

# COVENTRY HOMELESSNESS REVIEW 2024

This Homelessness Review provides information on the needs of people who have approached Coventry City Council's housing service for help since the last homelessness strategy was adopted in 2019.



# **Contents**

**1.Preface**

**2.Background**

**3.Homelessness review**

**4.Legislation and policy**

**5.Understanding homelessness nationally**

**6.Types of homelessness**

**7.Causes of homelessness, risk factors and impacts**

**8.Coventry data**

**9.Reasons for homelessness in Coventry**

**10.Duty to refer**

**11.The scale of homelessness in Coventry**

**12.Statutory interventions**

**13.Non-statutory interventions**

## **1. Preface**

This Homelessness Review provides information on the needs of people who have approached the Coventry City Council's housing service for help since the last homelessness strategy was adopted in 2019. It considers what we have achieved, what has changed, and how this relates to the changing environment and Government policy. The information contained in this review, what it has told us, as well as the information we have received from both internal and external partners will be used as the foundation for the development of the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and action plan.

The new strategy and plan will run until 2029 and be our road map for service delivery and improvements. It will illustrate our priorities and include clear, measurable outcomes and outputs. The strategy will be a partnership strategy and be inclusive of all functions, services and individuals that link to, or are impacted by homelessness in the city.

## **2. Background**

### **Housing and homelessness strategy**

The current Housing and Homelessness Strategy was published in 2019 and runs until 2024. It is aimed at providing a high-level plan to set out the main priorities for the Council and its partners for the life of the strategy, to guide the allocation of resources and investment, and provide a framework to inform project development, to achieve the vision that:

- Coventry Citizens will be able to access a suitable, affordable, and decent home, with the support they need to sustain their housing.

In 2019 when the strategy was developed the Homelessness Strategy and Housing Strategy were combined into one document, this was done as it was recognised that activities to prevent homelessness were to a degree dependent on the availability of permanent housing.

Whilst great achievements have been made and the delivery of the housing and homelessness function and strategy have moved, developed, and changed since its initial publication, we have also seen a shift in terms of some of the priorities and the challenges that sit alongside these.

The Covid pandemic has changed the way we operate and deliver homeless services in the city. Staff began working from home in the early stages of the pandemic and, although there has been a drift back to the office, many staff still work from home. This has meant a swing from face-to-face to online contact or the telephone. Some people do not have the appropriate technology for this or prefer face-to-face contact, so the option to come into the office remains open to them.

The reported inflation rate stands at 3.2% ( march 2024) , and translates to an increase in housing, heating, and food expenses for households. These increases obviously have a significant impact on households with lower incomes. Concurrently, there is an increase in households approaching homelessness support with the top 3 reasons for losing settled accommodation (friends & family no longer willing to accommodate, PRS eviction, and Domestic Abuse) being in line with national and historical trends.

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018 changed the way that homelessness services are delivered by local authorities. There have also been further changes to

legislation, such as the Domestic Abuse Act, which placed further duties on local authorities to provide temporary accommodation to all who are homeless because of domestic abuse. Brexit has also been an influential factor, and changes made as part of the UK's withdrawal from Europe have impacted who is eligible to receive homelessness assistance.

Alongside the wider changes and associated challenges, we are seeing a record number of households approaching the council for assistance and support.

Coventry published its first Rough Sleeping Strategy in December 2019, in line with a requirement by the Government for all Local Authorities to have a strategy to prevent and tackle rough sleeping. From the outset it was accepted that the successful delivery of the Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan was not in the Council's power alone. Therefore, a One Coventry partnership approach is the only way that we will be able to ensure successful realisation of our vision, therefore the strategy needed to be owned, supported, and delivered by ensuring effective collaboration and partnership working.

### Rough sleeping Strategy

The Rough Sleeping Strategy and its Action Plan were reflective of and intrinsically linked to the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy. The two strategies needed to be considered and delivered in tandem. Since the approval of the strategy in 2019 there has been a worldwide pandemic. Obviously, this has had a number of serious and negative impacts on individuals and society as a whole. In regard to rough sleeping there have been a number of positive outcomes in regard to our ability to accommodate and support some of the most entrenched rough sleepers in Coventry. The impact of this can be seen in the number of people accommodated as part of the 'Everyone-In' initiative.

The current Rough Sleeping strategy was reviewed during 2022 to reflect the shifts that had happened as a result of the covid 19 pandemic and the increased funding and support that was being provided for those rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.

### 2.1 Achievements Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2019-2024

<b>Preventing homelessness and supporting those who do become homeless</b>	
<b>What we have achieved:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Homelessness Reduction Act duties have been fully integrated into the homelessness service.</li> <li>• Regular reporting of metrics.</li> <li>• Recruitment of Head of Housing, Housing and Homelessness Operational Lead (Accommodation Team) and Housing &amp; Homelessness Commissioning and Partnerships Lead.</li> <li>• Creation and expansion of Rough Sleeper Outreach Team.</li> <li>• Publication of a Rough Sleeper Strategy and action plan</li> <li>• Creation of a Temporary Accommodation Team.</li> <li>• Service adapted to continue to deliver services during the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions.</li> <li>• Training provided to various council services and external partners.</li> <li>• Duty to Refer procedures in place and training provided to relevant teams/organisations.</li> <li>• Redesign of the Coventry Homelessness Forum.</li> <li>• Regional work through the WMCA Homelessness Task Force</li> <li>• Co-creation panel set up for those with lived experience of homelessness.</li> <li>• Values and behaviours training for staff</li> <li>• Updated information and advice on the website</li> </ul>	

- Dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer was recruited, and regular Landlord Forums were held.
- Focus on early identification and intervention for people at risk of homelessness.
- Homelessness commissioned services in place from April 2020
- Project to purchase properties for TA and Supported TA use.



