

Homeless Service

Accessing Change Together Middlesbrough

ACT
Middlesbrough

Housing

Substance Use

Domestic Abuse

Housing

Homelessness

- Rough Sleeping
- Temporary Accommodation
- HRA assessments
- Prevention

Commissioned accommodation

- Stages Academy
- Single Key
- Changing Lives
- Penrith Road
- Rainham House & Hestia

Housing related support

- Tenancy Sustainment
- Homelessness Prevention
- Move on support
- Housing Register

Homelessness Legislation

- Part VII – Housing Act 1996 (28 day threat, 33 day investigation period)
 - Eligibility for assistance
 - Homeless or threatened with homelessness
 - Priority Need
 - Intentionally Homeless
 - Local Connection
- Homeless Reduction Act 2017 (56 day threat, new duties)
 - Introduced Prevention and Relief duties, Personal Housing Plans and Duty to refer.
 - Priority Need is not necessary to receive support
 - Local connection can now be applied earlier and referrals made to other authorities.
 - Most decisions made along the way are subject to review – must be requested within 21 days of decision date.

Duties introduced in HRA 2017

- **Prevention Duty (56 days)**

- Where there is a threat of homelessness
- Aim is to keep the person in their current accommodation where possible and safe to do so
- If this is not possible, assist the person into alternative accommodation before their current accommodation ends

- **Relief Duty (56 days)**

- Where the person is actually homeless
- Temporary accommodation can be provided if s.188 duty met (next slide)
- S.193 referrals can be made to authorities where the person has local connection

- Both Prevention and Relief duties can be ended with an offer of accommodation where the person could be expected to reside for a minimum of 6 months.
- At the end of the Relief duty further considerations are made in terms of priority need, intentionality and whether a 'main duty' is owed. Main duty can only be discharged into a part VI (Social Housing) offer or 12 Month AST (specific conditions apply)

Duties introduced in HRA 2017 Continued

- **The Duty to Refer**

- The Act introduced a duty on specified public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness/housing options teams.
- The specified public authorities subject to the duty to refer are (in England only):
 - prisons
 - young offender institutions
 - secure training centres
 - secure colleges
 - youth offending teams
 - probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
 - Jobcentres in England
 - social service authorities (both adult and children's)
 - emergency departments
 - urgent treatment centres
 - hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
 - Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces

Eligibility

- To be eligible for assistance, you must meet residence and immigration conditions
- You usually meet immigration and residence conditions if you:
 - are a British or Irish citizen (and are habitually resident*)
 - have refugee status or humanitarian protection
 - have indefinite leave to remain or EU settled status
 - are a Commonwealth citizen with right of abode
 - have leave to remain in the UK with access to public funds**

* A habitual residence test would be required to satisfy this condition

**Access to public funds means access to benefits, homelessness assistance and council allocation of social housing.

Definitions of homelessness

- A person is homeless if they have no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere which is available for their occupation and which that person has a legal right to occupy.
- A person is also homeless if they have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it, or the accommodation is a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is nowhere it can lawfully be placed in order to provide accommodation.

Definitions of homelessness continued

- A person who has accommodation is to be treated as homeless where it would not be reasonable for them to continue to occupy that accommodation.
- A person is threatened with homelessness if they are likely to become homeless within 56 days.
- A person is also threatened with homelessness if a valid (“no fault”) notice under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 has been issued in respect of the only accommodation available for their occupation, and the notice will expire within 56 days.

Emergency/interim accommodation duty

- Section 188(1) requires housing authorities to secure that accommodation is available for an applicant (and their household) if they have *reason to believe* that the applicant may:
 - (a) be homeless;
 - (b) be eligible for assistance; and,
 - (c) have a priority need.

