

Annual Lettings Review 2024/25

1. Housing Register

1.1 As at 31st March 2025, there were a total of 2,586 households on Spelthorne Borough Council's housing register, this is approximately a 26% increase compared to the previous year.

1.2 Housing register applicants have required the following bedroom types:

Number of bedrooms required by household	Number of households 31/03/21	Number of households 31/03/22	Number of households 31/03/23	Number of households 31/03/24	Number of households 31/03/25
1 bedroom (or Studio flat/bedsit)	870	1,261	1,580	831	1,108
2 bedrooms	832	1,030	1,165	762	900
3 bedrooms	326	437	525	383	483
4 or more bedrooms	70	95	108	72	95
Grand Total	2,098	2,823	3,378	2,048	2,586

1.3 A new Housing Allocations Policy was implemented in Autumn 2023. Consequently, there was an overall decrease in the number of applicants in 2024, this is because a number of applicants were no longer eligible under the new Housing Allocations Policy and some applicants would have opted out of reapplying.

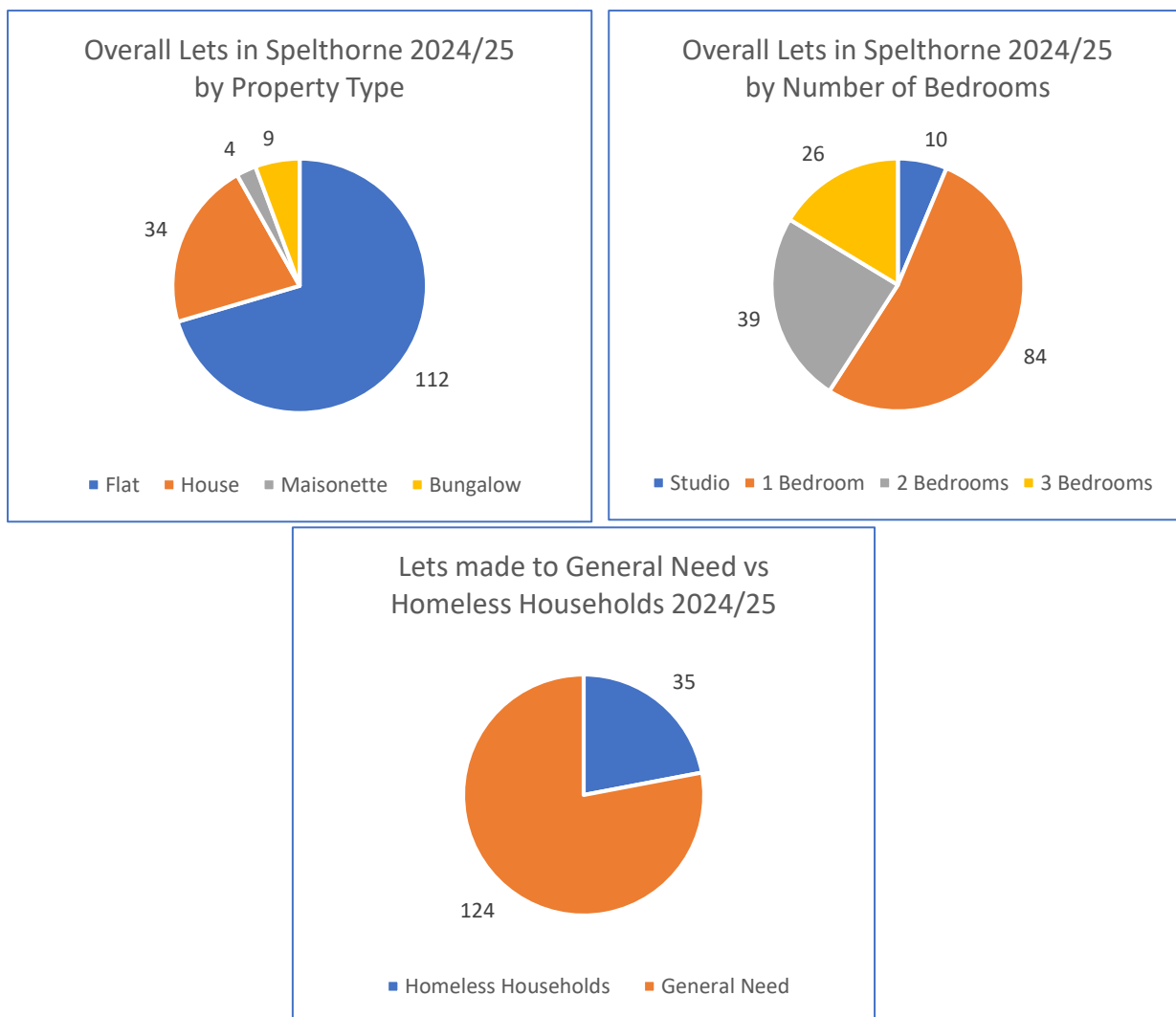
1.4 As part of the new Housing Allocations Policy, a housekeeping proposal was introduced to support a regular review of applicants. Applicants are invited once per annum to confirm if they wish to remain on the register and complete a change of circumstances form if their circumstances have changed. The housekeeping proposal was introduced to provide a more accurate reflection of housing register numbers. Officers are already noticing the impact, as the housing register numbers decrease some weeks due to applicants having a change of circumstances and housing no longer being required. The current numbers recorded are an up-to-date reflection of housing need in Spelthorne.

