

Homelessness Review

People Scrutiny Panel
Monday 24th March 2025

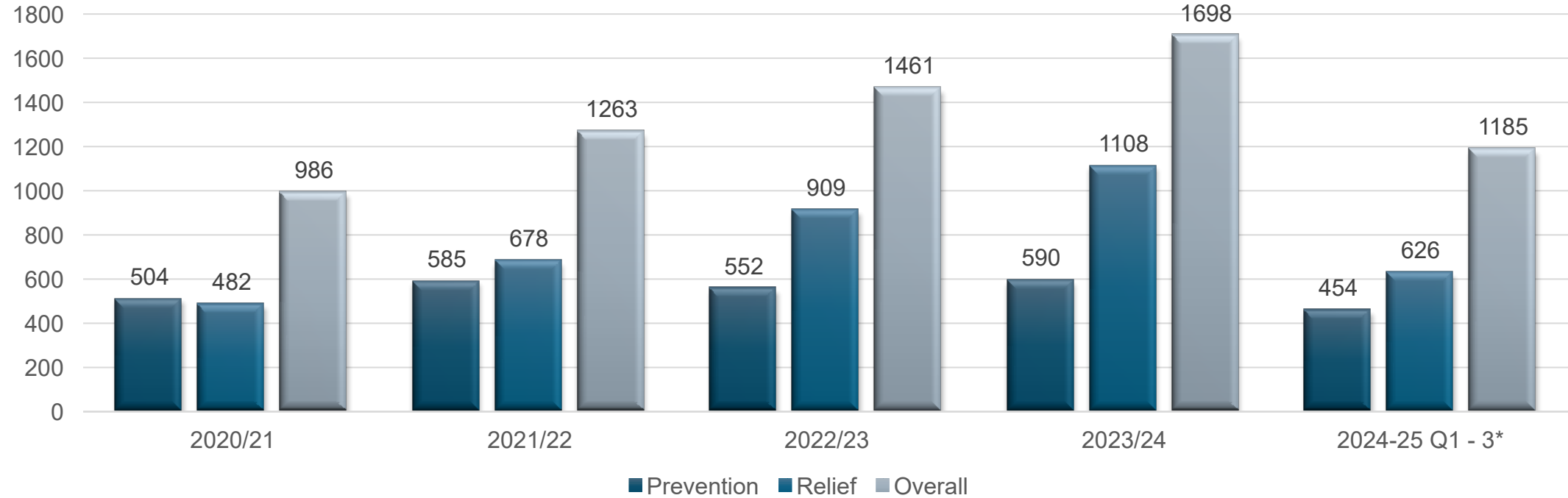
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Areas of review:

1. To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough.
2. To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities.
3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing.
4. To consider Local Authority and multi-agency approaches to tackling the issue of homelessness and the resource implications around this.

Aim 1: To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough.

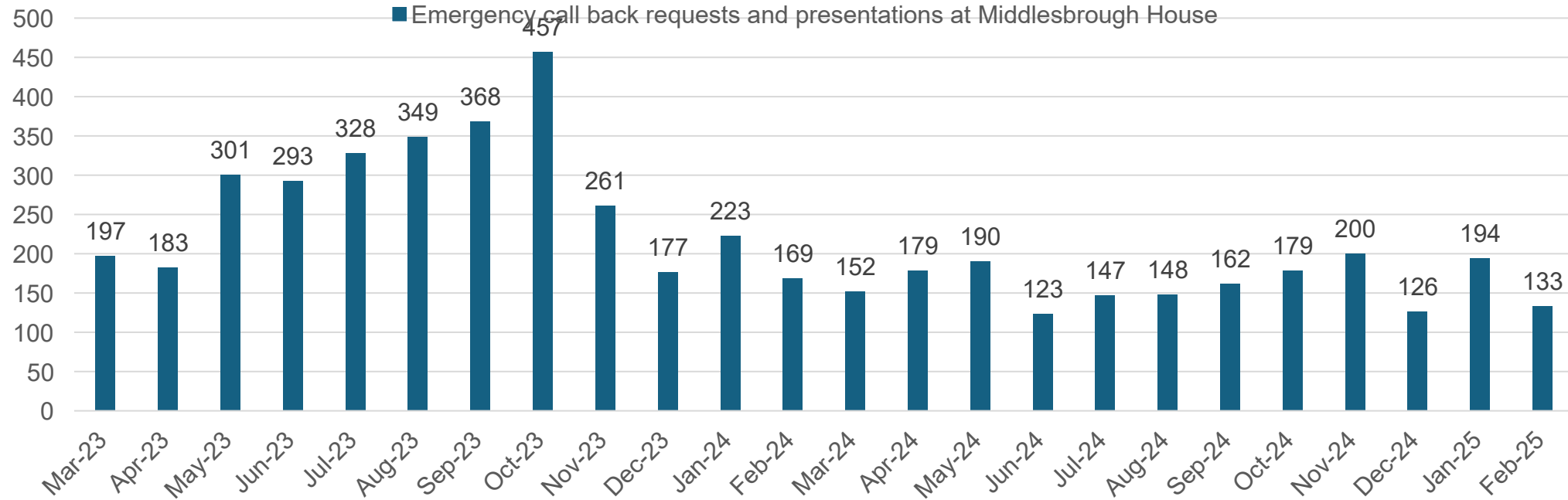
Number of Homelessness Assessments & Duties 2020 - present