- Creation of the Let's Rent scheme.
- Improvement of TA options to reduce B&B use.
- New Homefinder Policy approved and implemented.
- Housing First scheme delivered



#### The impact

- Range of good quality temporary accommodation with a reduction in use of B&B type accommodation
- Enhanced provision for rough sleepers in regards to support and accommodation options following
- Increased preventions and reliefs resulting in more people either securing alternative accommodation or remaining in their existing homes .
- Increased focus on prevention through the vulnerable person and complex needs forum and eviction prevention panel
- 

### **3. Homelessness review**

Housing authorities are required by legislation (Housing Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) to carry out a periodic review of homelessness in their area. The purpose of the review is to determine the extent to which the population in the district is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, assess the likely extent in the future, identify what is currently being done and by whom, and identify what resources are available to prevent and tackle homelessness.

Local housing authorities should use this understanding of homelessness in their area to inform their Homelessness Strategy and they are obliged by legislation to involve partners in this process. In addition, the Homelessness Code of Guidance for local authorities sets out some requirements for a Homelessness Strategy. It should:

- Link to the wider contributory factors of homelessness, such as health, wellbeing, employment, and economic factors.
- Be consistent with other corporate strategies and objectives. Involve partners in implementing the strategic homelessness objectives.
- Have an Action Plan to show how the strategic objectives will be achieved.
- Be monitored and reviewed during the life of the Strategy.

### **4. Legislation and policy**

The legislation and policies that impact homelessness are varied has counter impacts and presents its own challenges in terms of levels and causes of homelessness which are multi factored and intricate.

#### **4.1. Homeless Reduction Act 2017.**

The homelessness legislation is set out in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and provides the statutory framework and duties for local housing authorities to assist people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The legislation was amended via the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002. These amendments required housing authorities in England to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of a review of homelessness in their district. They also extended the groups of people whom housing authorities had a homeless duty towards, now including homeless 16- and 17-year-olds, care leavers aged 18-20, people who were vulnerable as a result of being in care, the armed forces, prison or custody and people who were vulnerable because they had fled their home due to violence.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) came into effect on 3 April 2018 and significantly reformed England's homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness. It also required housing authorities to enhance homelessness services to every household who is homeless or threatened with homelessness, and not just those who are considered to be in 'priority need'.

#### **4.2. Rough sleeping - Ending rough sleeping for good in 2022.**

Ending rough sleeping for good is a cross-government strategy setting out how the government and its partners will end rough sleeping for good. The strategy sets out how the whole government is taking action to meet its ambition to end rough sleeping, reflecting on the significant progress that has been made since the initial 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy. The strategy is built on 3 pillars – prevention, crisis, and relief.

#### **4.3. The Tenant Fees Act 2019**

This Act prohibits landlords and letting agents from requiring a tenant, licensee or other 'relevant person' to pay fees, other than 'permitted payments', in connection with specified private rented sector tenancies/licenses. This would normally come in the guise of renewal fees or credit check fees. It also caps all deposits to 5 weeks' equivalent rent. This is a positive change as it makes access to the private rented sector more affordable as up-front fees and rent deposits are minimized.

#### **4.4. The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018**

This requires a landlord to ensure a property meets minimum safety standards. Violations can range from mould, small, cramped living spaces, lack of adequate sanitation facilities, insecure doors, and windows, excess cold and potential for trips and falls. This Act empowers tenants to obtain redress in the courts for sub-standard accommodation. Poor standard accommodation in the private sector can increase the need for tenants to move home.

#### **4.5. Rented Homes Bill 2021 / Renters Reform Bill**

This Bill proposes to amend the Housing Act 1988 to abolish Assured Shorthold Tenancies. Thereby disabling a landlord's ability to commit to a fast-track eviction under Section 21 of the Housing Act, as this section will be repealed. Although more grounds for eviction will be introduced in the bill, it will oblige landlords to prove the grounds of eviction to a court. Removing the fast-track to evictions approach substantially increases the security of tenure for private renters.

#### **4.6. The Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Act 2023**

The act came into force on the 29th of August 2023 and was passed as a response to the issues with the quality of some of the accommodation, providers and the care and support provided in exempt accommodation. Some providers were seen to place profits over the actual provision of care and support which is an essential part of supported exempt accommodation.

The Act will allow the Government to create new National Supported Housing Standards which will set out minimum standards for supported exempt accommodation and will aim to address the type or condition of accommodation, as well as the care or support provided whilst ensuring provision is value for money. There is no set date for these standards to be introduced and it is not currently known what the standards will specify. Alongside an introduction of minimum expected standards, The Act will introduce new licensing regulations specifically to exempt supported accommodation. It also sets out how a new Supported Housing Advisory Panel will work and makes changes to the rules on intentional homelessness when a person leaves accommodation which does not meet national standards. The act will also require local authorities in England to review supported housing in their areas and develop Supported Housing Strategies.