2. Lettings and Nominations

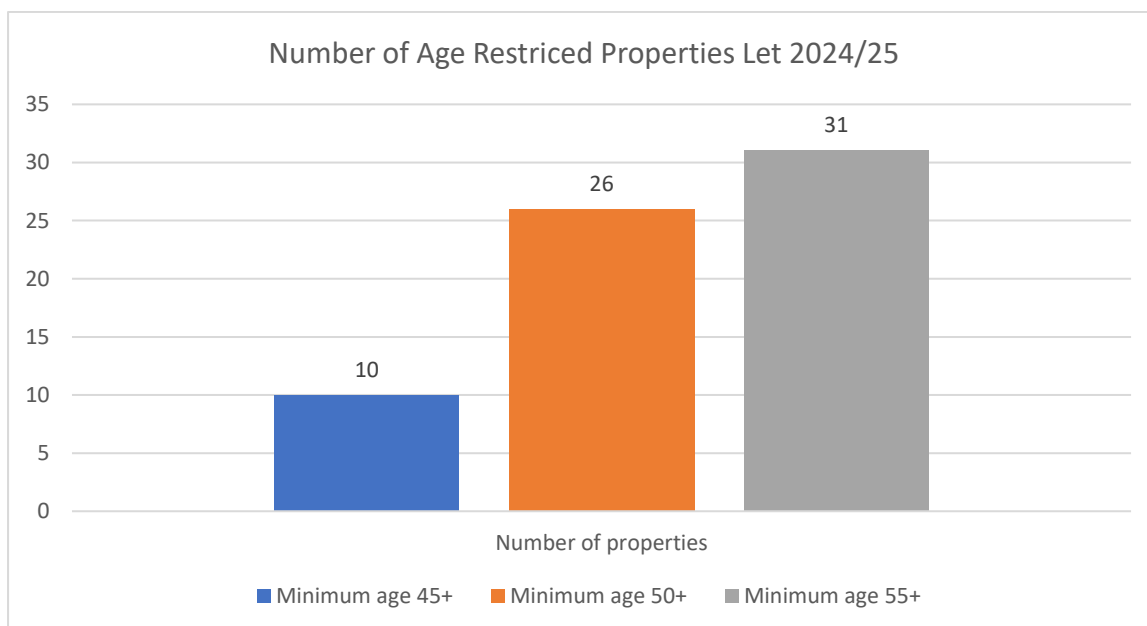
2.1 As Spelthorne Borough Council is a non-stock holding authority, lettings are only made through nominations to private registered providers with stock in Spelthorne. For 2024/25 this totalled to 159 lets (134 General Needs, 9 Sheltered and 16 Extra Care). This includes 2 properties that were recovered via a Spelthorne fraud initiative.

2.2 Of the total 159 lettings, 17 were reserved for working households only. However, a total of 61 lets were made to households who were in employment of which 20 were identified as key workers.

2.3 Out of the total number of lets, the vast majority (70%) were apartments and were mainly one-bedroom properties. In the last two years, no 4-bed+ lets have become available. However, the total number of 3-beds that have become available (26) has over doubled compared to 2023/24 when it was only 11. Similarly, the number of houses that have become available (34) has also over doubled compared to 2023/24 when it was 14. Furthermore, 78% of properties were let to general need households through the Housing Register with the remaining 22% let to households who were either homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is slightly less compared to 2023/24 where 30% of lets were made to homeless households.



2.4 Out of the total number of lets, 67 were age restricted. Of these, 62 were studios or 1-beds meaning 66% of all 1-bedroom lets had age restrictions in place.



2.5 Usually the minimum age for Sheltered or Extra Care accommodation is 50 or over. Out of the 1,108 households waiting for a one-bedroom property on the 31st March 2025, 388 households were aged 50 or over (a full breakdown is given in the table below). This means that approximately 65% 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, approximately 59% of 1-bedroom households would not be eligible for properties with age restrictions of 45+. As noted above, over half of one-bedroom properties let for 2024/25 were age restricted which limited one-bedroom households aged 44 or under. There is not a separate waiting list for Sheltered housing. However, there is a small waiting list for Extra Care which fluctuates throughout the year but is currently at 9.