Source: [Homelessness statistics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/homelessness-statistics) & local data for Q3 24/25

* Q3 data not yet published

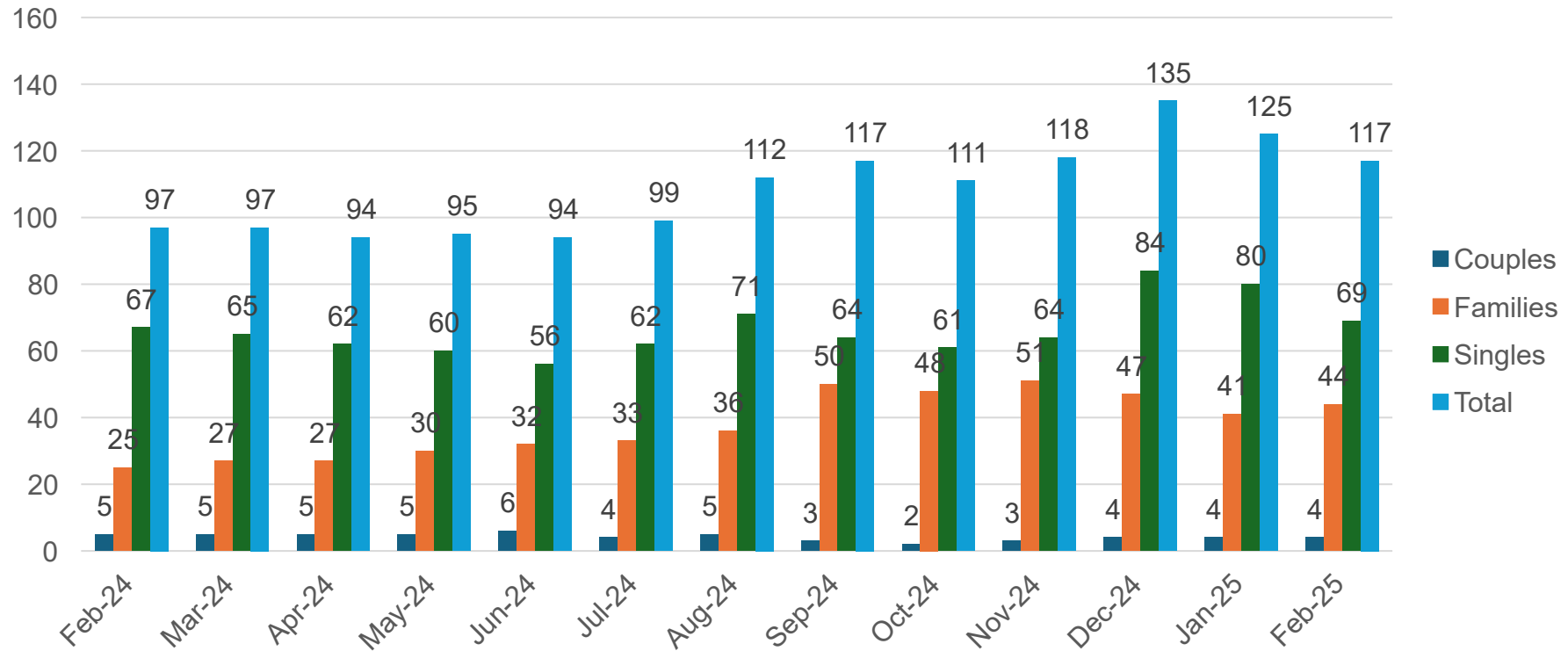
Aim 1: To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough. (Continued 1) Demand on duty services & appointments offered



