

Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee

18 June 2025 (Briefing Pack)



Title	Annual Lettings Review 2024-25
Purpose of the report	To note
Report Author	Steph Green, Assistant Strategic Housing Lead
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	Report and Appendix B – No. Appendix A - Yes
Exemption Reason	This report (Appendix A) contains exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 Paragraph 2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and in the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information
Corporate Priority	Addressing Housing Need
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: Note the findings of the annual lettings review 2024/25.

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, it was agreed that an Annual Lettings Review would be undertaken at the end of each financial year. This was completed for 2024/25 detailing the numbers of lettings via the housing register, number of homeless households supported into accommodation and the number of applicants supported into a Knowle Green Estates (KGE) property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness remains a key area of concern for the Council as many residents struggle to source suitable and affordable accommodation. Consequently, many families live in emergency accommodation which remains a high cost to the Council and impacts the day-to-day welfare of many family lives. There are also many residents who are not homeless but are living in housing that is not suitable for their needs. There are currently over 2,500 households on Spelthorne Council's housing register list.
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor annual lettings to identify trends and patterns and where possible, address concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annual Lettings Review for 2024/25 has been completed (Appendix A/B) and was presented to Strategic Housing Group (made up of Officers and the Chair / Vice Chair of this Committee) on the 7th May 2025.

1.1 This report seeks to update Members on the findings of the Annual Lettings Review 2024/25.

2. Key issues

2.1 The Annual Lettings Review demonstrates a continued lack of suitable and affordable accommodation available for homeless households and residents in housing need in Spelthorne.

2.2 Demand continues to outstrip supply with over 2,500 households currently on the housing register. Only 159 social housing lettings became available last year. This is a small increase compared to the previous year, however, it's still significantly below what is required to meet local demand.

2.3 Summary of key points highlighted in the Review:

- There's been a 26% increase in the number of housing register applicants compared to the previous year.
- All 159 lettings were made from the existing social stock of local registered providers. No new social rented homes were built and completed last year.
- 70% of the social housing lettings were apartments and 59% were studio or 1-bedroom properties.
- In the last 2 years, no 4-bedroom+ properties have become available. However, the number of 3-beds and houses that became available last year was over double of that recorded in the previous year.
- 67 of the 159 social lettings were age restricted.
- 78% of social lettings were made to general needs on the housing register and 22% were made to homeless households.
- The majority of applicants let a property held a band B on the register.
- Last year, 26 households at risk of homelessness were successfully supported in maintaining their existing privately rented accommodation. A further 119 households were supported to secure alternative privately rented accommodation.
- A total of 12 households were supported into the Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme to prevent homelessness.
- The Council referred 230 clients to Spelthorne Rentstart for housing advice. In total, Rentstart advised 333 clients last year and assisted 94 clients with securing accommodation.
- Last year, 14 KGE affordable rented properties became available to let or re-let to either housing register applicants or homeless households.

2.4 Full details of the review findings can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B contains similar information to Appendix A but has been presented in a data compliant way for publication purposes.

3. Options analysis and proposal: Not applicable.

4. Financial management comments

- 4.1 Appendix A/B discloses that £281,426 was spent last year to support homelessness prevention and relief efforts. This included providing homeless households with deposits, rent in advance and rental support payments to secure existing or alternative accommodation. This expenditure is funded via the Council's Homeless Prevention Grant allocated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 The lack of suitable and affordable accommodation locally will continue to impact homelessness levels and increase the number of housing register applications. The Council is already aware of this risk and is exploring options on how to address housing need within the current Corporate Plan.

6. Procurement comments: Not applicable.

7. Legal comments

- 7.1 In accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 the Council is required to have procedures and policies in place for nomination and allocation of affordable housing.
- 7.2 Annual review allows to monitor performance and determine whether the procedures remain fit for purpose.

8. Other considerations: Not applicable.

9. Equality and Diversity: Not applicable.

10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications: Not applicable.

11. Timetable for implementation: Not applicable.

12. Contact: HousingStrategy@spelthorne.gov.uk

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A: Annual Lettings Review 2024/25

Appendix B: Annual Lettings Review 2024/25 (Public)