All 3 criteria must be met

Priority Need

Source: Chapter 8, Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

An applicant will have a priority need for housing if they or a member of their household is:

- a pregnant woman or a person with whom she resides or might reasonably be expected to reside
- a person with whom dependent children reside or might reasonably be expected to reside
- a person who is homeless as a result of that person being a victim of domestic abuse
- a person who is vulnerable *as a result of* old age, mental illness, learning disability or physical disability or other special reason, or with whom such a person resides or might reasonably be expected to reside
- a person aged 16 or 17 who is not a 'relevant child' or a child in need to whom a local authority owes a duty under section 20 of the Children Act 1989
- a person under 21 who was (but is no longer) looked after, accommodated or fostered between the ages of 16 and 18 (except a person who is a 'relevant student')

Priority Need continued

- a person aged 21 or more who is vulnerable *as a result of* having been looked after, accommodated or fostered (except a person who is a ‘relevant student’)
- a person who is vulnerable as a result of having been a member of Her Majesty’s regular naval, military or air forces
- a person who is vulnerable *as a result of*:
 - (i) having served a custodial sentence;
 - (ii) having been committed for contempt of court or any other kindred offence; or,
 - (iii) having been remanded in custody
- a person who is vulnerable *as a result of* ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out
- a person who is homeless, or threatened with homelessness, as a result of an emergency such as flood, fire or other disaster

Vulnerability

- COG 8.16 - It is a matter of evaluative judgement whether the applicant's circumstances make them vulnerable. When determining whether an applicant in any of the categories set out in paragraph 8.14 is vulnerable, the housing authority should determine whether, if homeless, the applicant would be significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person would be if they became homeless. The assessment must be a qualitative composite one taking into account all of the relevant facts and circumstances, and involves a consideration of the impact of homelessness on the applicant when compared to an ordinary person if made homeless. The housing authority should consider whether the applicant would suffer or be at risk of suffering harm or detriment which the ordinary person would not suffer or be at risk of suffering, such that the harm or detriment would make a noticeable difference to their ability to deal with the consequences of homelessness.

Vulnerability

- COG 8.17 - When assessing an applicant's vulnerability, a housing authority may take into account the services and support available to them from a third party, including their family. This would involve considering the needs of the applicant, the level of support being provided to them, and whether with such support they would or would not be significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person if made homeless. In order to reach a decision that a person is not vulnerable because of the support they receive the housing authority must be satisfied that the third party will provide the support on a consistent and predictable basis. In each case a housing authority should consider whether the applicant, even with support, would be vulnerable.

Intentionally Homeless

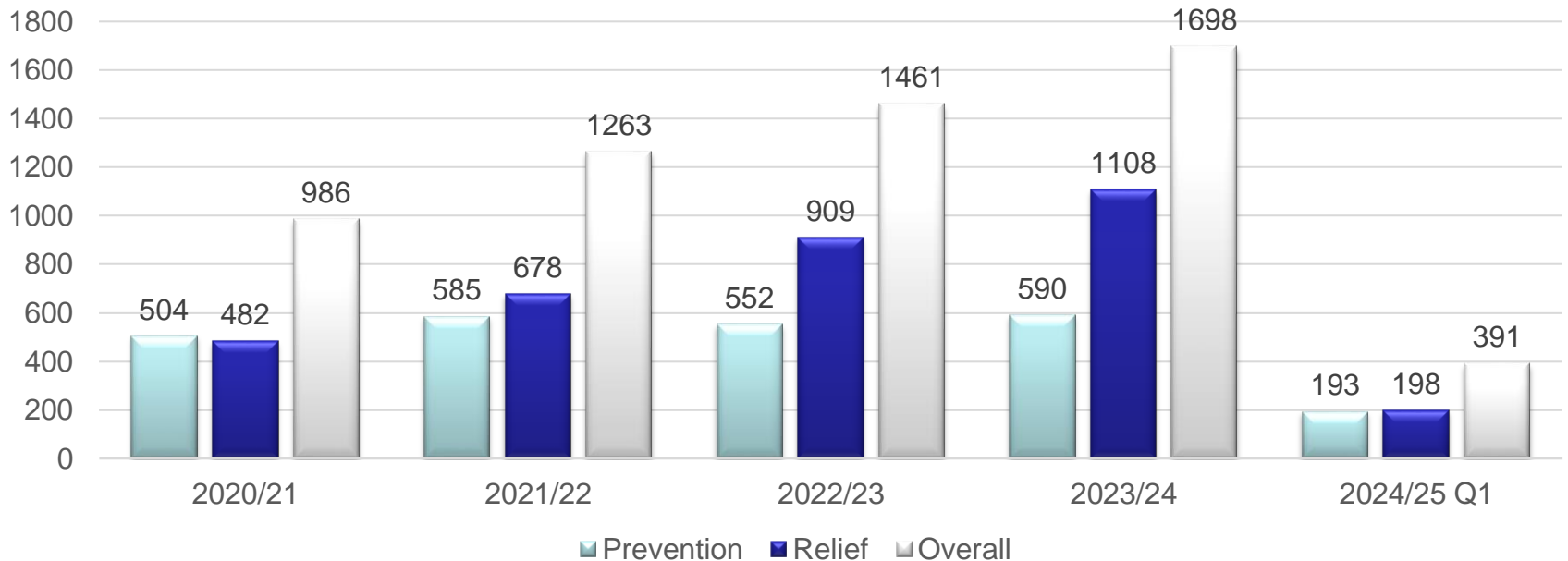
- An Intentionally homeless decision may be made if the main reason the applicant lost their home was because of something they did or failed to do.
- This might include if they (not exhaustive):
 - were evicted after not paying the rent when they could afford to
 - moved out of their home voluntarily when they could have stayed
 - lost their tenancy because they went to prison for a criminal offence
 - were evicted for anti-social behaviour
- If a household is determined to be intentionally homeless, the relief duty would end and there would be no further duty. This means the case would be closed and they would be given reasonable notice to leave any interim accommodation provided.
- They won't be intentionally homeless if they lost your home because of something beyond their control or it wouldn't have been reasonable to expect them to do so. For example, we would need to consider (not exhaustive and on a case by case basis):
 - If they were at risk of violence or domestic abuse by staying
 - If the property had become unaffordable due to a life event out of their control e.g. health issues

