation and allows the Council to purchase good quality local homes for use as temporary accommodation. The Council is currently awaiting the outcome of an expression of interest form submitted to DLUHC for further funding under round 3.

The Home Office also hold a hotel for asylum seekers and numerous dispersed accommodation within Spelthorne. In 2023, the notice period provided by the Home Office following a positive asylum seeker decision was reduced. Consequently, there has been an increase in the number of households approaching Spelthorne Borough Council for homelessness assistance following the withdrawal of Home Office accommodation. Figure 42 illustrates the trend in demand within the last 5 years and demonstrates a particular increased pressure within 2023/24.

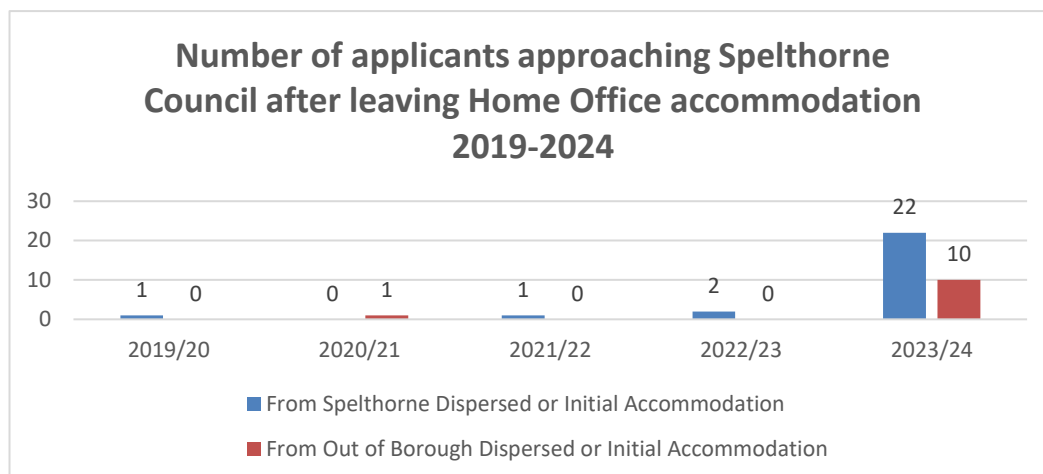


Figure 42: Number of applicants approaching Spelthorne Borough Council after leaving Home Office accommodation 2019-2024

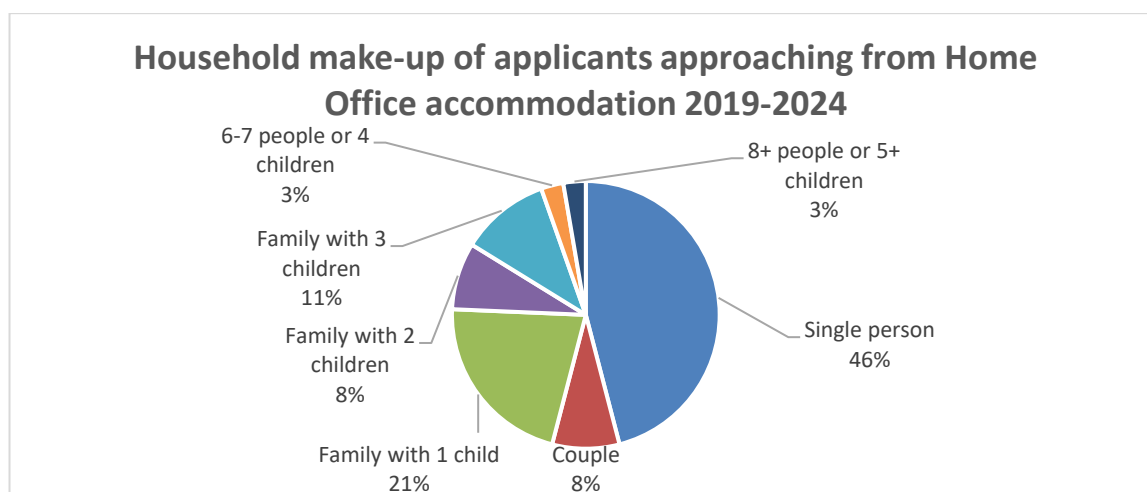


Figure 43: Household make-up of applicants approaching from Home Office accommodation 2019-2024

Spelthorne residents have also been supporting Ukrainians via the Homes for Ukraine Scheme by acting as sponsors. Spelthorne Borough Council supported sponsors and guests by issuing £600 monthly thank you payments (this is an increase to central Governments initial £350 payment to support higher living cost pressures in Surrey). As at 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024, the total number of arrivals in Spelthorne was 258<sup>12</sup>. In some circumstances, the sponsorship relationship broke down or the host was no longer able to accommodate, and the Ukrainian household approached Spelthorne Borough Council for homelessness assistance. Across 2022-2024, a total of 11 households approached the Council for homelessness advice via a Homes for Ukraine sponsorship route and 6 households from a Ukraine family scheme route.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024). Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme: Visa data by country, upper and lower tier local authority. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-visa-data-by-country-upper-and-lower-tier-local-authority>



## Resources available to deliver homelessness services

### Staffing revenue expenditure

A comparison of our staffing team in 2019 to 2024 is demonstrated in figures 44 and 45.

The Housing Options team at Spelthorne Borough Council has somewhat expanded and shifted over the last five years. This includes the specific creation of a strategy and data hub to improve data quality, lead on initiatives and manage performance of contracts with funded partners. There has also been an expansion to the rough sleeper support outreach team (due to an increase in Rough Sleeper Initiative funding), ensuring a well-resourced first approach team.