In addition to the above emergency calls and presentations, we have the rough sleepers that are being engaged with on a daily basis, officers also receive direct phone and email enquiries and we also offer an appointment service. The appointment service more recently has offered between around 6-15 appointments per day dependant on staffing levels and includes specialist Domestic Abuse assessments at an appropriate location.

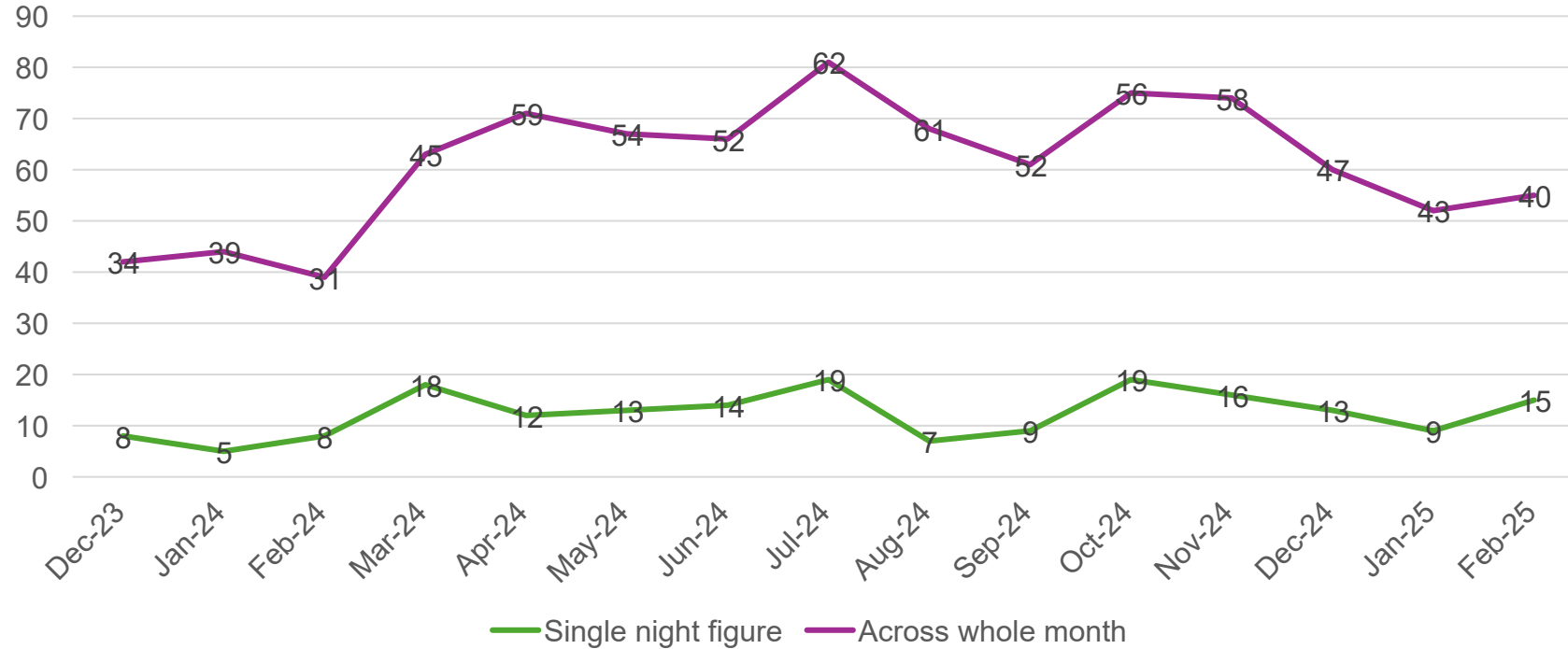
3. To consider the Council’s use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing.