Age Band of Main Applicant requiring a one-bed (as at 31 st March 2025)	Number of Applicants
Under 25	223
Between 25 and 39	355
Between 40 and 44	80
Between 45 and 49	62
Between 50 and 54	76
Between 55 and 59	86
60 and Over	226
Grand Total	1,108

2.6 A breakdown of the housing register banding given to each household that was successful in bidding for one of the 159 properties let is given in the table below. The vast majority held a band B due to homelessness or medical grounds.

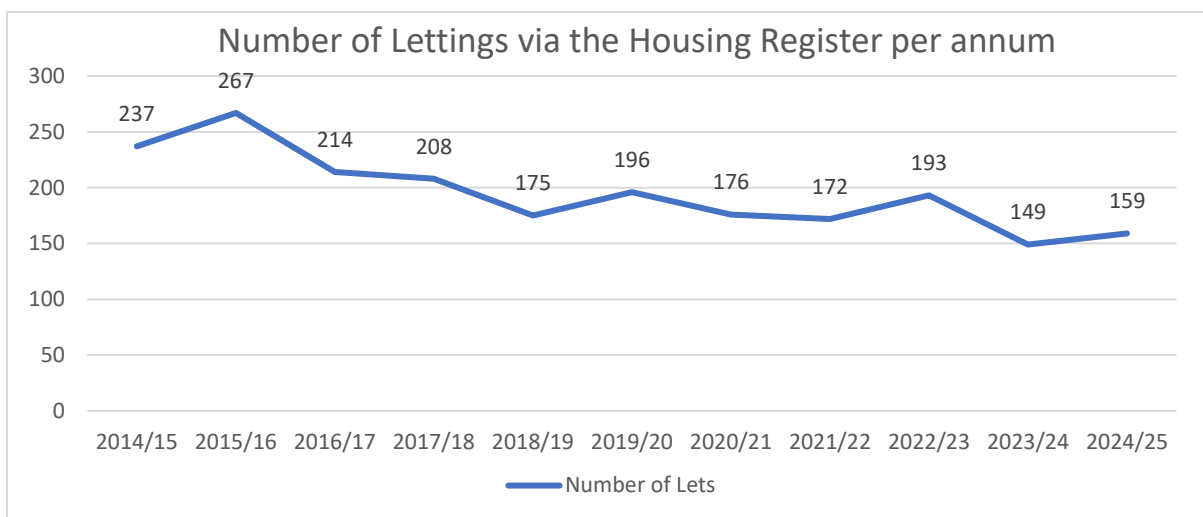
Band	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed
A	-	8	2	3
B	7	46	31	23
C1	2	16	1	-
C2	-	3	-	-
D	1	12	4	-

* 16 of the Band D's were for Sheltered / Extra Care lettings.

2.7 When the new Housing Allocations Policy was implemented in Autumn 2023, greater priority was awarded to under occupiers of social housing (band A) to encourage movement. Of the total 159 lettings last year, 10 tenants were under occupiers of social housing, representing 6% of total lettings. In comparison to previous years, this has not hugely increased despite the additional priority. However, there has been a small increase of 2% of overall lettings, compared to 2 years ago when the old policy was in operation. As of 31st March 2025, there were 44 housing register applicants with a band A due to under occupation of social housing. This is approximately 2% of the total number of housing register applicants.

Year	Number of under occupiers successfully let into a new property	% of total lettings
2024/25	10	6%
2023/24	10	5%
2022/23	8	4%
2021/22	14	8%
2020/21	8	5%

2.8 Due to the lack of affordable housing delivery in Spelthorne and the low number of re-lets, the total number of lettings has continued to decline in Spelthorne since 2014. Last year, was a slight improvement to the previous year which was the lowest number of affordable lets on record within the last 10 years.



2.9 With 2,586 households currently on the Housing Register and only 159 nominations in the last year, demand continues to significantly outstrip supply.

3. Private Rented Sector

Homelessness Prevention and Relief Outcomes

3.1 The Housing Options Officers work to assist applicants in finding suitable accommodation to either prevent or relieve homelessness. In 2024/25, 26 clients were successfully supported in maintaining their existing privately rented accommodation (21 were families with children) and 119 clients secured alternative privately rented accommodation (46 were families with children, of which 30 moved to homes within Spelthorne).

Secured existing accommodation	Prevention	
Number of months secured for	6	12+
Private Rented Sector	15	11
Social Housing	6	10
Supported Housing	<5*	-
Staying with Family	<5*	-

* Where there are low values, <5 is stated for data protection purposes.