#### **4.7. Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

The Domestic Abuse Act makes provisions about domestic abuse, for the granting of measures to assist individuals in certain circumstances and has changed the homelessness legislation to give automatic priority need to victim/survivors of domestic abuse. n.

### **5. Understanding homelessness nationally**

Local authorities are working in an increasingly challenging environment, we have faced the Covid-19 pandemic, the rising cost of living, and we are seeing an increase in complex and diverse groups requiring support from local authorities. As a result, there is a rising demand for homelessness and housing services, with increasingly limited options to provide support and relief.

The [Government's Statutory Homeless Annual Report](#) outlines that in England alone, 298,430 households were assessed as either being at risk of homelessness or already homeless from April 2022 to March 2023, which is a 7.3% increase from the 2021 financial year.

#### **5.1. Covid-19, and a new national strategy**

In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government implemented the 'Everyone In' policy. This policy equipped local authorities with the mandate and resources to provide temporary accommodation for all rough sleepers to keep them safe during the pandemic. Around 37,000 rough sleepers in England were housed in temporary accommodation. The policy enabled housing teams to help even the hardest-to-reach and street-attached rough sleepers.

However, [Shelter's 2021 'Everyone In: Where Are They Now?'](#) report estimated that more than 77% of those 37,000 rough sleepers that the policy helped, had not moved into settled accommodation. This policy was a short-term solution that successfully provided rough sleepers with temporary accommodation. Yet, it did not tackle the issue of limited affordable accommodation for people to move into. It also did not ensure that there was adequate support to help people maintain long-term tenancies.

#### **5.2. Housing affordability and availability**

There is a growing lack of affordable housing in the UK. Recent global factors, such as the cost-of-living crisis, rising energy bills, and inflation rising at unprecedented levels, have made it much more challenging for residents to pay essential housing bills. As well as this, welfare support, such as

Universal Credit and the Local Housing Allowance, have not increased in line with rising costs (though LHA rates will increase from April 2024. Figures from the [ONS](#) indicate that the average home in 2000 cost 4 x the average salary. By 2022, this had risen to) 8.3 x the average salary. The rise in interest rates between August 2022 and March 2023 further impacted on the affordability of mortgages for homeowners and prospective buyers. Landlords are also impacted by the challenge in paying mortgages and as a result, many increased their rental rates.

There is also a shortage of available accommodation. There has been a [decline of national housebuilding](#), from a peak of just over 350,000 completions in 1968 to an average of 165,000 completions over the five years to 2022 (DLUHC Live Table 244). This includes a drop in new social homes being built – just over 9,500 new social homes were built in 2022/23, alongside just over 24,000 Affordable Rent homes. The number of Social rented homes also continues to decrease as tenants purchase their properties under the Right to Buy scheme. The pool of available private rented accommodation is also reducing as many landlords are selling up and exiting the sector entirely. So, whilst residents are increasingly struggling to afford housing costs, there is a growing lack of available accommodation. Therefore, people are struggling to find affordable housing to buy or to rent, and there is an increasingly long waiting list for social housing both locally and nationally. People face a lack of viable options if they do become homeless or are threatened with homelessness.

Local councils are having to use temporary accommodation in higher numbers and for longer periods to house people who are homeless. In England, the number of people living in temporary accommodation has risen by an alarming 89% in the last 10 years, according to the [Local Government Association](#), which costs Local Authorities about £1.74billion, depleting spending from other vital interventions. This is largely due to a reduction in options of affordable accommodation for people to move into.

### **5.3. Refugees and EU Nationals**

Local authorities have faced additional demands on their housing with international developments resulting in UK policy changes. Local authorities have a duty to provide accommodation for people who have been evacuated from danger, under various schemes. This includes the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, Ukrainian placement schemes, and the Hong Kong UK Welcome Programme. For example, Ukrainian nationals were hosted by UK families, but many placements have now ended. Therefore, local authorities have a responsibility to help them secure housing and avoid homelessness.

The impact of Brexit also means that there is a new sub-group of European nationals who no longer have the right to work in the UK. If they are homeless or sleeping rough, they no longer qualify for public funding and their housing options through local authorities are highly limited. This inevitably impacts local health services and frontline workers who face worsening health conditions for those people due to their unresolved housing situation.

## **6. Types of homelessness**

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness but there are a wide range of situations that are also described as homelessness.

Understanding each type of homelessness leads to better support and a better view of homelessness as a whole. Building a picture of the number of people who are homeless is complicated. This is due to the different ways each type is counted and the limitations of each approach.

### **6.1. Rough sleeping**



Rough sleeping is the most visible and dangerous form of homelessness. The longer someone experiences rough sleeping the more likely they are to face challenges around trauma, mental health, and drug misuse.

According to the Annual snapshot count figures published on 29th February 2024

### **At a national level:**

3,898 people were found to be sleeping rough, up by 27% (829 people) on the previous year. This is a 120% increase above the level in 2010 when the current annual snapshot count methodology was first introduced.

The rate of people sleeping rough on a single night in England in 2023 is 6.8 people per 100,000. This has increased since 2022 (5.4 per 100,000) though remains lower than the peak in 2017 (8.5 per 100,000).