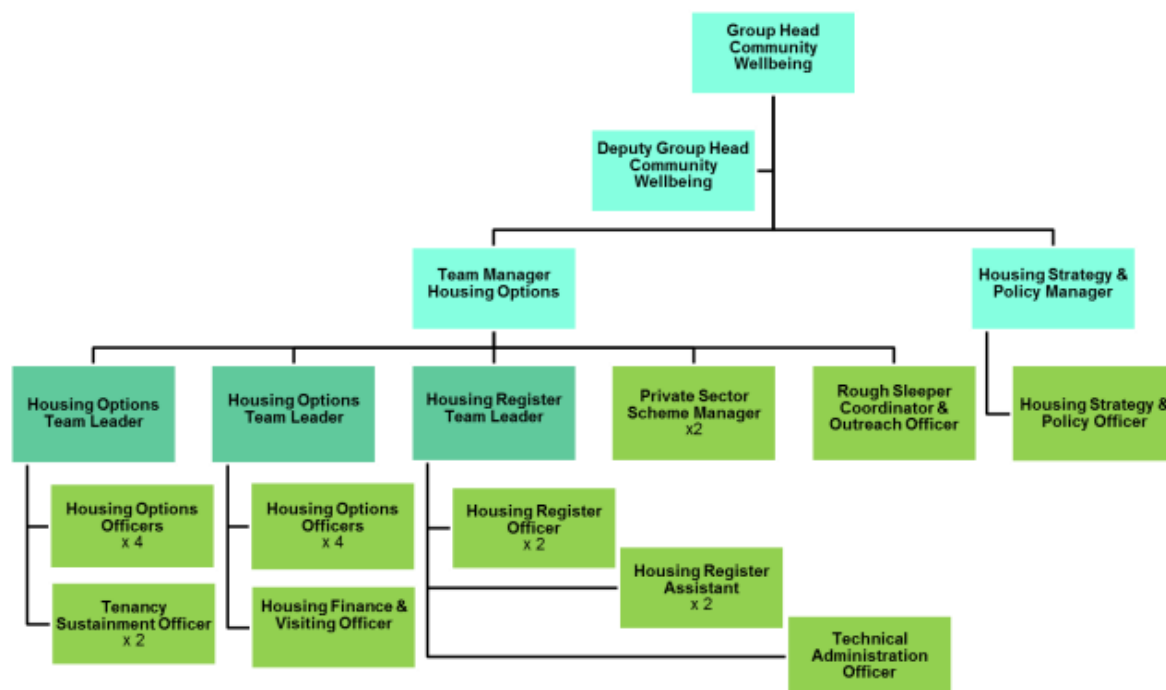


Figure 44: Spelthorne Borough Council Housing Options Staff Structure 2019

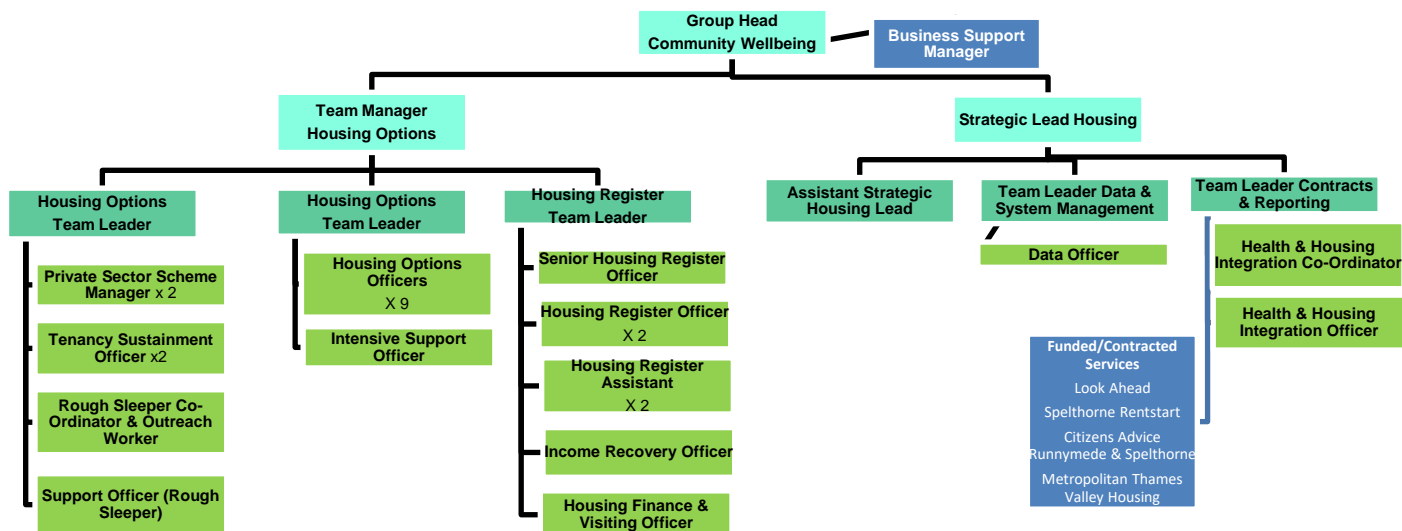


Figure 45: Spelthorne Borough Council Housing Options Staff Structure 2024

Total expenditure related to these costs are displayed in figure 46. This highlights a general increase in expenditure for staff related costs including salaries, insurance, pension, admin costs and essential allowance for home visits. Spelthorne Borough Council has aimed to meet the increasing demand for housing support, advice and assistance by ensuring our ability to deliver a well-structured and effective Housing Options service.

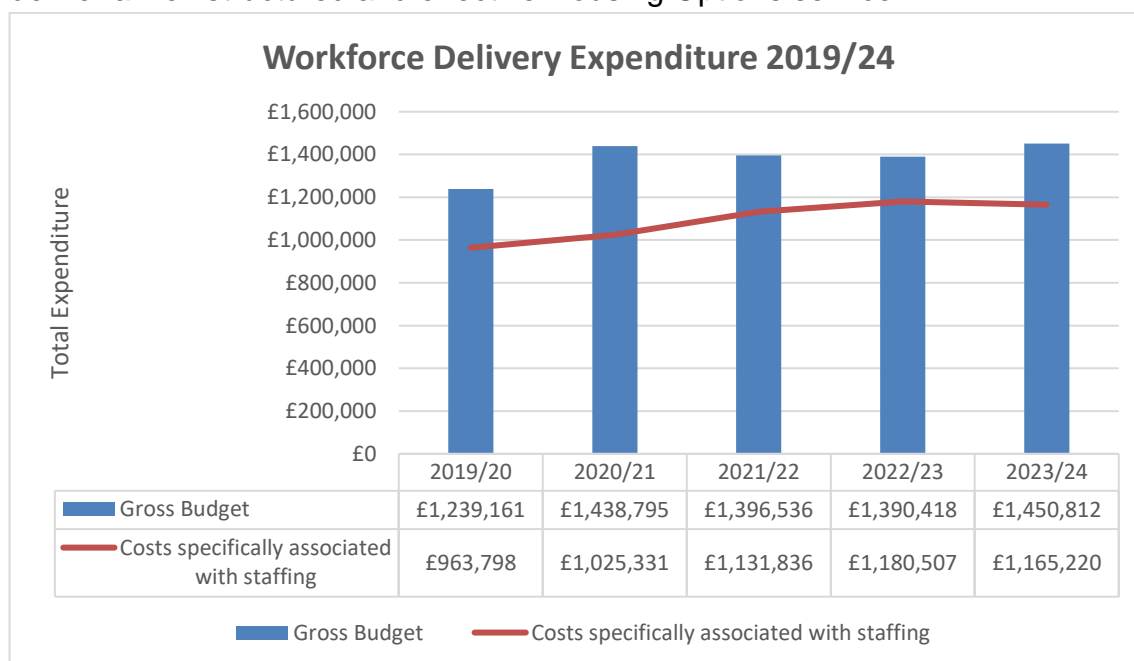


Figure 46: Workforce delivery expenditure for Spelthorne Borough Council Housing Options team 2019-2024

## Non-staffing revenue expenditure

Spelthorne Borough Council has also seen a general increase in expenditure on homelessness prevention initiatives. The expenditure in figure 47 was funded using homelessness prevention and flexible support grant funding allocated by central Government.

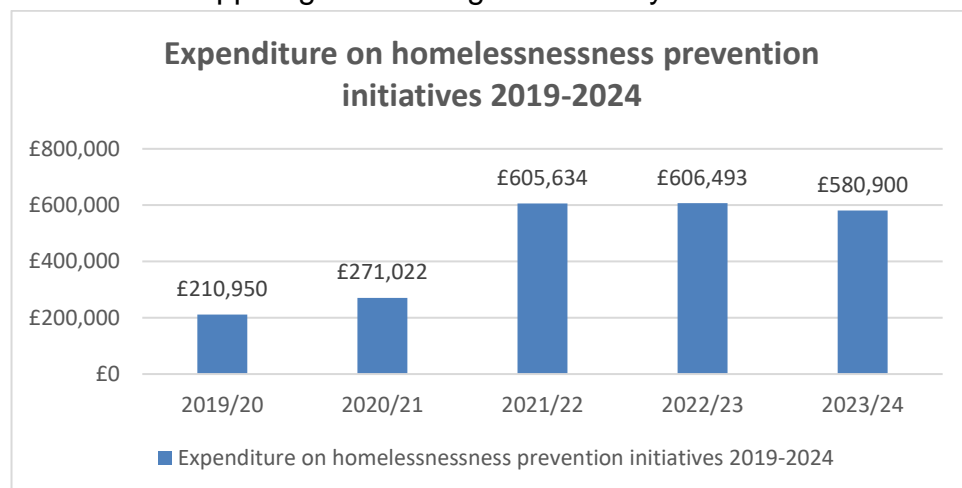


Figure 47: Expenditure on homelessness prevention initiatives in Spelthorne 2019-2024

Expenditure has been used to fund:

- £671,961 for the issue of rent in advance, deposits, rental and mortgage payment support payments, to assist homeless applicants with retaining their existing tenancy or securing new settled accommodation.
- A floating support service via Look Ahead to help residents sustain their tenancies.
- A dedicated Citizens Advice Spelthorne caseworker to provide housing, benefits, employment and accredited debt management advice to residents.
- A contribution towards Spelthorne Rentstart who support homeless single people and couples without children with housing advice and routes into accommodation.
- Furniture costs to enable move-on from emergency accommodation and minimise barriers in accessing accommodation.
- Administrative costs to support effective service delivery, for example, out of hours service, medical advisor to assess vulnerability, legal and court costs, translation services, ad-hoc prevention projects, essential transport and storage costs for clients.
- In 2021/22, £176,322 was granted to A2Dominion to help fund several advice services to support residents following the economic impact of COVID-19. This included 'project breakthrough' which provided tenancy support to those aged 18-30 including employment, skills, and training. Tenancy support was also commissioned for residents aged 50+ to assist with securing employment, training and skills. 'Advice Plus' was also commissioned as a borough-wide drop-in advice service for residents.
- In 2022/23, £100,000 was contributed to costs associated with the delivery of the homeless support schemes at White House and Harper House in Ashford.

## Emergency accommodation expenditure

Given the high demand for emergency accommodation, a significant amount of money is spent by Spelthorne Borough Council to secure emergency accommodation for homeless households. Whilst some of these charges are recovered back in the collection of rent, there is still a shortfall which the Council pays for. Figure 48 identifies the total expenditure on emergency accommodation over the last five years. Whilst the figures fluctuate, there has generally been an increase in expenditure compared to five years ago, with a particular increase in 2023/24 due to the cost-of-living crisis.