Secured alternative accommodation	Prevention		Relief		Main Duty
Number of months secured for	6	12+	6	12+	12+
Private Rented Sector					
Private rented sector: HMO or lodging	13	6	15	10	-
Private rented sector: self-contained (Of which, 6 joined the Spelthorne Rent Assure (SRA) Scheme)	9	41	<5*	14	7
Social Housing					
Registered Provider tenancy or out of borough council tenancy	-	11	<5*	7	30
Supported Housing					
Social rented supported housing, hostel or rehabilitation centre	7	6	14	8	-
Other					
For example, caravan / houseboat, staying with friends or family, purchased a property, other type of accommodation, or not recorded.	<5*	15	<5*	<5*	-

* Where there are low values, <5 is stated for data protection purposes.

3.2 Financial assistance is one method used to assist homeless households with retaining or securing new accommodation. Homeless Prevention grant funding can be used towards rental payment support, deposits or rent in advance payments. Payments are issued in the form of either a grant or loan depending on the applicant's capacity for repayment.

In 2024/25, the following funding was granted to applicants to either prevent or relieve homelessness:

Description	Amount
Homelessness Prevention Fund	
Rent in advance	£129,034
Rent deposits	£96,583
Rental payment support	£25,768
Care Leavers project*	£8,321
Total	£259,706
Rough Sleeper Initiative Fund	
Rents paid to landlord	£21,720
Grand Total	£281,426

*The Council supported 7 Care Leavers living in social housing under a separate homelessness prevention initiative last year. Eligible applicants had to be under the age of 25, a Care Leaver, in an affordable property going forward, and be in an active repayment plan with their landlord for any rent arrears. Many of the Care Leavers were in bedsits where historically, the service charges for these particular properties are high. The offer was to help tenants with funding, equivalent to up to 12 months service charge, to help with arrears and affordability, and provide more stability to young people in their first homes since leaving care.

Spelthorne Rent Assure (SRA)

3.3 In addition to the financial assistance offered above, Spelthorne Borough Council also offers a 24-month rent guarantee scheme called 'Spelthorne Rent Assure'. The Council guarantees to directly pay landlords a fair market rent for up to two years, paid monthly in advance. The Council provides the tenant with a 5-week repair bond deposit and agrees to top-up the rent between the local housing allowance and fair market rent. Ongoing support is available for both the tenant and landlord for the duration of the scheme.

3.4 In 2024/25, the scheme received enquiries from 58 landlords and a total of 12 placements were made. Placements were made into 2 houses and 10 flats. All placements were made within the borough of Spelthorne. Further properties were put forward for use, however, these were not successful. Circa 15 properties were not secured as we could not meet the landlord's rent expectations which ranged from £1,500 for a 2-bed maisonette to £3,200 for a 3-bed house. A further 26 properties (across 2 sites) were lost, as the scheme does not offer property management services. Whilst there are some properties on the market with more affordable rents, these are severely limited. Officers have made efforts to identify suitably affordable properties for the scheme, unfortunately, they have not all come to fruition. However, positive enquiries can be made.

3.5 Of the 12 placements, 6 were new placements. The remaining 6 had been previous SRA tenants who had completed the 24-month placement and, required a renewal on the scheme to prevent homelessness.

3.6 The lowest rental amount agreed was £1,300pcm and the highest was £2,700pcm. The average rent agreed based on property size is given below:

Property Size	Number of Placements	Average Rent Agreed
2-Bedrooms	7	£1,439
3-Bedrooms	3	£1,800
4-Bedrooms	1	£2,235
5-Bedrooms	1	£2,700

3.7 A total of 7 placements reached the end of the 24-month period within the last year, 5 tenants remained within the property following a renewal on the scheme. A further 6 placements finished the scheme slightly earlier than the 24-month period, this was due to the tenants securing other accommodation.

Spelthorne RentStart

3.8 Additionally, Spelthorne Borough Council contract Spelthorne RentStart to find privately rented accommodation for single homeless people and couples without children.

3.9 In 2024/25, a total of 333 clients were offered housing advice of which 230 had been directly referred by the Council. In total, 94 clients secured accommodation. Of these, 50 Clients moved into (HMOs) and 44 moved into self-contained properties.

3.10 Approximately, 68% were placed in Spelthorne, the remaining 32% were placed out of borough in Runnymede, Elmbridge, Woking, Slough, Richmond, Hounslow, Sutton, Hillingdon and Windsor.

Property type	Number of placements in Spelthorne	Number of placements out of the borough	Average Rent Agreed
Shared accommodation (room)	29	21	£831
Studio	19	3	£895
1-Bed	14	6	£1,169
2-Bedrooms	2	-	£1,300
Total	64	30	-

Knowle Green Estates (KGE)

3.11 In 2024/25, 14 properties became available to let or re-let to either housing register applicants or homeless households. These properties are set at affordable rent levels (80% of the local market rent or capped at the Local Housing Allowance rates).

Further details are given in the tables below.

Property Size	Number of Properties
1-bed	1
2-bed	8
3-bed	1
4-bed	2
5-bed	2

Property Type	Number of Properties
House	5
Flat	9