Most people sleeping rough in England are male, aged over 26 years old and from the UK. This is similar to previous years. However, rough sleeping is rising among women with 568 seen to be rough sleeping in 2023, up from 464 in 2022, a rise of 22%. Most people sleeping rough were from the UK, similar to previous years. In 2023, 62% were from the UK, 18% were EU nationals and 9% were from outside the EU and the UK. 11% were recorded as 'not known'.

## **6.2. Statutory homelessness**

In 2022/2023, 298,430 households were accepted as being owed a duty from their local authority because they were either homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

For 24,260 people, the main reason they needed support to try to prevent their homelessness was due to them being issued a Section 21 eviction notice by their landlord. This means they had to leave the property due to no fault of their own. (Statutory Homelessness in England 22-23, DLUHC)

As defined by the homelessness legislation, Local Authorities have a duty to make one suitable offer of settled accommodation to those who meet the tests of homelessness and are therefore owed the main housing duty.

## **6.3. In Temporary Accommodation**

At the end of September 2023, there were over 109,000 families and individuals in England who were staying in temporary accommodation provided by their local council because they were homeless, (sources: [DLUHC](#)). Note that the length of time people can stay in temporary accommodation can range from a single night to many years.

## **6.4. Hidden homelessness**

Although everyone is eligible to receive information, advice, and guidance on housing & homelessness from Local Authorities, not all are eligible for support under homelessness duties or provided emergency accommodation. Additionally, there are also many people who do not approach their councils for help. Many people who experience homelessness are hidden from statistics and services as they are dealing with their situation informally. This means staying with family and friends, sofa surfing, or living in unsuitable housing such as squats or in 'beds in shed' situations. Crisis undertakes an annual study (the Homelessness Monitor) which attempts to highlight the overall number of homeless households in England.

All these situations leave the person extremely vulnerable, and many have to sleep rough at some time.

Crisis Skylight a leading homelessness charity estimates that homelessness is experienced by 227,000 households in Great Britain on any single night. These figures try and show the scale of all forms of homelessness and includes an estimate of people who are not accessing services or recorded in official government data.

## **6.5. At risk of homelessness due to insecure accommodation**

Some people are more at risk of being pushed into homelessness than others. People in low-paid jobs, living in poverty, and poor quality or insecure housing are more likely to experience homelessness and insecure accommodation.

## **7. Causes of Homelessness, Risk factors and Impacts**

### **7.1. Risk factors.**

According to Public Health England many personal risk factors related to childhood experiences including being part of a homeless family as a child, missing school, running away from home or residential care, and moving house frequently means a person is more likely to experience homelessness.

Researchers from Heriot Watt University challenge the notion that “we are all two pay cheques away from homelessness” and that homelessness is not randomly distributed across the population [Homelessness in the UK: Who is most at risk? — Heriot-Watt Research Portal \(hw.ac.uk\)](https://www.heriot-watt.ac.uk/research-portal/homelessness-in-the-uk-who-is-most-at-risk/) It suggests that individual, social, and structural risks are largely predictable and that, although individual causes are important in many cases, the main risks are structural. Homelessness risk factors highlighted include:

- The centrality of poverty particularly childhood poverty.
- The impact of local labour and housing market conditions.
- The absence of social support networks, particularly family.

There are many different reasons why people become homeless in the UK, and these include a range of social, economic, and personal factors. According to the charity Crisis, [Homelessness: Causes, Types and Facts | Crisis UK](https://www.crisis.org.uk/homelessness-causes-types-and-facts/) some of the main causes of homelessness include losing a job, relationship breakdown, and health issues such as addiction or mental illness. However, the most frequent reason is being unable to pay for housing, rent, groceries, and bills.

The cost-of-living crisis has made it increasingly difficult for low-income households to keep up with their expenses, and this can contribute to homelessness. Many people simply cannot afford to pay their rent or mortgage and are forced to rely on temporary accommodation or the support of friends and family. In addition, the severe lack of affordable homes in many areas of the UK means that households are often stuck in temporary housing or forced to move around frequently, which can exacerbate their situation.

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis is particularly severe for vulnerable populations, including those with physical or mental health issues, immigrants, and the elderly. For example, those with mental health problems may struggle to keep a job or maintain stable relationships, which can lead to homelessness. Immigrants may face language barriers, discrimination, and a lack of support systems, which can make it difficult for them to access housing and other services. The elderly may have limited income and resources and may be more vulnerable to health problems and other challenges that can contribute to homelessness.

It is clear that the causes of homelessness are multifaceted and complex and require a comprehensive approach that addresses both the root causes and the immediate needs of those affected.

## 7.2. The impact of homelessness

The negative impact of homelessness on health and well-being is well established, although national evidence is mostly focused on those experiencing chronic homelessness (rough sleepers and those living in hostels). Poor health and well-being outcomes for those experiencing chronic homelessness are exacerbated by disadvantages in accessing the healthcare system. Providing healthcare for the chronically homeless population is far more costly than the general population due to much higher levels of use of acute services (A&E) and lower use of primary services.