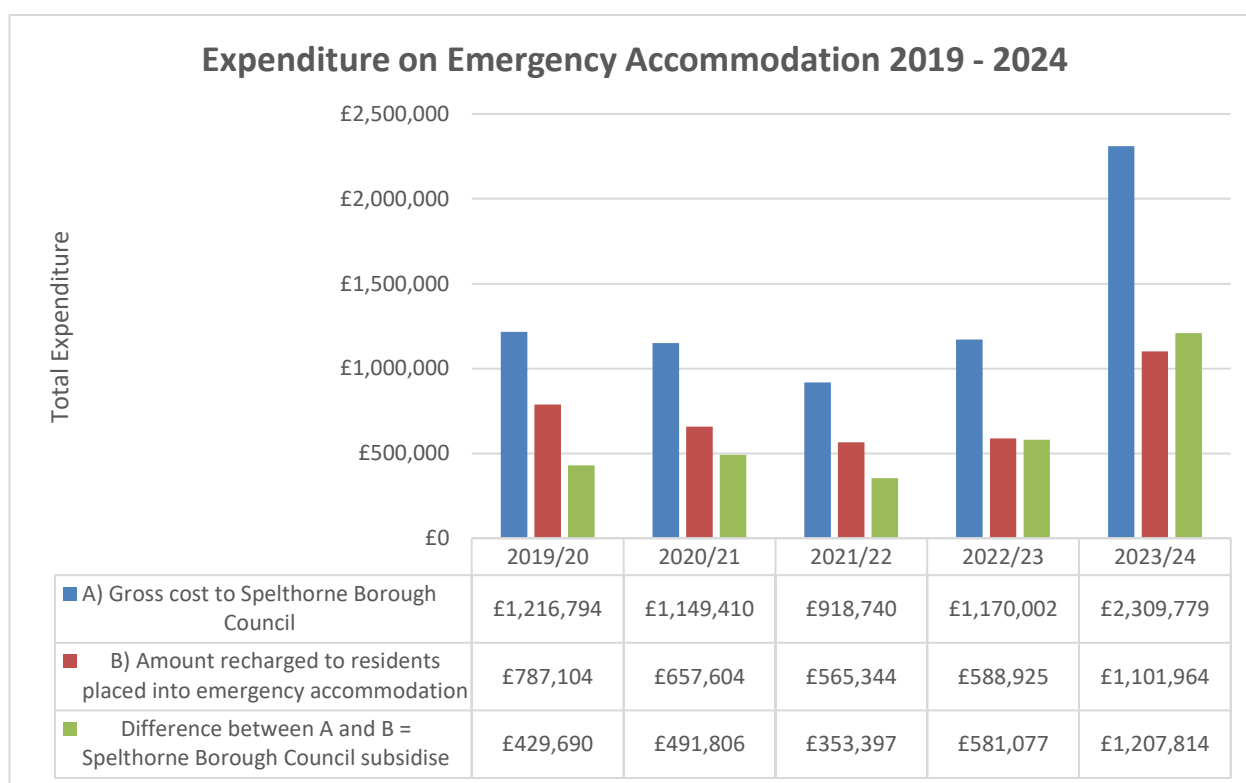


Figure 48: Emergency accommodation expenditure 2019 – 2024

In 2020, the Council sourced additional emergency accommodation to support an increased demand during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an additional cost of £160,486 across 2020-2024 (£658,981 expenses minus £498,495 rent recovery).

## Protection of property

Under section 211(1) and (2) Housing Act 1996 the local authority has a responsibility to ensure that where it has become subject to a duty to a homeless household, they have ensured their possessions are safely stored. Table 9 indicates the total expenditure on reasonable steps taken to prevent the loss or damage to any personal property of homeless households.

Financial Year	Storage expenses directly incurred by Spelthorne Borough Council
2019/20	£1,394
2020/21	£3,108
2021/22	£3,953
2022/23	£4,793
2023/24	£11,723
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£24,971</b>

Table 9: Total storage expenditure for client possessions 2019-2024

## Spelthorne Rent Assure

Our privately rented scheme, whilst successful, is also initially costly as we enter into a two year guarantee rent period with the landlord. In the last 5 years, we have committed £3,117,404 up to April 2024. These costs are made up of the total market rents we have offered to pay for a period of 24 months. We collect back rent equivalent to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate and top up the remaining monies to make up the market rent. Therefore, whilst we have committed £3,117,404, providing we collect the full LHA rent back from the tenant, the total cost to the Council to top up these rents is £466,871. This is approximately 13% of the monies we have committed and is significantly lower than the costs that would be incurred by an emergency accommodation placement.

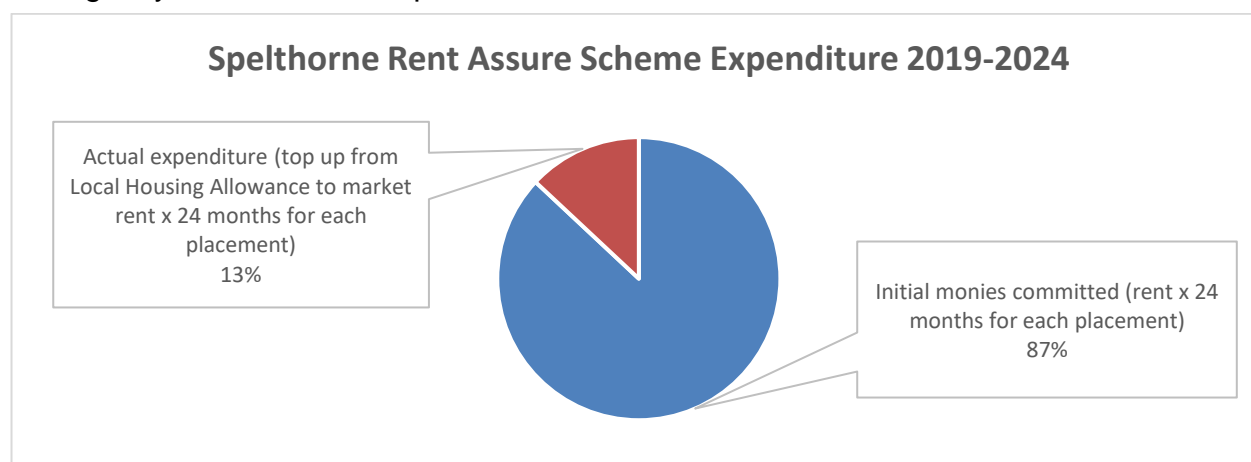


Figure 49: Spelthorne Rent Assure Scheme Expenditure 2019-2024

To ensure the scheme is marketed to landlords, a total of £1,043 has been spent to advertise the scheme and gauge landlord interest through a landlord forum. The scheme also offers the incentive of paying for an inventory by a professional company. These inventory costs have accumulated to £10,690 for all placements in the last 5 years.

As the scheme has been in place for several years now, some expenditure on deposit bond claims have been incurred. As part of the scheme's incentives, landlords are offered a bond deposit equivalent to 5-weeks rent which can be claimed on at the end of the tenancy for tenant damages and repair requirements. In total, £63,799 was spent on claims in the last 5 years.

## Partnerships

Joint working is key to earlier intervention of preventing homelessness. Spelthorne Borough Council prides itself in working with its local partners to help reduce the levels of homelessness. To list but a few partnerships, Spelthorne Borough Council demonstrates some of the effective joint working relationships we have achieved so far and hope to continue building.

- **Social Services – e.g. mental health team, adult social care, SAM (Surrey Adults Matter), children's social services, and the family support team.** We have key partnerships to ensure that some of the most vulnerable groups in our society are offered specialist support and assistance. For example, our Family Support team has provided intensive support to 204 families experiencing multiple and complex challenges between 2021-2024. We have open opportunities to communicate with the various social services teams to ensure the wellbeing of households is being upheld when faced with homelessness. The introduction of the 'Duty to Refer' under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 has also placed greater links between statutory services and the Housing Options team. By attending regular **MARAC** meetings with statutory and voluntary sector agencies, we are more informed about households who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. These meetings allow us to work together to ensure we are offering coordinated support to high-risk cases.
- **Surrey Police and National Probation Service** – By attending regular **MAPPA** meetings, we ensure that we are identifying clients under probation who are threatened with homelessness. These meetings give us deeper insight to the needs of this potentially vulnerable group.
- **Gypsy and traveller support** – to better understand the needs of this community and tailor the type of support we can give, we engage with Surrey Community Action Gypsy Support.
- **Citizens Advice Runnymede & Spelthorne (CARS)** – whilst we can offer limited budgeting advice, CARS are able to offer accredited financial and legal advice.

Spelthorne Borough Council has formed a direct fast track referral service with CARS and has a contract in place.

- **Job Centre Plus / DWP** – we work together to support clients with Universal Credit queries and support applicants into training and employment.
- **Applied Resilience** - if there is an emergency, there will almost certainly be a housing element involved. The applied resilience team have provided training sessions to staff at Spelthorne Borough Council in preparation for an emergency response e.g. to flooding.
- **Look Ahead** – the housing related floating support contract with Look Ahead offer residents tenancy sustainment and community integration support. Look Ahead specialise in delivering support services to those with mental health or learning difficulties. They also deliver assistance to young people and those facing homelessness.
- **Transform Housing** - we have worked with Transform Housing to ensure our cases with more complex needs are assessed for supported housing and are offered the assistance they need or require.
- **Homestart** – We work together to ensure families with young children who are experiencing challenging times are getting the additional support they may need.
- **Rentstart** - we have worked very closely with this charitable organisation for a number of years. Whilst our Rent Assure team mainly focus on supporting families into the private rented sector, Spelthorne Rentstart focus on assisting single people or couples without children. The two teams have run joint landlord forums and keep an open line of communication when new landlords enquiries arise.
- **Salvation Army** - operate a service in the borough of Spelthorne meaning an additional support service is available to help offer tailored assistance for those experiencing homeless. Our rough sleeper support team has worked with the Salvation Army to understand how we can offer a joint outreach service.
- **Children's centres** – By working with local schools in the area, we keep clear lines of communication open to ensure the welfare and well-being of vulnerable children are being monitored and addressed.
- **St Mungo's** - Our rough sleeper coordinator has particularly worked closely with St Mungo's to gain an insight on rough sleeping and the impact it has on overall health and wellbeing. By working together, both parties monitor rough sleeping more closely and work to provide outreach services to this vulnerable group of people.