Local Connection

- The service user may choose the local authority to be referred to / approach.
- However, they should be advised that if they do not have a local connection to the area, they will probably be referred to the area where they do have a connection
- Someone is defined as having a local connection to an area if they have:
 - Lived in that area recently - 6 of last 12 months / 3 of last 5 years
 - Employment in that area
 - Lived in asylum accommodation in the area at point of positive decision
 - Receive Care Leavers support in that area
 - Close family connection in the area (& family member has local connection). Strong family connection is usually restricted to, mother, father, brother, sister or adult child, although other family members may be considered in exceptional circumstances. There also needs to be ongoing relationship.
- Local connection to an area does not apply if the person is in prison or an institution in that area unless one of the criteria above applies.
- Local connection requirements may be disregarded in cases where a person is fleeing violence and is at risk in that area.

Homelessness duties in Middlesbrough

Chart Title

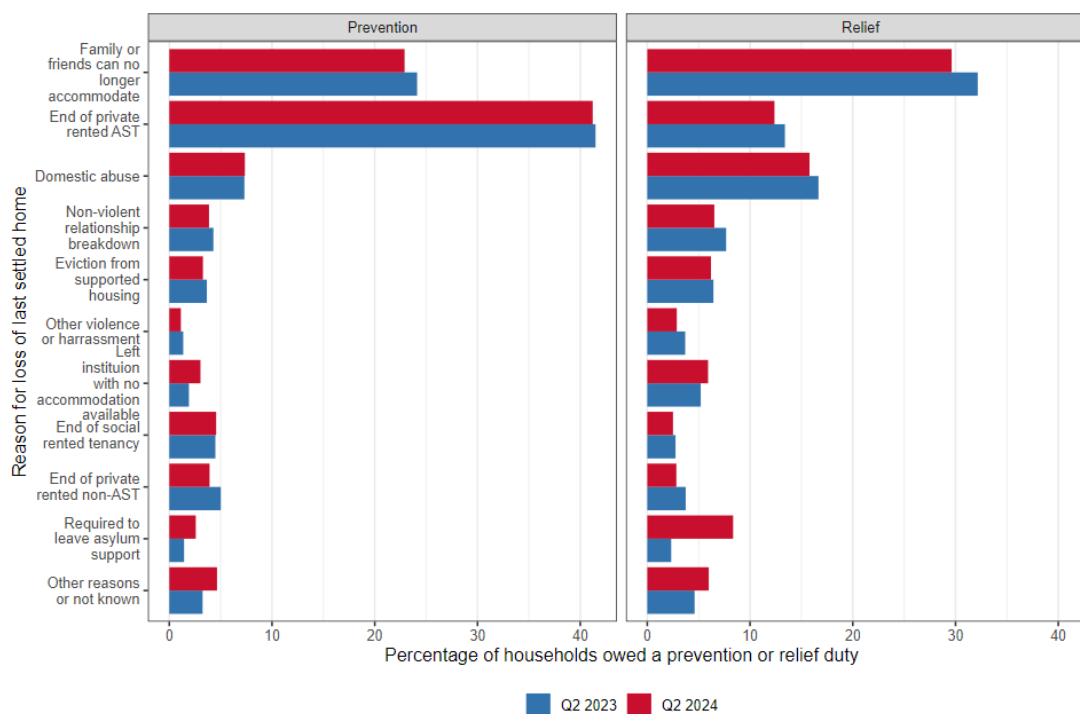


Reason for loss of last settled home

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 Q1
Prevention Duty cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 36.5% 2. Domestic Abuse – 22.8% 3. Other/Unknown – 9.3% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 31.6% 2. Domestic Abuse – 19.9% 3. End of Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 13.7% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic Abuse – 23.9% 2. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 22.6% 3. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 18.1% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold - 30.7% 2. Domestic Abuse – 24.1% 3. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 15.9% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold 33.7% 2. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate 23.8% 3. Domestic Abuse – 16.1%
Relief Duty cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate 29.9% 2. Left Institution – 15.6% 3. Other / not known – 15.1% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 28.9% 2. Domestic Abuse – 10.9% 3. End of Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 9.9% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate - 31.8% 2. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 13.4% 3. Domestic Abuse 12.2% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 25.8% 2. Domestic Abuse – 14.2% 3. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 12.6% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate 20.7% 2. Eviction from Supported Accommodation 15.7% 3. Domestic Abuse 13.6%