According to the British journal of general practise in an article published in October 2023 entitled "Inclusion health and missingness in health care": People who are homeless, rough sleeping or living in insecure housing typically experience multiple risk factors for poor health (such as poverty, violence, and complex trauma). They experience stigma and discrimination and are not consistently accounted for in records such as healthcare databases – variation in name spellings being one such reason, as does frequent changes or absences of an address. [Inclusion health and missingness in health care: dig where you stand \(bjgp.org\)](https://bjgp.org) These experiences and factors frequently lead to barriers in access to healthcare and result in extremely poor health outcomes. Without appropriate access to primary and community care, and early / preventative interventions, people in inclusion health groups are likely to turn to acute services: For instance, A&E attendance is 6-8 times higher for people experiencing homelessness and 28 times higher for people who experience both homelessness (rough sleeping) and alcohol dependency.

National research on the negative impacts of homelessness on children is more rounded and extensive and includes children living in Temporary Accommodation. Living in Temporary Accommodation affects the emotional well-being and development of children as well as their physical and mental health and education. The negative impacts increase with the longer a child lives in Temporary Accommodation or unsuitable housing. Homelessness among young people is often the result of family breakdown and can exacerbate existing mental health and substance misuse problems.

Unemployment can be both a cause and consequence of homelessness, with research emphasising the difficulty of maintaining a job when homeless. In England during 2022/2023, 33.9% of the households owed a homeless duty were registered as unemployed, 14.3% were full-time employed, 10.6% were working part-time, 1.5% were students or training, 3.33% were seeking a job, 13.8% were not working due to long term illness and 2.97% were retired. This shows worklessness is much higher among the chronic homeless population. Although, most homeless people want to work, but face significant barriers: low-level qualifications, an absence of soft employability skills, lack of confidence/self-esteem, and limited employment history. The labour market and benefit system are also seen as disincentivising employment among homeless people with welfare sanctions a particular issue.

A history of homelessness and insecure housing is very high among the prison population. Stable housing solutions are vital in preventing reoffending. People reporting as homeless are often the victim of criminal behaviour and domestic abuse. Rough sleepers are disproportionately victims of crime (77% say they suffered ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) or crime in the last year) but tend not to report incidents to the police. Police custody and the Courts provide many opportunities for addressing the underlying causes of homelessness such as mental ill health.

In addition to the personal toll of homelessness, there are also wider social and economic impacts. Homelessness can lead to increased crime and antisocial behaviour and can place a strain on public services such as healthcare, policing, and social services. It can also harm local businesses and tourism, as well as property values and community cohesion. [Homelessness: The Cost of Living Crisis | GN Law](#)

The cost of homelessness is also significant, which includes emergency accommodation, healthcare, and other support services. Investing in preventative measures to address the root causes of homelessness could save the government money in the long run, as well as improving the lives of those affected. According to government figures the cost to the public purse for homelessness and rough sleeping in the UK was over £1.7 billion in 2022/2023.

It is clear that homelessness is not just a personal or individual issue, but a systemic one that requires a coordinated and sustained response from the government, civil society, and the private sector.

## **8. Coventry**

### **8.1. Coventry's Demographic**

According to the 2021 census, Coventry's population amounted to a total of 345,324 people, representing a 9% growth rate from 2011. Based on this figure, the demographics of Coventry's population are as follows:

Christians accounted for 43.9% of the population, maintaining their status as the largest religious group since 2011, albeit with an -11% decline in growth rate.

In the 2021 census, 45% of Coventry's population identified as an ethnic minority, up from 33% in 2011, which is higher than both the regional (28%) and national average (26%)

Of the ethnic minority population, Asian Indians formed the largest group making up 9% of Coventry's total population compared to 3% in England and 5% in the West Midlands. Within Coventry, Foleshill West, Foleshill East, and Hill fields had the largest percentage of their population identifying as an ethnic minority with 80% or more doing so.

Coventry boasts of a youthful demographic, with the median age ranging from 25 to 34 years and the top 75th percentile falling within the age group of 35 to 49. Conversely, individuals aged above 74 represent the smallest proportion of the population.

54% of the population are said to be economically active, 5% are unemployed and students and 41% are economically inactive.