- **Food banks** – in times of crisis, we complete referrals to local foodbanks in order to help households in a desperate time of need e.g. **Manna, Stanwell Food bank, St Saviours Church, Jubilee, and Surplus to Supper.**
- **Surrey Crisis Fund / Besom Project / Hounslow Furniture Recycling Project / Woking Community Furniture Project** - We work closely with charitable organisations and the Surrey Crisis fund to help clients set up homes with furniture and white goods where no other funds or resources are available for households.
- **Sanctuary Scheme** – Spelthorne Borough Council in partnership with Surrey Police and Citizens Advice Elmbridge (North Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service) offer the sanctuary scheme to provide additional security to victims of domestic abuse where it is appropriate for them to remain in their own homes. The Council work closely with the **North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service (NSDAS)** to support domestic abuse survivors facing homelessness and there is a dedicated housing Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) working locally. In 2023/24, a total of 36 referrals were made to the Sanctuary scheme for Spelthorne residents requiring security measures and a total of 27 referrals were made to the IDVA for support.
- **Housing associations e.g. A2Dominion, PA Housing, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, London & Quadrant, Housing21** – As Spelthorne Borough Council does not own its own stock, it aims to work with housing associations that operate in the local area to ensure affordable housing is available. Our allocations team work effectively with the letting's teams of all housing association partners, to ensure that nominations are suitable and that lets are completed efficiently.

In July 2021, Spelthorne Borough Council launched a multi-agency Spelthorne Homelessness Prevention Forum to focus on partnership working, sharing updates and good practice. The forum has enabled us to foster food partnerships with new organisations and sustain existing ones. Clients with lived experience presented at two of our forums in 2022 and 2023 sharing details of their experience and offering direct feedback to service providers.

### Contracted Services

We have a robust contract management system in place and within the last 5 years, we've recruited a Contracts and Reporting Team Leader to monitor performance.

### White House and Harper House

Spelthorne Borough Council developed two high quality sites:

1. **White House** (opened October 2021) - provides specialist accommodation for single homeless people with multiple and complex needs. The development comprises 27 en-



suite rooms with shared kitchens and four self-contained studio flats. There is also an on-site learning suite / communal space for helping prepare residents for move-on. The communal space can also be utilised for Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP).

2. **Harper House** (opened January 2022) – provides emergency accommodation for up to 20 homeless families while settled accommodation is found.

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH) are contracted to manage both sites. They provide 24-hour on-site cover for White House and have an on-site presence 10am-4pm daily at Harper House.

From opening in 2021 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, 30 clients have been successfully supported on from White House and 34 clients from Harper House into settled accommodation. Personalised support plans for clients are drawn up within 48 hours of moving in and are reviewed every 28 days. Support outcomes are measured using the 'Star' model at White House which is underpinned by empowerment, collaboration, and integration.

### Step-Down Programme

We are the lead authority for the set-up and management of a step-down project across North-West Surrey. The service delivers an integrated 'wrap-round' intermediate care package to support timely discharge of older residents from acute settings. It's a temporary solution whilst their existing home is made habitable or new accommodation (appropriate to the person's needs) is found. The service also supports any temporary mobility issues and care needs that patients have following discharge from hospital.

The service was initially introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic to free up hospital beds and is a partnership between Spelthorne Borough Council, A2Dominoin, Elmbridge Borough Council, Runnymede Borough Council, The Whitely Homes Trust and Woking Borough Council (Woking withdrew 2 properties from January 2023 but clients are still being supported from Woking into other scheme properties. Apex and Housing 21 are now part of the partnership and replaced the 2 properties). The service is commissioned by the NHS.

In April 2021, the North West Surrey Alliance Board funded a one-year project to fund seven units across North-West Surrey which take place in extra care / sheltered settings. When a patient is medically ready to leave hospital, they may not be able to return to their home if it's not fit for purpose. This can be for many reasons, for example they have been self-neglecting, the property is uninhabitable, or they may need care and support that cannot be delivered in their home. A referral can be made by the Discharge Health Coordinator or Adult Social Care to facilitate a discharge into a temporary step-down unit with either on-site care provided or with a package of care from Adult Social Care. The client is provided with a wrap-around service at one of the units for up to 6 weeks which will look at what support is required in order for them to return home in the most efficient and safe way.

The scheme's accommodation is also used for 'step-up' purposes to prevent hospital admission. For example, where a vulnerable client needs temporary emergency accommodation whilst their home is repurposed or a step-up to reintegrate into the community. This has worked particularly well for patients who were discharged into residential homes during the COVID-19 pandemic and who required support to gain skills for independent living. Consequently, they may have become institutionalised in the 24-hour care setting they were residing in, step-down offers the opportunity to work with the patient and help them to continue living as independently as possible.

In 2022, due to the success of this service and the difference it makes in the community, this initiative was extended indefinitely and expanded to a total of 9 units (6 of which are in Spelthorne).

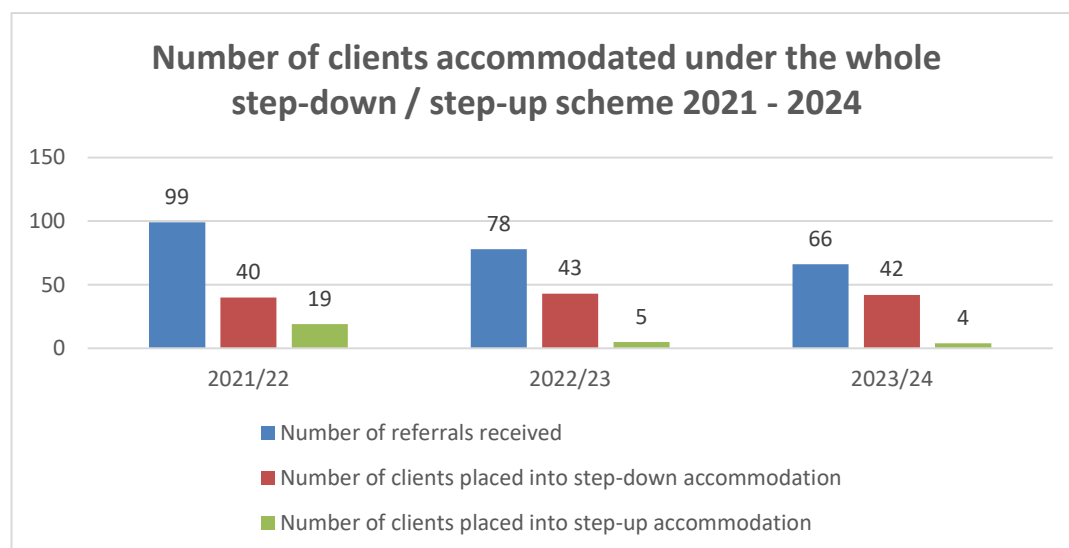


Figure 50: Total number of clients supported into the step-down / step-up scheme 2021-2024

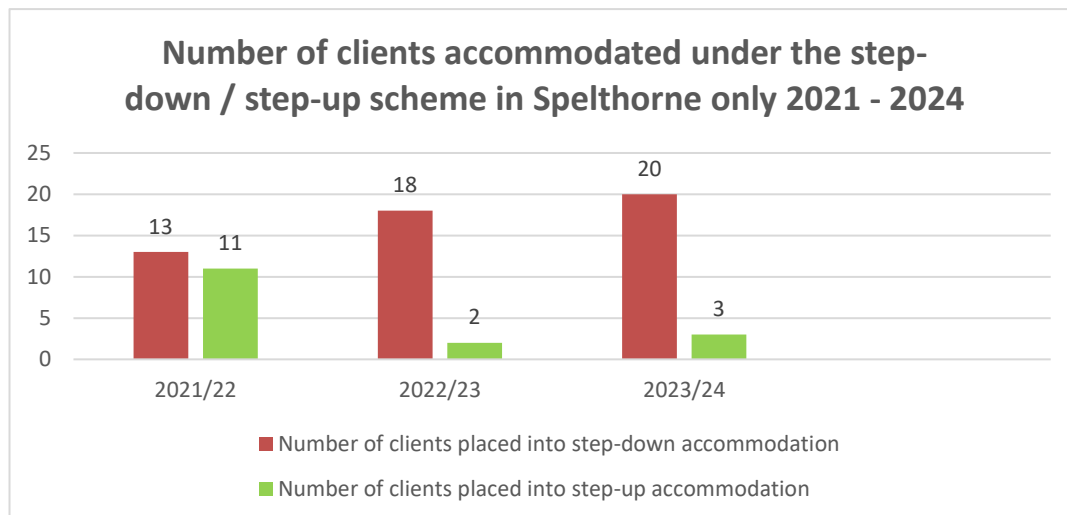


Figure 51: Total number of clients supported into the step-down / step-up scheme in Spelthorne 2021-2024

### Browns Community Services

As noted earlier in the review, Spelthorne Borough Council repurposed RSI funding (initially intended for Housing First) to provide an intensive ‘housing led’ support officer who manages a smaller caseload to enable the provision of wrap-around support to clients with multiple and complex needs. Due to the support needs of these clients, we enabled a 24-hour service provision to ensure we maintain engagement and progression with clients. Browns Community Services were appointed as an out of hours contact and additional resource cover from Jan 2023 to March 2024. When the contract ended, the funding was repurposed to provide additional hours to in-house support staff and to cover emergency housing placements.