Snapshot number of households in temporary accommodation



Aim 1: To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough. (Continued 2)

Rough Sleeping



Source: [Homelessness statistics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/homelessness-statistics)

Aim 1: To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough. (Continued 3)

Top 3 Reasons for homelessness each year

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 Q1&2 only
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 – 35.1% 2. Domestic Abuse – 21.8% 3. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 21.2%
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. 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. Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate – 30% 2. Domestic Abuse – 17.5% 3. End Private Rented Assured Shorthold – 11.7%

Source: [Homelessness statistics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/homelessness-statistics)

Aim 2: To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities.

- Recap from previous session to give context:
- 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 (56 days each), 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.

Aim 2. To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities. (Continued.1)

- Prevention and Relief Duties brought in by Homeless Reduction Act 2017 adding to existing duties from [Housing Act 1996](#).
- [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK](#) is always the best place to start for guidance on how to implement the legislation and is the source if the information on this slide. .
- **12.1** [Section 195 of the 1996 Act](#) – the ‘prevention duty’ – places a duty on housing authorities to work with people who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days to help prevent them from becoming homeless. This chapter provides guidance on how to fulfil the prevention duty and the ways in which it can be ended.
- **13.1** [Section 189B of the 1996 Act](#) – the ‘relief duty’ – requires housing authorities to help people who are homeless to secure accommodation.

Aim 2. To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities. (Continued 2)

- **13.2** The duty applies when the housing authority is satisfied that the applicant is both homeless and eligible for assistance. The housing authority is obliged to take reasonable steps to help the applicant secure suitable accommodation with a reasonable prospect that it will be available for their occupation for at least 6 months.
- **13.3** Where the housing authority have reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless, eligible and have a priority need they must provide interim accommodation under [section 188\(1\)](#) whilst fulfilling the relief duty. For further guidance on interim duties to accommodate see [Chapter 15](#).
- **13.4** If the housing authority would be subject to the relief duty but consider that the conditions are met for referral to another housing authority in England (not Scotland or Wales) they have the discretion to notify that housing authority of their opinion ([section 198\(A1\)](#)). For further guidance on local connection see [Chapter 10](#).
- **13.5** The reasonable steps to be taken by both the housing authority and the applicant to help secure accommodation must include those set out in the personalised housing plan drawn up and reviewed as set out in [section 189A](#). For further guidance on assessments and personalised housing plans see [Chapter 11](#). The housing authority will need to have arrangements in place for accessible and timely communication with applicants to maximise the effectiveness of their joint efforts.
- **13.6** Housing authorities must take into account their assessment of the applicant's case under section 189A (which includes consideration of an applicant's housing needs, circumstances leading to homelessness, and support required) as they work to fulfil the relief duty, recognising that there are a range of factors that will affect an applicant's ability to take action to secure accommodation. For some applicants, the circumstances, needs or issues that have contributed to their being homeless may also affect their ability to work with the housing authority. The housing authority's duty to have regard to the applicant's section 189A assessment will assist the authority with understanding the applicant's particular situation and tailoring the support it provides under the relief duty, both directly and through engaging relevant specialist services, accordingly.

Aim 2. To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities. (Continued 3)