## 8.2. Summary of Coventry's population

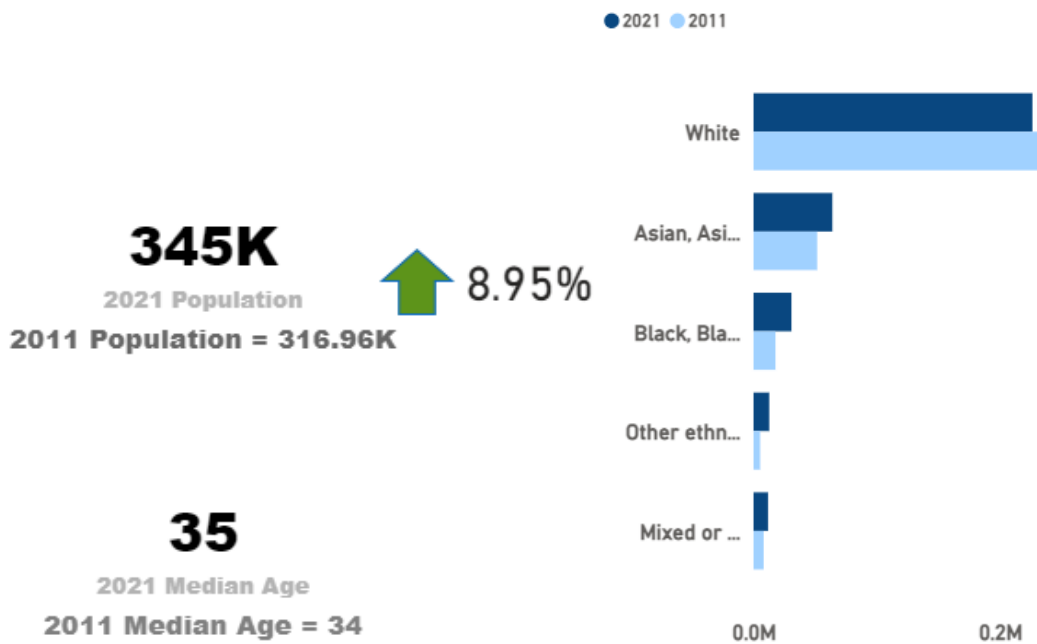


Figure 1 Ethnicity of Coventry's Population

Figure 2 Coventry's Age Breakdown

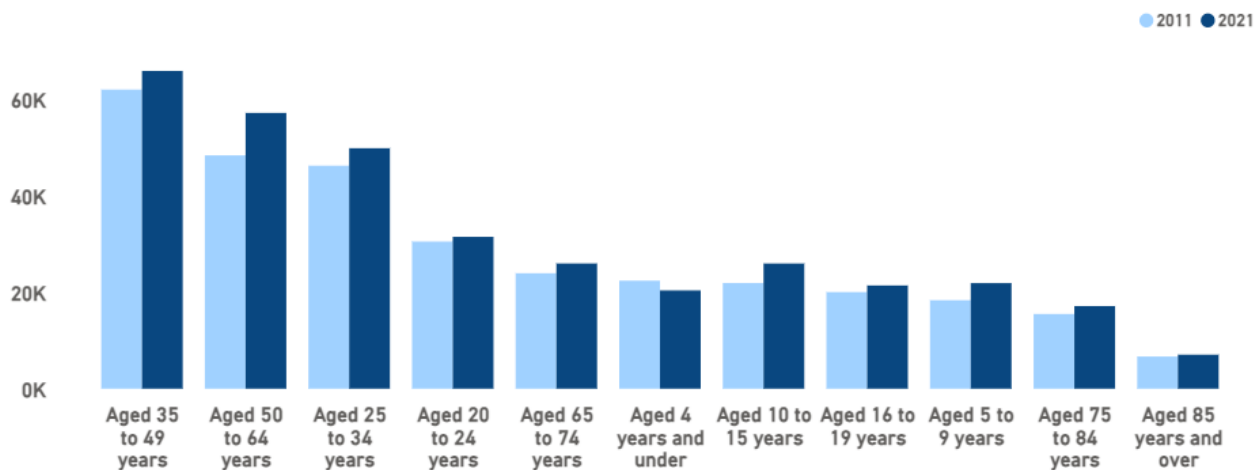


Figure 4 Economical Activities of Coventry's Population

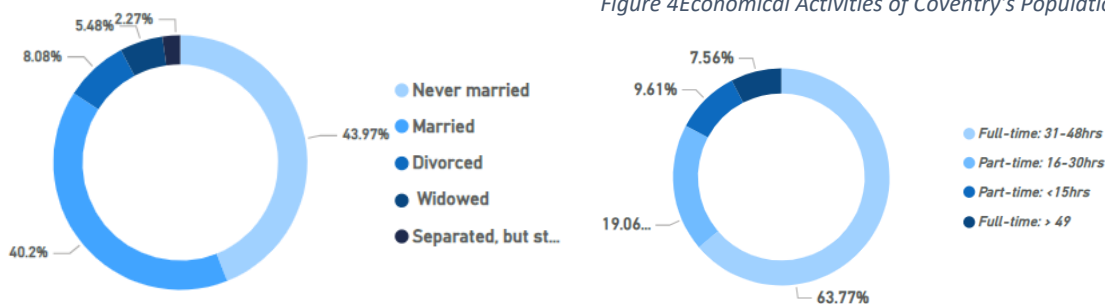


Figure 3 Breakdown of Marriage Demographics

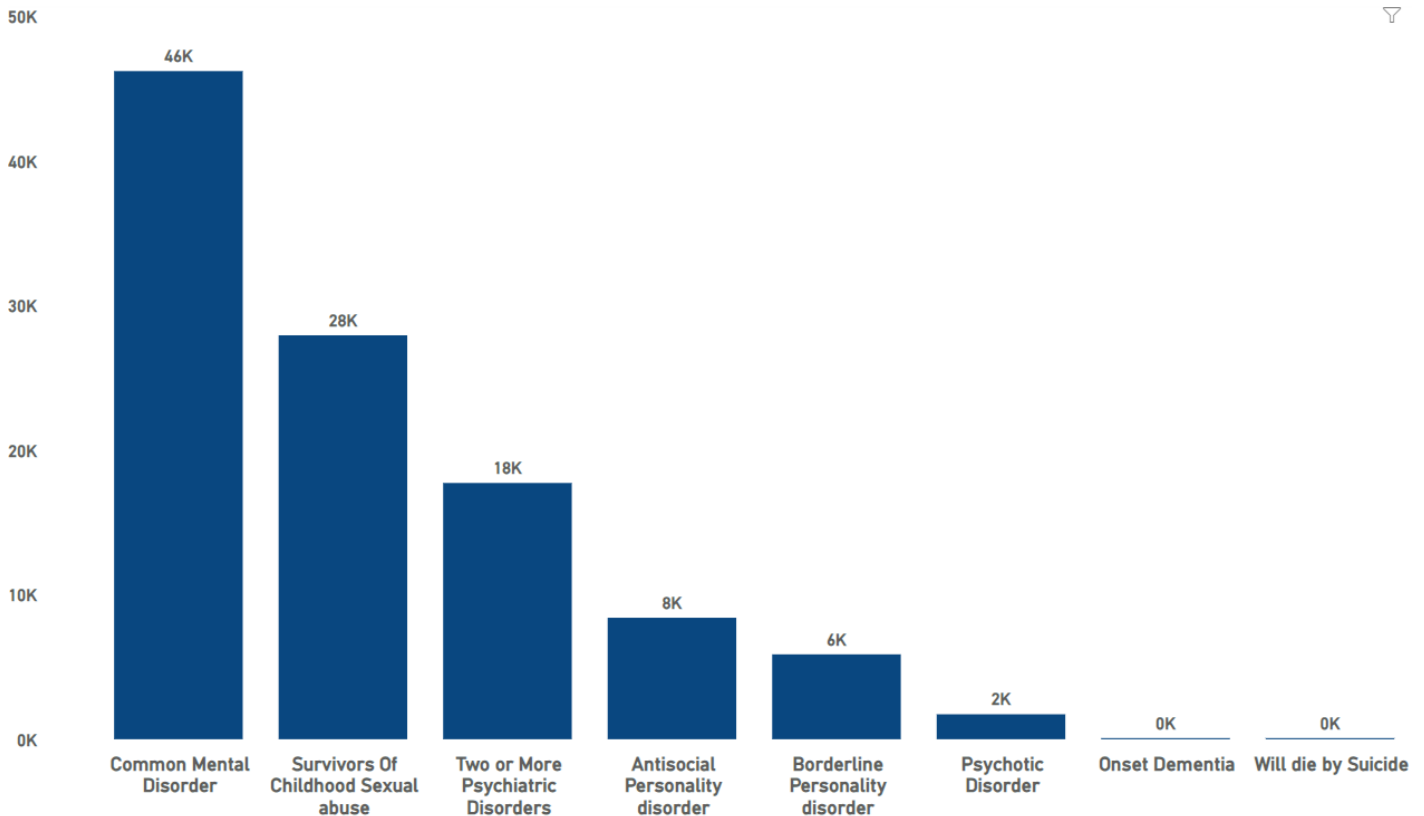
The percentage of Coventry neighbourhoods that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England reduced from 18.5% to 14.4% between 2015 and 2019. Based on this measure, Coventry ranked

64th nationally in 2019 (with 1st being the most deprived), an improvement in ranking from 46th in 2015. These pockets of deprivation limit people’s opportunities to succeed in life; and transforming life chances requires addressing the social inequalities that are established right from the earliest years. The latest available data, for 2020/21, suggest that 23% of Coventry children aged 0-15 live in relatively low-income families compared to 19% nationally.

### 8.3. Mental health

There are approximately 46,221 people in Coventry living with a common mental disorder such as depression.

#### Projected numbers of people aged 18-64 in Coventry with specific mental health needs.



*Note: dependant on drugs figure covers all drugs not just opiates and crack.*

*Source: Mental Health Market needs assessment 2021/26*

*Cited: PANSI data 2020. Note that there will be overlap between these groups.*

### 8.4. Health and life expectancy

Overall health in the city is below average, life expectancy has remained below the regional and national averages.