### Look Ahead

Spelthorne Borough Council contribute a proportion of funding with other Surrey local authorities to refer clients for floating support. To create a specific additional resource, Spelthorne Borough Council used an allocation of RSI funding in 2022 for Look Ahead to appoint a specific Spelthorne case worker. The service supports private renters with sustaining their tenancies and assists prison leavers to access the private rented sector. Since the service was implemented from September 2022, a total of 66 residents have received floating support. This includes helping ex-offenders resettle into the community and sustain their tenancy. The housing-related support service have helped to enable service users to live independently as soon as practicable through support plans. These plans include helping clients with financial awareness and budgeting, meaningfully engaging with support services, addressing anti-social behaviour, and preventing re-offending, learning independent living skills and managing both mental and physical health.

### Citizens Advice Runnymede and Spelthorne

Spelthorne Borough Council utilises the Homelessness Prevention Fund to provide contract funding to Citizens Advice who deliver advice on housing, benefits, employment and accredited debt management to Spelthorne residents. The Council pays for a specific Spelthorne caseworker to help meet some of the additional local demand. Since 2021, Citizens Advice have supported 7,811 individuals following a referral. There was an upsurge in demand in 2022/23 due to the cost-of-living crisis which consequently led to more residents needing advice and support.

## Spelthorne Rentstart

Spelthorne Borough Council provides contract funding to Spelthorne Rentstart to provide private sector housing support to single people and couples without children. Rentstart are able to offer a deposit guarantee scheme to landlords in lieu of cash deposits and provide ongoing tenancy sustainment support to both tenants and landlords. Rentstart Extra was launched in 2018 to provide additional support to clients with multiple and complex needs to enable successful tenancies. As previously noted, Rentstart have successfully assisted a total of 2,056 clients between 2019-2024. Assistance was given through housing advice which was provided to 1,644 clients and an additional 412 were supported into accommodation through the deposit scheme.

## Fraud and Financial Investigations (Reigate and Banstead Council)

The Council recognises the continued importance of collaborative working arrangements to help prevent, deter and investigate fraud. We have taken up counter fraud measures including enhanced proactive vetting of Housing Register Applications and a bulk data matching exercise with A2Dominion to target social housing fraud. Counter fraud measures to target illegal sub-letting and other types of social housing fraud contribute to the delivery of wider social benefits, enable more social housing to be available to members of the community who are genuinely in need of a home, lead to a reduction in housing applicant waiting times, and reduce temporary accommodation costs.

Since 2019, a total of 1,978 referrals have been made to the Reigate and Banstead Fraud and Investigations team for enhanced verification checks on applicants nominated for social housing or applicants who have made a homeless application. Figure 52 highlights that 174 positive outcomes were achieved where fraud activity had been detected. In total, this has seen notional savings of £1,098,320 and cashable savings of £3,814.18.

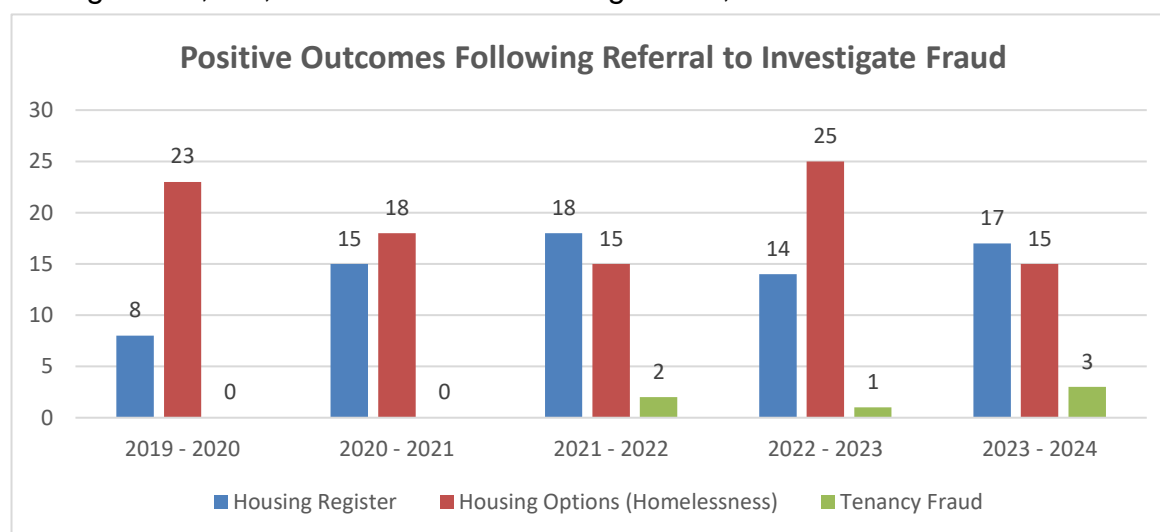


Figure 52: Total number of positive outcomes following fraud investigation referral 2019-2024

## Monitoring and review

### Strategic Housing Group

Strategic Housing Group (SHG) exists to ensure that Spelthorne Borough Council has a focussed strategic approach on housing matters that ensures the communities housing need is identified and met.

The objectives of SHG are:

- To decide priorities and focus of the group for the coming year.
- Develop strategies for dealing with issues (which may translate into projects to be reviewed).
- To ensure all housing strategies dove tail with other relevant strategies e.g. Asset Management Plan, Capital Strategy, etc.
- Develop and monitor the progress of both the Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan and monitor the housing element of the Corporate Plan.
- Monitor key areas of concern (such as emergency accommodation and shortage of affordable housing) and make strategic decisions on approaches to mitigate the impact.
- To make decisions on operational matters which impact the delivery of strategic priorities.
- To share information on housing and housing-related issues (including legislation changes).
- To identify and allocate resources to help meet the priorities identified.
- To ensure key politicians and partners are effectively communicated with.
- To receive updates on Knowle Green Estates acquisitions and developments.
- To consider and agree corporate responses to Government consultations which directly or indirectly impact housing.

Membership of SHG includes:

- Deputy Chief Executive (s)
- Group Head Community Wellbeing
- Group Head Regeneration and Growth
- Group Head Assets
- Strategic Housing Lead
- Assistant Strategic Housing Lead
- Housing Options Manager
- Housing Benefits Manager
- Senior Environmental Health Manager
- Accountant (Housing)
- Representative from Legal

## Implementation of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy action plan 2020-2025

Looking back at the six strategic priorities that were set out for 2020-25, we have achieved some of our targets, however, we have not been full successful in all. A reminder of these targets is outlined below in table 10.

Strategic priority	Did we accomplish it?
End the use of private sector emergency accommodation.	<b>No</b> - we have not ended the use of private sector emergency accommodation entirely due to increased demand from COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. We have slightly reduced the number of out-of-borough placements and reduced the average length of time that clients spend in emergency accommodation. We also built White House and Harper House and sourced good quality local temporary accommodation to help us manage the surge in demand.
Reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation.	<b>Yes</b> – 5 years ago, applicants were spending on average, 44 weeks in emergency accommodation. Over the last 5 years, the average placement has been just over 38 weeks.
Nobody sleeps rough in Spelthorne.	<b>Partly</b> - we have not been able to completely eradicate rough sleeping in Spelthorne. However, we have no entrenched rough sleepers and have recorded as few as zero on our nightly count snapshots. Our rough sleeper support team has been able to ensure low numbers of rough sleepers compared to 5 years ago where we were seeing 2-3 times as many people rough sleeping.
Increase use of the private rented sector for homelessness prevention and relief.	<b>Partly</b> – we have seen a reduction in the number of landlords on our Rent Assure Scheme due to many landlords selling their properties over the last 5 years. However, our homelessness prevention fund has been utilised well to secure move-on accommodation.
Invest in staff training and development in order to improve the customer journey within Housing Options service.	<b>Yes</b> - Several staff members within Housing Options have been able to complete their Chartered housing qualifications and the Council is preparing for the Government's competence and conduct standard requirements. The Housing Options team were successfully shortlisted for 3 awards in 2023 including the Local Government Chronicle award for Housing Project of the Year, The MJ Award for Best Council Services Team, and Affordable Housing Award for Homelessness Project of the Year.
Improve partnership working to prevent and relieve homelessness.	<b>Yes</b> - Several successful homelessness prevention initiatives have been implemented with partners and a multi-agency forum was set-up by the Council. There is robust contract management reporting in place to ensure KPIs are monitored.