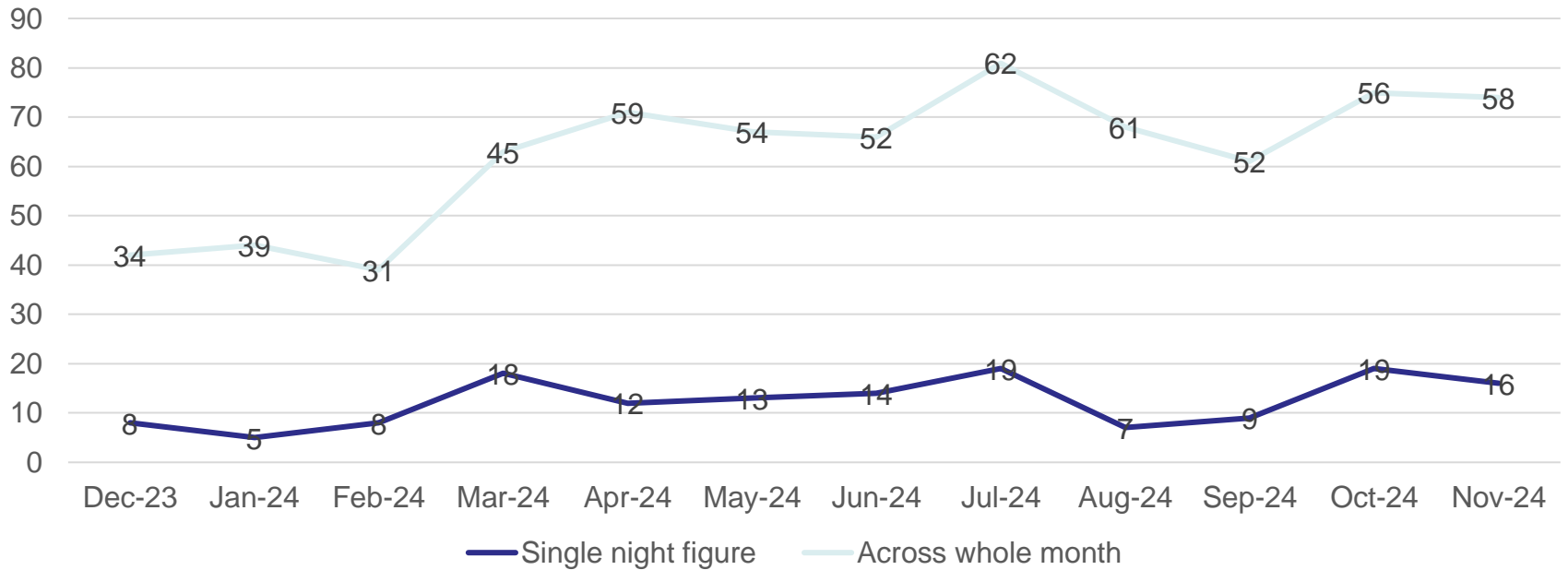
National picture April-June 2024

– most recent published data



Rough Sleeping

Chart Title



What impacts our ability to prevent and relieve homelessness effectively?

Changes to:

- Social Housing
- Private Rented Sector
- Supported accommodation move on

Social Housing

- Out of 65,236 dwellings in the borough, 15,154 are social rented
- Stock has dropped 1% since 2009 due to right to buy, but population has risen 7% over the same time
- 29 social housing providers operate within the borough
- 3 biggest providers are: Thirteen Group (11,849), North Star (939), Home Group (878). The remaining providers have 1488 properties between them.
- Turnover of properties becoming available to let dropped from 12 to 5% between 2019-2024 – so less movement.
- Evictions dropped by half from 2019 to 2024 in social rented sector
- Awab's Law – damp and mould - Causing a delay in properties being available to let (18 months) affecting about 250 properties

Social Housing continued

- There is a consensus that due to changes in mortgage rates and local market, less people are leaving the social sector to buy properties or rent in the private sector.
- This slow down can be demonstrated by North Star's information below on how many properties were available to let during the last three financial years :

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
General Needs	75	67	50

Social Housing – Waiting times 2023/24

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Band 1	362 days	242 days	167 days	232 days
Band 2	375 days	347 days	419 days	318 days
Band 3	409 days	54 days	526 days	208 days
Band 4	488 days	144 days	182 days	182 days
All Bands	397 days	236 days	224 days	244 days

Social Housing – Bidding

Table 4 – Data from TVHF about the average number of bids per property type advertised 23/24

	Average no of Bids per property type advertised			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
1 Bed Bungalow	21	9	6	28
1 Bed Flat	26	29	52	89