Life expectancy for females in Coventry is 82 years and for males is 78. from 2018 to 2020. This is below the national average of 83.1 for women and 79.4 for men. Healthy life expectancy for Coventry males is lower than the national (63.1) and regional (61.9) averages whereas for Coventry females it is slightly higher (62.6) and (63.9). The trends show little change in recent years for women, but it has fallen a little for men.

There are significant health inequalities across Coventry's neighbourhoods that effect certain communities disproportionately. Males living in less deprived areas of the city can, on average live up to 10.7 years longer than those living in the most deprived areas of Coventry, and for females, the gap is 7.8 years.

### 8.5. Substance misuse

Coventry has an average number of citizens who are dependent on substances and an above-average number of citizens whose alcohol consumption is considered harmful.

#### During 2021/22

There were an estimated 5416 people in Coventry who were alcohol-dependent (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alcohol-dependence-prevalence-in-england>)

Note: but this reflects dependency, not "at risk of alcohol-related health problems" and approximately 700-800 people who are dependent access treatment each year.

There is an estimated 2,500 heroin and crack users in Coventry (the estimate has recently been increased from 1,800). Approximately 1200 drug users will access treatment each year.

Note: This is the current estimate of people who are using/misusing heroin (or other illegal opiates) and / or crack cocaine. It does not include any other substances; it also does not include those who are using / misuse prescription only opiates, etc.