- **13.7** Housing authorities will want to ensure that people who are sleeping rough and eligible for assistance are supported to apply to them for housing assistance, and should seek to prevent applicants from starting to sleep rough during the course of the relief duty. For further guidance on joint working to address rough sleeping see the homelessness strategy see [Chapter 2](#) and for further guidance on personalised plans see [Chapter 11](#). Specific considerations in relation to applicants who are (or are at imminent risk of) sleeping rough and are or may be owed the relief duty include:
 1. (a) working with other agencies and/or commissioned services to ensure rough sleepers are aware of, and have support to seek, housing assistance from the authority and in the provision of appropriate accommodation and/or support;
 2. (b) if the authority does not have reason to believe that the applicant may have a priority need and has not therefore provided interim accommodation under section 188(1), the use of discretionary powers to secure emergency accommodation to prevent nights on the streets, taking into account the risk of harm applicants may face. For further guidance on discretionary powers to secure emergency accommodation see [Chapter 15](#);
 3. (c) if using discretion to enquire into whether an applicant has a local connection, remembering that normal residence does not require a settled address and may include periods sleeping rough. For further guidance on local connection see [Chapter 10](#).
- **13.8** Where homelessness is relieved, but an applicant's needs, as set out in the personalised housing plan, may put them at risk of a further threat of homelessness, the housing authority should work with relevant support and specialist services to help promote sustainability.
- **13.9** Housing authorities may conduct and complete their inquiries into the duties that will be owed to an applicant under [section 193\(2\)](#), the main housing duty during the period in which they are attempting to relieve homelessness under the [section 189B duty](#). However, this activity must not detract from the housing authority's work to relieve the applicant's homelessness. **Where the housing authority considers an applicant is unlikely to be owed a section 193(2) main housing duty they must not limit or reduce the assistance they provide during the relief duty for this reason.**

Aim 2: To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities. (Continued 4)

- **13.10** Housing authorities are advised against issuing a [section 184 notification](#) accepting the section 193 (main housing duty) during the relief stage. The section 193 duty cannot commence until the relief duty has come to an end and issuing notification during the relief stage might detract from activities to relieve their homelessness.
- **13.11** Housing authorities may issue a section 184 decision to the applicant, that when the relief duty ends they will owe them a duty under [section 190](#) because they have a priority need but are intentionally homeless. Although the section 190 duty cannot commence until the relief duty has come to an end, the authority may wish to alert an applicant that the main housing duty will not be owed. It may be beneficial to review the personalised housing plan at this point to help maximise joint efforts to relieve homelessness.
- **13.12** If the authority has provided interim accommodation under section 188 and subsequently finds that the applicant does not have a priority need during the relief duty stage, a section 184 notification that neither the main housing duty nor the section 190 duty will be owed once the relief duty ends will bring the section 188 duty to an end ([section 188\(1ZA\)\(b\)](#)). The relief duty will continue to be owed until it ends in one of the circumstances in [subsections \(7\) or \(9\) of section 189B](#). For further guidance on interim duties to accommodate see [Chapter 15](#), and for guidance on ending the prevention and relief duty see [Chapter 14](#)

Ending the relief Duty ([Chapter 14](#)):

- The housing authority is satisfied that the applicant has suitable accommodation available for occupation and a reasonable prospect of suitable accommodation being available for at least 6 months from the date of the notice.
- The housing authority has complied with the relief duty and 56 days have passed.
- The applicant has refused an offer of suitable accommodation and, on the date of refusal, there was a reasonable prospect that suitable accommodation would be available for the minimum prescribed period.
- The applicant has become homeless intentionally from any accommodation that has been made available to them as a result of reasonable steps taken by the housing authority during the prevention or relief duty, whichever is relevant.
- The applicant is no longer eligible for assistance
- the applicant has withdrawn their application for homelessness assistance (including lost contact)

3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing.

- 'interim' accommodation would only be offered if the local authority has a reason to believe an applicant may be Homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need for rehousing. The LA will then carry out their enquiries and look at what duty would be owed. If a main duty is owed, the applicant would be then further offered temporary accommodation, which would be their accommodation until the homelessness duty can be discharged.
- We have a temporary accommodation policy which take into account needs of family, including children's education, wellbeing and involvement with services.

Code of guidance states:

- **17.7** Accommodation that is suitable for a short period, for example accommodation used to discharge an interim duty pending inquiries under [section 188](#), may not necessarily be suitable for a longer period, for example to discharge a duty under [section 193\(2\)](#).
- **17.8** Housing authorities have a continuing obligation to keep the suitability of accommodation under review, and to respond to any relevant change in circumstances which may affect suitability, until such time as the accommodation duty is brought to an end.