Table 10: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 measure of completion

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# Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee



28 November 2024

<b>Title</b>	Placement Policy for Emergency Accommodation
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Steph Green, Assistant Strategic Housing Lead
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Addressing Housing Need
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b> Approve the placement policy for emergency accommodation.
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	It would be good practice to have a policy that shows clear guidance on how homeless households are prioritised for emergency accommodation in-borough as opposed to out of the borough.

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A local authority must provide interim (emergency) accommodation while it makes inquiries into a homeless application if it has reason to believe that the applicant is homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need.</li> <li>Demand is often high resulting in some households being placed out of the borough.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would be best practice to clearly outline how the Council prioritises homeless households when placing them into emergency accommodation.</li> <li>When demand is high and supply is limited, a policy will provide guidance on who will be prioritised for offers of local interim accommodation.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a policy specifically outlining how priority is given.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve the policy provided in Appendix A.</li> </ul>

1.1 This report seeks to implement a policy that outlines how the Council prioritises homeless applicants when making emergency accommodation placements.

## 2. Key issues

- 2.1 Following a staff training session where a case study was shared, it was decided that it would be good practice to have a policy that shows clear guidance on how homeless households are prioritised for emergency accommodation in-borough as opposed to out of the borough.
- 2.2 In brief, the proposed policy covers how emergency accommodation offers will be made and how refusals will be handled. It considers suitability of emergency accommodation and outlines factors that will be assessed, including location, property size, property condition, available facilities, affordability, health, education and employment.
- 2.3 For information, as at the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024, there were a total of 203 households in emergency or temporary accommodation. Details of how many were placed in-borough as opposed to out of the borough is as follows:

### Households with children under 18:

Local Authority	Spelthorne	Hillingdon*	Hounslow	Runnymede	Total
<b>Nightly Paid</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>95</b>
Longford	0	14	0	0	14
Radford Gate	32	0	0	0	32
Private Provider	41	0	6	2	49
<b>Temporary Accommodation</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>62</b>
A2Dominion	31	-	-	-	31
Harper House	18	-	-	-	18
Knowle Green Estates	14	-	-	-	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>158</b>

### Households without children under 18:

Local Authority	Spelthorne	Hillingdon*	Hounslow	Ealing	Total
<b>Nightly Paid</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>
Longford	0	1	0	0	1
Private Provider	32	3	1	1	37
<b>Temporary Accommodation</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>
A2Dominion	6	-	-	-	6
Harper House	1	-	-	-	1
Knowle Green Estates	0	-	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>

Local Authority:	Spelthorne	Out of Borough	Total
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>203</b>

\*Note that we have leased 16 houses in Longford, Hillingdon until August 2025.

### **3. Options analysis and proposal**

#### Option 1 – Approve the Placement Policy for emergency accommodation (recommended)

3.1 The draft Policy offers clear guidance to Officers when identifying suitable emergency accommodation for homeless households. In times of high demand and low supply, it provides a prioritisation criterion to enable vulnerable residents to remain within or as close to the borough as possible. This is essential when the Council is seeing increased demand for housing advice and an increase in homeless applications with subsequent need for emergency accommodation. Whilst much of the guidance is already in operation by Officers, official approval of this policy from the Committee will make it more robust and be of good practice to have formalised.

#### Option 2 – Do not approve the proposed Policy

3.2 If the draft Policy is not approved, housing legislation still requires the Council to ensure the suitability of interim accommodation provided. This includes considering the applicant's needs and location. For example, families with dependent children or a pregnant woman within the household should only be placed within shared accommodation for a maximum of 6 weeks where no alternative accommodation is available. Without formal approval, the Council could be at risk of being challenged when making placement decisions as Officers will not have an official policy to refer to.

#### Option 3 – Approve the Placement Policy with amendments made by the Committee

3.3 If the Committee broadly agrees with the Policy proposed but wishes to make some additional suggested amendments, option 3 could be considered. However, the existing version collated is recommended by Officers.

### **4. Financial management comments**

4.1 Emergency accommodation is a costly expense to the Council and is in high demand. Having a policy in place which outlines the priority of how placements will be made will enable the Council to retain some units when needed. Some units may be kept available for particularly vulnerable residents that may otherwise be costly to place further afield if there was nothing suitable available locally. For example, where an applicant has medical needs and may require ground floor self-contained accommodation with adaptations or where a family with dependent children requires self-contained accommodation that does not have shared facilities.

### **5. Risk management comments**

5.1 If Option 2 is chosen by Committee, there is a risk that if the Council were to be challenged by a Court on an emergency accommodation placement decision, the Council will not have a policy to refer to. This risk would be somewhat mitigated by the relevant legislation that has to be considered when making a placement. However, approval of option 1 would be a

preferred outcome to ensure that the Council has a more robust process in place that guides consistent decision making.

**6. Procurement comments**

6.1 Not applicable.

**7. Legal comments**

7.1 No comments received.

**8. Other considerations**

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every 5 years and monitored by Strategic Housing Group. Strategic Housing Group is made up of senior Officers from several departments as well as the Deputy Chief Executives and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee.

**9. Equality and Diversity**

9.1 A full equality and diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and provided in Appendix B.

**10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

10.1 None identified.

**11. Timetable for implementation**

11.1 Following a Strategic Housing Group meeting in August 2024, it was agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for Officers to use the policy as guidance with immediate effect. This was to prevent any delay until the policy could be formerly considered by the Committee.

**12. Contact**

12.1 [HousingStrategy@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:HousingStrategy@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Background papers:**

[Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.pdf](#)

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Placement Policy – Emergency Accommodation

## **Placement Policy - Emergency and Temporary Accommodation**

**December 2025**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out Spelthorne Borough Council's ('the Council') approach for the placement of households in emergency and temporary accommodation, both inside and outside of the borough. It covers both interim placements made under s188 Housing Act 1996, while homelessness enquiries are undertaken, and longer term temporary accommodation (TA) placements for households accepted as homeless under s193 Housing Act 1996.
- 1.2 Due to the lack of supply of affordable, suitable emergency and temporary accommodation in Spelthorne, it may be necessary to procure some properties outside of the borough. Where possible, this accommodation will be in the periphery of Spelthorne, for example Hounslow or Runnymede. However, at time of high demand and limited supply, it may be necessary to secure accommodation further away from Spelthorne. Such placements will only be procured when all other reasonable options have been exhausted. Prior to placing a household into such accommodation, an assessment will be undertaken to determine the suitability of the accommodation offered.
- 1.3 This policy details how applicants will be prioritised for emergency and temporary accommodation in Spelthorne, and out of the borough.

### **2. Offers and Refusals**

- 2.1 Homeless applicants who are housed under the Council's interim duty to accommodate pursuant to s188 of the Housing Act 1996 may initially be placed into emergency accommodation, including bed and breakfast (B&B) with shared facilities or short-term self-contained accommodation, while enquiries are carried out. This accommodation may be outside of the borough. If the Council decides it has a duty to house the household, they may be moved to longer-term TA, owned by the Council, Knowle Green Estates or a Registered Provider as soon as a suitable property becomes available.
- 2.2 Wherever possible, the Council will avoid placing families with dependent children or pregnant women into B&B accommodation. Where no other suitable accommodation exists and such placements are necessary, the Council will move these households to more suitable self-contained accommodation within six weeks to comply with legislation.
- 2.3 Where the Council decides that applicants housed under s188 are not owed the main homelessness duty, they will be asked to leave following reasonable notice after being notified of the decision. Each case will be assessed on its own circumstances as reasonable notice will differ between households. As a guide:

- 2.3.1 A single person or couple with a non-priority decision will usually be given 7 days' notice.
- 2.3.2 A single person or couple without children who have a priority need, who have been found intentionally homeless, will usually be given 14 days' notice, to allow handover to other services.
- 2.3.3 The Council will give regard to the safeguarding of any children in a family, the cessation of emergency or temporary accommodation will always be notified to Social Services in cases where there are dependent children. In the event of a negative decision, families with dependent children will usually be given 28 days' notice, this is to give Children's Services adequate time to contact the family and arrange accommodation.
- 2.3.4 In all cases, if there has been a serious breach of licence (violence, criminal damage, arson), the Council will usually end a s188 duty within 24 hours.
- 2.3.5 If the Council is satisfied that the property has been abandoned, the Council will aim to take back occupation of the property as soon as possible, without mind to the above notice periods.
- 2.3.6 In all cases, the Council may use discretion to give a longer notice period to increase opportunities for partnership working with other agencies.
- 2.4 Applicants will be given one offer of suitable interim or longer term temporary accommodation; they will be advised to accept this offer straight away. There is no obligation upon the Council to enable applicants to view the accommodation prior to acceptance. In making the offer, the households' individual circumstances will be considered, taking into account the factors set out in section 3 of this policy and the Council's criteria on in and out of borough placements detailed in section 4.
- 2.5 If an applicant refuses an offer, they will be asked to provide their reasons for refusal. This applies to new applicants to whom the Council has an interim duty to accommodate under s188, as well as those being transferred to alternative TA. The Council will consider the reasons given and undertake further enquires as necessary. If the Council accepts the reasons for refusal as valid, the offer will be withdrawn and a further offer will be made.
- 2.6 Where applicants refuse suitable emergency accommodation (which may include out of borough placements) and the Council does not accept their reasons for refusal, and considers that the offer is suitable, applicants will not be offered further accommodation and will be required to make their own arrangements. There is no right of appeal against the suitability of accommodation offered to applicants under s188 (although they can apply for judicial review through the courts). For applicants where the Council has accepted a s193 rehousing duty, there is a right to request an internal review of the suitability decision, pursuant to s202.