1 Bed House	45	20	136	89
2 Bed Bungalow	60	60	15	73
2 Bed Flat	18	20	35	77
2 Bed House	83	49	72	227
2 Bed Maisonette		19	38	26
3 Bed Maisonette	8			31
3 Bed Bungalow	23			17
3 Bed House	37	35	40	115
4 Bed House	16	13	70	66
5 Bed House	26	15		
Studio Flat	3		5	7

Private Rented Sector

- Out of the 65,236 dwellings in the borough 12,863 are private rented
- 19.99% of the housing stock in the borough is private rented and broadly aligns to the national picture.
- In Middlesbrough large proportions of the PRS accommodation is in densely populated areas such as Newport, University and North Ormesby.
- Not subject to the housing regulator so standards are variable

Private Rented Sector - Challenges

- Rents continue to increase and the Local Housing Allowance rate remains static
- Section 21 (no fault) notices are a leading cause of homelessness.
- Increase in accommodation aimed at students and ‘serviced accommodation’ market, which formerly general needs homes.

Improvements to service delivery:

- Delivering face to face service from Middlesbrough House, telephone appointments available too.
- Intention to have a data led approach to improve service delivery
- Ongoing work with Pathways to improve the offer to Care Leavers
- Recently consulted on proposed changes to local housing register to benefit vulnerable and homeless applicants.
- Weekly support and advice sessions for Early Help and Stronger Families staff (to be rolled out wider across Childrens Services)
- Weekly Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel
- New Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy soon to be published.

Improvements to service delivery continued

- Successful support of SHAP bids – further 35 supported bed spaces should be online before end of current financial year (DePaul, Beyond & New Walk)
- Continued outreach work with Rough Sleepers
- Specialist Domestic Abuse officers in Housing Solutions and Community Interventions improving offer to victims and survivors.

End.