•**Middlesbrough's Temporary Accommodation Commissioning Framework:**

- Came into place in early 2024
- Set nightly rates paid
- Framework opened periodically to attract new providers to market
- Requested range of property types and locations (ideally Middlesbrough) to suit different household types and needs including accessibility.
- Has helped significantly reduce hotel use

3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing. (continued 1)

•Number of providers on the Framework:

- Active and providing properties: 5
- Active but still bringing properties on board: 1
- In process of onboarding: 1

•Commissioned Accommodation through TA Framework:

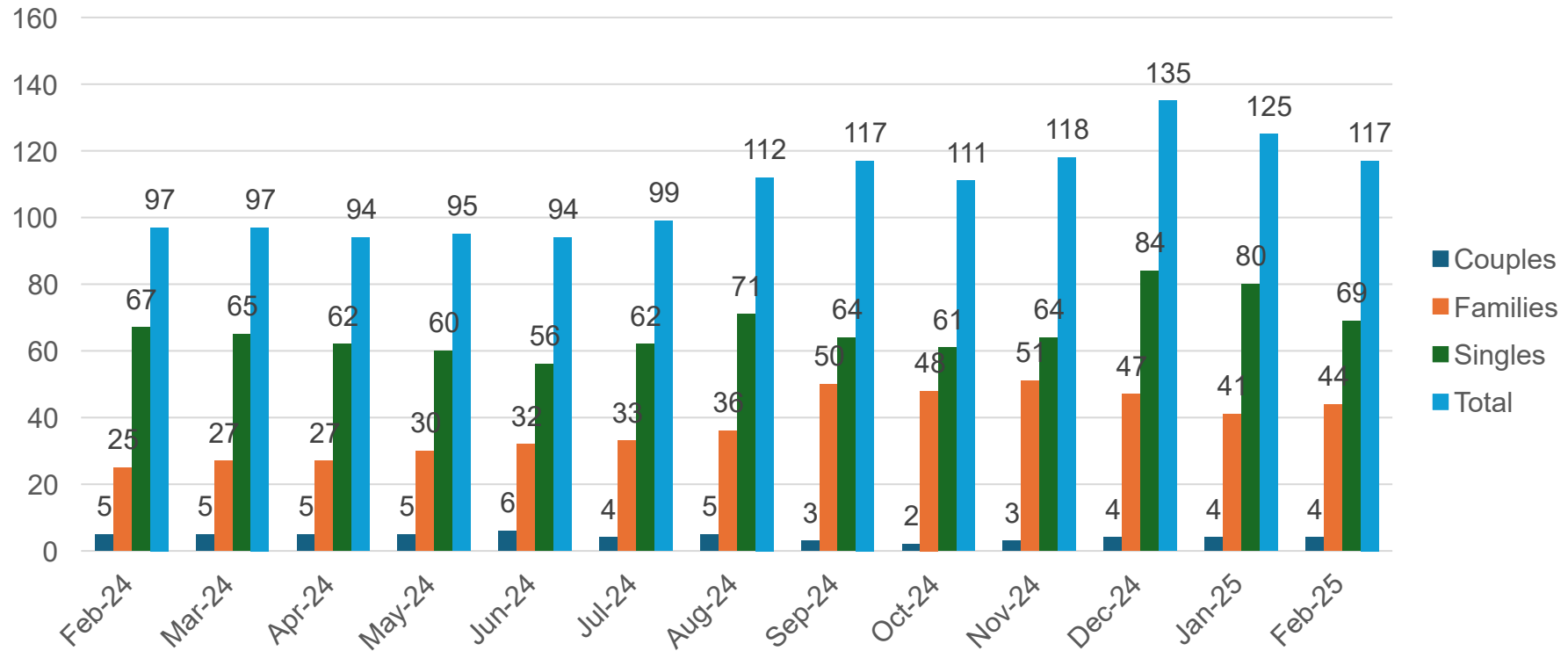
- Houses, flats & studios
- Some houses can be used as shared accommodation for single person households
- All families have a self-contained property, B&B style accommodation (including hotels) is rare now.