2.7 In cases where the applicant still refuses a suitable offer of accommodation, the homelessness duty will be discharged. If the applicant is resident in emergency accommodation, they will usually be asked to vacate the property and advised that no further assistance will be provided. If they are already in longer-term TA, the current housing provider would be advised that the duty has been discharged so that they can start possession action.

2.8 Where applicants, whom the Council has accepted a s193 duty, refuse a suitable offer and submit a review request, they will only continue to be accommodated during the review period in exceptional circumstances. Each case will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the overall merits of the review request, any new information or evidence that may affect the original decision, and the personal circumstances of the applicant and the potential impact of the loss of accommodation.

### **3. Suitability of accommodation – factors to consider**

3.1 **Location** – if suitable and affordable accommodation is available within the borough, applicants will be housed in Spelthorne, allowing them to maintain any established links with services and social/support networks. However, when there is a lack of suitable accommodation or there are higher priority households awaiting accommodation in the borough, out of borough placements will be used to meet the Council's housing duty (see section 4 on priority for local accommodation). If no suitable accommodation is available in Spelthorne, attempts will be made to source accommodation on the periphery of the borough or further afield.

3.2 **Affordability** – in order to be suitable, a property must be affordable for the household. This may have a greater impact on larger households who require bigger properties to meet their housing need. In such circumstances, the Council will initially look for a property in-borough and if unsuccessful, will gradually increase the radius in which it searches for a suitable property.

3.3 **Size, condition and facilities** – accommodation must provide adequate space and room standards for the household and be fit to inhabit. Households in temporary accommodation will often be placed into properties with fewer bedrooms than they would otherwise be entitled to in settled accommodation, with the expectation that the living room provides dual purpose as a living and sleeping area. In deciding on the fitness of the property, consideration should be given to the length of time needed to complete any necessary repairs and whether it is reasonable to complete these while the property is occupied. The quality of the decoration/furniture, the layout/type of accommodation, provision of parking and lack of access to a garden are unlikely to be acceptable reasons for a refusal.

3.4 **Health factors** – the Council will consider health factors, such as mobility, care and support provided by other statutory agencies. If the applicant or a member of the resident household is citing medical grounds that were not identified during the initial assessment, the applicant

must submit supporting medical evidence within 48 hours. The key test in determining the impact of medical issues is whether the condition itself makes the housing offered unsuitable. Many health services are universal and are provided across the country. Spelthorne has no unique or specialist health providers which would necessitate staying in the borough.

- 3.5 **Education** - attendance at local schools will not be considered a reason to refuse accommodation, though some priority will be given to special educational needs and students who are close to taking public examinations in determining priority for in-borough placements (see Section 4).
- 3.6 **Employment** –the Council will consider the needs of applicants who are in paid employment to reach their normal workplace from the accommodation that is secured (see Section 4).
- 3.7 **Proximity to schools and Services** - The council will consider the proximity to schools, public transport, primary care services, and local services in the area in which the accommodation is located.
- 3.8 **Any special circumstance** - The Council will consider any other reasons for refusal put forward by the applicant and come to an overall view about whether the offer is suitable.

#### **4. Criteria for prioritising placements inside/outside of Spelthorne**

- 4.1 As the borough faces pressure to house applicants, it will increasingly be necessary to make decisions about the suitability of out of borough placements for individual households and balance these against the type and location of emergency and temporary accommodation that can be offered.
- 4.2 Wherever possible, the Council will seek to make placements within the borough of Spelthorne. However, in times where demand for emergency accommodation is significantly high, the Council may choose to retain a small number of self-contained emergency or temporary accommodation units in the borough. This is to ensure the availability of accommodation for households that may approach with one of the priority needs outlined below. If a household does meet one of the priority needs specified, they may be offered accommodation out of the borough in the first instance. This is to ensure that there is sufficient availability of self-contained accommodation for those who may require to be in-borough more urgently.
- 4.3 Priority for accommodation in the borough will be given to:
  - 4.3.1 Applicants with a severe and enduring health condition requiring intensive and specialist medical treatment, where a move out of the borough would disrupt that treatment and continuity of care.



- 4.3.2 Applicants who are in receipt of a significant package and range of health care options that cannot be easily transferred.
- 4.3.3 Applicants with a severe and enduring mental health problem who are receiving psychiatric treatment and aftercare provided by community mental health services and have an established support network where a transfer of care would severely impact on their wellbeing.
- 4.3.4 Households with children registered on the Child Protection register in Spelthorne, who are linked into local services and where it is confirmed that a transfer to another area would adversely impact on their welfare.
- 4.3.5 Households containing a child with special educational needs who is receiving education support in Spelthorne, where change would be detrimental to their wellbeing.
- 4.3.6 Applicants who have a longstanding arrangement to provide care and support to another family member in Spelthorne who is not part of the resident household and would be likely to require statutory health and social support if the care ceased. This must be evidenced by a Carers Assessment and/or receipt of Carers Allowance and confirmed by Social Services that there are no suitable arrangements available to replace the existing care arrangement.
- 4.3.7 Any other special circumstance will also be taken into account.
- 4.4. Priority for accommodation within neighbouring boroughs will be given to:
- 4.4.1 Applicants who have as part of their household, a child or children who are enrolled in GCSE, AS or A-Level courses in Spelthorne, with exams to be taken within the next six months. Wherever practicable, the Council will seek to place such households within 60 minutes travelling distance by public transport, of their school or college.
- 4.4.2 Wherever practicable, any applicant who works for 18 or more hours per week and has been employed continuously for more than 12 months will not be placed more than 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport, from their place of employment.
- 4.5 Accommodation out of the borough:
- 4.5.1 When no suitable property is available, applicants who meet none of the above criteria are likely to be offered properties outside of Spelthorne.
- 4.5.2 Applicants who are victims of domestic abuse would be placed outside of Spelthorne in an area where the risk of abuse does not exist having considered all other factors within this policy.

- 4.5.3 Applicants who are at risk of violence being perpetrated against them would be placed outside of Spelthorne in an area where the risk of violence does not exist having considered all other factors within this policy.
- 4.5.4 Applicants who indicate a desire to be housed in a particular area outside of Spelthorne will be housed in those area(s) so far as reasonably practicable.

## **5. Other considerations**

- 5.1 Discretionary placements or placements that are made under the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), that are not made under the functions of the Housing Act 1996, may be dealt with differently. RSI is currently funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and is due to be reviewed in 2025. Any placements made under RSI must be verified by the Council's RSI coordinator.
- 5.2 When making decisions, due regard will be given to the most updated version of the [Homelessness Code of Guidance](#) and any other UK statutory instruments introduced by the Government.

## **6. Review**

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 5 years and will be monitored by the Council's Strategic Housing Group.

# Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee



**Date of meeting: 28 November 2024**

<b>Title</b>	An update from the Environmental Health Department on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note
<b>Report Author</b>	Fidelma Bahoshy, Joint Senior Environmental Health Manager
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	Not applicable
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Community Addressing Housing Need Services
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b> To note the contents of this report.
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	Not applicable

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategic Housing Group (which is attended by the Chair and Vice Chair of this committee) asked that a report for information be written providing an update on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and outlining the current situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There had been an increase in HMO applications and complaint work over the last few months.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We want you to know the current work that is ongoing within the Environmental Health team with regards HMOs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A review of the resourcing required to deliver this service to the expected standard will be undertaken as part of a wider review of the resourcing need within Environmental Health department.</li> </ul>

1.1 This report seeks to provide an update on the current situation with regards to ongoing and backlogged HMO work within the Environmental Health (EH) department and to clarify the HMO licensing process.

## **2. Key issues**

2.1 Over the past few months the EH department has noted an increase in complaints and queries about HMOs and potential HMOs still under construction.

2.2 The Residential Team within the EH department is responsible for the implementation of the HMO licensing regime in addition to undertaking compliance visits, investigating both allegations about HMOs that potentially require a licence and complaints from tenants living within licensed and unlicensed HMOs. The team is also responsible for private sector housing condition complaints, statutory nuisance work, public health matters (such as drainage complaints, private water supplies, welfare funerals, pest and waste accumulations on private land), planning application consultations, caravan/camping site licence applications and compliance inspections.

2.3 The Residential Team has suffered four significant staff changes this year (this represents 80% of our senior EHOs/EHROs). As a result of this, all planned work and services requests from the public and councillors is being prioritised in order of urgency and harm. Non-urgent cases are being held until more resource is available and complainants being advised of this action. Cases in triage are regularly reviewed and the priority status of individual cases may change as their circumstances alter and as new cases come in. Currently allegations and complaints against HMOs are considered as high priority work.

2.4 We have received a number of queries about the licensing process from Councillors. A licence for an HMO is required from Environmental Health under the mandatory scheme in the following circumstances:

- The dwelling is occupied by five or more people who form two or more households; and
- all or some of the occupants share bathroom, toilet, or kitchen facilities.

HMOs with less than five occupants do not require licensing within Spelthorne.

2.5 Once an application is received by the department, the applicant can operate the property as an HMO. This is normal practice across local authorities. The landlord operates at their own risk as on full consideration of their application it may be refused.

2.6 When determining whether to grant a licence for an HMO, Environmental Health is not able to take into consideration whether or not the property has or requires planning permission to operate as an HMO. Environmental Health does, however, consult with Planning on any licence applications received and notify them when granting a licence so that Planning can take appropriate enforcement action for unlawful development if required. Environmental Health also strongly advise HMO licence applicants to contact Planning where planning permission is not in place and may be required.

- 2.7 When a HMO application is received the applicant is provided with all the necessary information to run the establishment safely and in compliance with the legislation. The applicant is required to submit detailed plans of the property in addition to certification for their fire alarm system, emergency lighting where applicable (this is dependent on the layout and size of the property), gas and electrical safety checks. The officer processing the application undertakes a risk assessment based on the information provided and may seek additional information or clarification from the landlord. As a result of the assessment the application could be refused or issued with a 1, 3 or 5 year licence, the period is dependent on the risk presented. If the officer is concerned that the plans and documents submitted are of a poor quality or suspicious as to their accuracy, then the application can be deemed invalid, a site visit made or further checks carried out prior to the licence being granted. In addition, if complaints have been received while the application is under determination, particularly from the tenants, then a site visit will usually be made as part of the processing stage.
- 2.8 Environmental Health has powers under various legislation such as the Environmental Protection Act, the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act and the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to deal with noise and other nuisance; accumulations of rubbish; and along with our colleagues in Community Safety, to address complaints about anti-social behaviour (ASB) These powers apply to all residential properties in the Borough including licensed and unlicensed HMOs.
- 2.9 Generally EHOs have found a high standard of compliance with legislation across our licensed HMOs which goes against the perception many people have. Officers have noted issues with aesthetics and wear and tear rather than safety or the suitability of a property. Many of our licensed HMO are used by professionals working within the area and are of a high standard.
- 2.10 Environmental Health only responds to complaints about properties that fall outside the scope of licensing (HMOs with less than five occupants) so it is more difficult to comment on the standards within those.
- 2.11 HMOs statistics:
- Number of Licensed HMOs in Spelthorne on 14 October 2024 is 117, this figure does not include HMOs where the licence has expired and a new licence is yet to be issued.
  - Number of HMO applications awaiting processing: 39 including new and renewal applications.

Due to very high workloads in the team, we recognise that we are currently taking longer to process an application and have received one complaint against service about the time taken. To try and mitigate workloads, in September we appointed a casual member of staff to predominantly work on processing applications in an effort to address the backlog. This officer will be in post until December 2024.

- 2.12 Licensed HMOs are subject to programmed inspections to check compliance with relevant legislation and licence conditions relating to fire safety, amenities and management. These licence conditions include matters that might adversely impact on nearby residents, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour and accumulations of rubbish.

2.13 The vast majority of HMOs that the team deal with provide good quality affordable accommodation, consistent with the Council's objective of providing housing which meets the needs of residents and does not detrimentally impact the tenants or the residents living nearby.

2.14 Complaints and allegations about potential HMOs

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Allegation of potential HMO	39	25	33	46	63
Defects in Licensed HMO	8	7	7	21	11
Defects in Unlicensed HMO	0	1	0	5	2
Total	47	33	40	72	76

\*not full year data, accurate as of 14 October 2024

We received 56 complaints about potential HMOs between the 1 January 2024 to 21 August 2024 and went through each of these to look at the outcome. Of these allegations, 41 have been closed (they were not HMOs) with five making an application to be licensed, the rest remain under investigation. Of the 36 addresses contacted following a complaint and found not to require further action, the majority we found to be family homes, often homes to multi-generations of the same family and one was found to be renting out their drive-way for parking due to their proximity to a train station.

2.15 The area of HMO licensing has become particularly challenging with the department now facing objections from neighbours while the property concerned is still under construction/renovation and before applications are even received. Most recently an officer noted a placard in a street protesting against a new HMO. The HMO licensing regime does not allow the Council to take into account objections or representations from neighbours or others, and there is no mechanism for members of the public to do so. If the applicant is considered as a fit and proper person and can demonstrate compliance with the criteria set down in legislation, then a licence must be issued. Depending on the size of the HMO, planning permission may be required and residents would have the opportunity to object during this process.

2.16 Parking is a significant concern raised by neighbouring properties, however this is not an issue that can be considered as part of the licensing process.

### 3. Options analysis and proposal

3.1 Not applicable, this report is for note only.

### 4. Financial management comments

4.1 Not applicable, this report is for note only, however a review is being undertaken of the HMO licensing resourcing and depending on the outcome of this process additional funding may be required.

### 5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 The Environmental Health department has identified HMO applications, complaints and queries as high priority work due to the potential risk to those living within them and the increased number of complaints that we are receiving from neighbouring properties.
- 5.2 The Council is not currently meeting our target times for issuing licences to new applicants and renewals. The resource currently in place to deal with applications and the backlog of work is temporary and does not address the backlog of compliance visits. This temporary post is currently funded by a vacant post which is for a generalist position and is out for advert. The prioritisation of HMO applications means that other work is backlogging and staffing issues will need to be addressed.
- 5.3 The consequence for the delays in issuing licences include an increased risk of serious harm to the residents of the licensable HMO and increased complaints from residents within the property and from neighbouring properties. Additionally should there be an incident within a HMOs or complaint, the Council could potentially be subjected to further scrutiny by other organisations such as the Coroners Court and the Ombudsman which can result in reputational damage and compensation claims.

## **6. Procurement comments**

7. There is no procurement issues associated with this report.

## **8. Legal comments**

- 8.1 The Legal team has expressed concerns over the time it is currently taking to issue HMO licences.
- 8.2 The Council is under a statutory duty pursuant to s.55 of the Housing Act 2004 to determine applications for licences within a reasonable time.

## **9. Other considerations**

- 9.1 The Strategic Lead for Housing has provided the following comments;
  - HMOs do fulfil a vital role in providing affordable accommodation for individuals and they are an essential part of the housing stock.
  - The housing benefit system is complex and most people under the age of 35 who do not live with a partner or children, will usually only be able to claim for a single room in a shared house.
  - In Spelthorne we don't have enough HMO's to meet the demand, but at the same time, many people don't want to share even if they can't afford to cover the rent otherwise. The issue is that the quality of HMO's is often poor which is what puts people off and HMO's are poorly managed and maintained. Landlords often see HMOs as an income generating opportunity, not as a long-term investment and a quality product.
  - Our Rentstart colleagues offer support into HMO accommodation but a number of people reject the offer as they don't want to share, and the quality of the property is not very inviting. So, despite the support in rent and deposit payment, it is not a popular choice. People often go into an HMO because they run out of options, not because of their own choice.

- So, while HMO's are in high demand (on paper) and the only option for many under 35 year olds, there are some challenges in the delivery which are worth explaining as well.

**10. Equality and Diversity**

10.1 This report has no impact on equality or diversity issues and is for note only.

**11. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

11.1 This report has no impact on sustainability or climate change issues and is for note only.

**12. Timetable for implementation**

12.1 Not applicable

**13. Contact**

13.1 Fidelma Bahoshy – [f.bahoshy@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:f.bahoshy@spelthorne.gov.uk) or Tracey Willmott-French – [t.willmott-french@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:t.willmott-french@spelthorne.gov.uk).

**Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer  
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

**Background papers:** There are none

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A** – photographs illustrating housing standards found in HMOs within the Borough



## Appendix One - Photographs

Property One: before and after photos

The standard was particularly poor but after the intervention of the EH team significant improvements were made and the property could be licensed.

### Before







**After**





**Second Property – good standards**