Other considerations

- S.188 duty can be discharged to a variety of types of accommodation and doesn't have to be one of the above type properties or a hotel, this could also be exempt supported accommodation, arrangements with family or some cases supported accommodation if the need arises and this is not a long term solution to the persons needs. Officers are always encouraged to explore all options for the applicant.
- In cases where someone has identified they are at risk of homelessness as a result of Domestic abuse we will explore Safe accommodation as defined by the Domestic Abuse Act2021 (Refuge, dispersed sanctuary scheme) options where possible. Where this isn't possible either due to safety, availability or the victim/ perpetrator needs and/or complexities, we would need to offer commissioned interim/ temporary accommodation. In order to give increased support during this period we have commissioned, using DA Act funding, an outreach worker from a specialist DA support service who will provide additional support to the applicant and their household, until we can source safe accommodation or identify more appropriate supported or longer term accommodation.

3. To consider the Council’s use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing. (cont.2)

Snapshot number of households in temporary accommodation



3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing. (cont. 3)



3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing. (Cont 4)

- The key to reducing the number of households which end up in temporary accommodation depends on the officers applying the law correctly and in a timely manner, but also with a focus on preventing homelessness in its truest form – keeping people in their current accommodation where possible. If this is not possible, focus should then be shifted to securing alternative accommodation by means of the private sector, supported accommodation or social housing before they become homeless and require interim or temporary accommodation.
- Homelessness prevention tools and resource available
 - Community Interventions Team
 - Negotiation with landlords to offer support if notice served to rent arrears or issues around conduct
 - Homeless Prevention Fund
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
 - Recovery Housing Support Team
 - Housing register
 - Private rented sector
 - Affordability assessments and onward referrals to Welfare Rights where needed
 - Relationships with Social Housing providers
 - Environmental Health

3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing. (Cont.5)

- **Upcoming changes to support with homelessness prevention and supporting rough sleepers:**
 - Increased resource for Housing Solutions team – new posts created to reflect demand and resource required to effectively manage those placed in interim and temporary accommodation.
 - Single Homeless Accommodation Programme ([Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme - GOV.UK](#))
 - Almost £3m in Capital and Revenue funding awarded for 3 year programme
 - 3 providers will offer 44 units of accommodation (Depaul, New Walk CIC & Beyond Housing)
 - 2 based on dispersed, self-contained model one in large supported accommodation building



4. To consider Local Authority and multi-agency approaches to tackling the issue of homelessness and the resource implications around this.

- **Rough Sleeping**
 - Rough Sleeper Action Group – Held monthly with a range of organisations in attendance such as Police, Probation, Adult Social Care, Accommodation providers, Substance Use and other Local Authorities where involved and more. Aim is to work collaboratively to help resolve the homelessness for those who have been outside the longest, those who have additional needs which require support to address and identifying those who are new to the street to see if measures can be put in place to keep this as short as possible. This is in addition to the daily work carried out by the Rough Sleeper Team.
 - Partnership working with organisations who have accommodation through RSAP and SHAP funding, including Thirteen, North Star, Depaul, New Walk and Beyond Housing.
 - Working with charitable organisations to join in at drop-ins to maintaining contact with service users - e.g Depaul, Salvation Army, Doorways etc.
- **Young People and Care Leavers**
 - Weekly Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel attended by Pathways, referrers and accommodation providers
 - Weekly meeting with Pathways Managers to discuss all Young People being looked after and their accommodation pathways.
 - Protocol for Homeless 16/17 year olds in place (underway with updated version)
 - Care Leaver Protocol (underway with updated version)

4. To consider Local Authority and multi-agency approaches to tackling the issue of homelessness and the resource implications around this (continued 1).

- Children
 - Weekly practice clinic with Early Help & Stronger families colleagues following a session around homeless legislation process and duty to refer
 - Attendance at MACH triage where required
 - Attendance at meetings arranged by Children's services where client is open to service – Strategies, Child Protection meetings etc
- Domestic Abuse
 - Working in partnership with DA services around homelessness prevention where appropriate - Looking into legal orders, Sanctuary Scheme etc
 - Attendance at MARAC
- Adults
 - Attending Safeguarding meeting for clients in the safeguarding arena
 - Senior managers attend High Risk Adults Panel (HRAP) to offer strategic or system change solutions
 - Attendance at MAPPA
- Escalations panel
 - Introduced in February 2025 and aims to address cases which require support from senior managers to resolve, which may require extraordinary decisions and encourage system change

Questions?



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End.