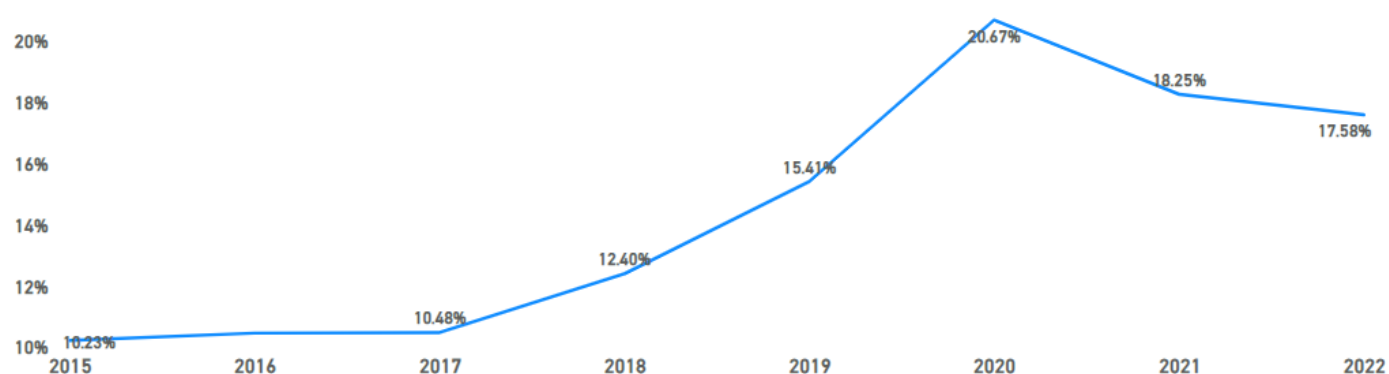
In 2021/22, there were 858 presentations (new starts) to structured treatment. Of these 28 (3%) were NFA, and 118 (14%) had a housing problem at assessment. This does not include those who accessed non-structured treatment.

Source: *Office for Health Inequalities and Disparity*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-health-improvement-and-disparities/about#:~:text=OHID%20supports%20the%20delivery%20of,health%20across%20the%20regional%20system>

### 8.6. Domestic abuse

There has been an average growth rate of 9% domestic abuse cases in West Midlands Police area force, in which by 2022, 17.6% of the total crimes reported were due to domestic Abuse, according to ONS. The breakdown of crimes and the trend of domestic abuse in West Midlands is as follows.



Estimating the number of people affected by domestic abuse is difficult due to the hidden nature of the problem and the difficulties for individuals in recognizing domestic abuse.

## 8.7. Housing affordability

Affordability of housing is a contributory factor to homelessness, as the price of privately renting accommodation or indeed being able to buy a property is increasing however household incomes are not directly proportional. With this ratio, it allows a measure of what it takes to afford a house in Coventry based on earnings of the individual. The measure will be based on the ratio of house price to yearly earnings, private rent to earnings and Private rent to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

**Based on the ratio of House Price to Yearly Earnings:** In 2022, an average house in Coventry cost 6 times the average earnings of a household. This number has been on an upward trend, which means it is becoming more expensive to purchase a house with the average earnings in the city. Below is the trend of the house affordability ratio from 1995.

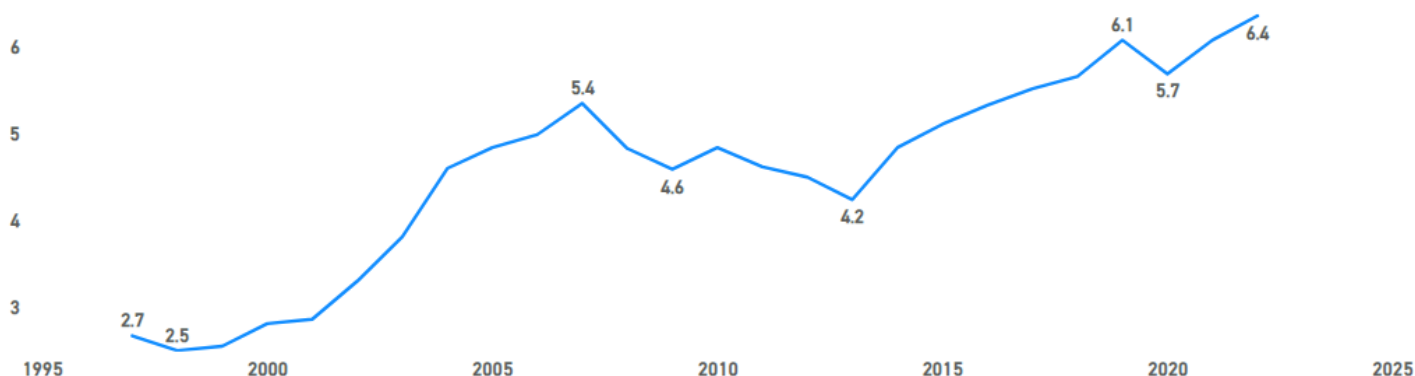


Figure 5 Ratio of House Price to Yearly Earnings

**Based on the Ratio of Private Rent to Earnings:** According to [ONS](#), an area is deemed affordable, if the average ratio of Private Rent to Earnings is below 0.30. The ratio of PRS to earnings in Coventry is 0.31 which is higher than the ratio of West Midlands and England, which are 0.28 and 0.26, respectively. Although, Coventry's ratio has been stagnant for the last 4 years, while the affordability ratio in West Midlands and England has had an average growth rate of 2% and 1%, respectively.

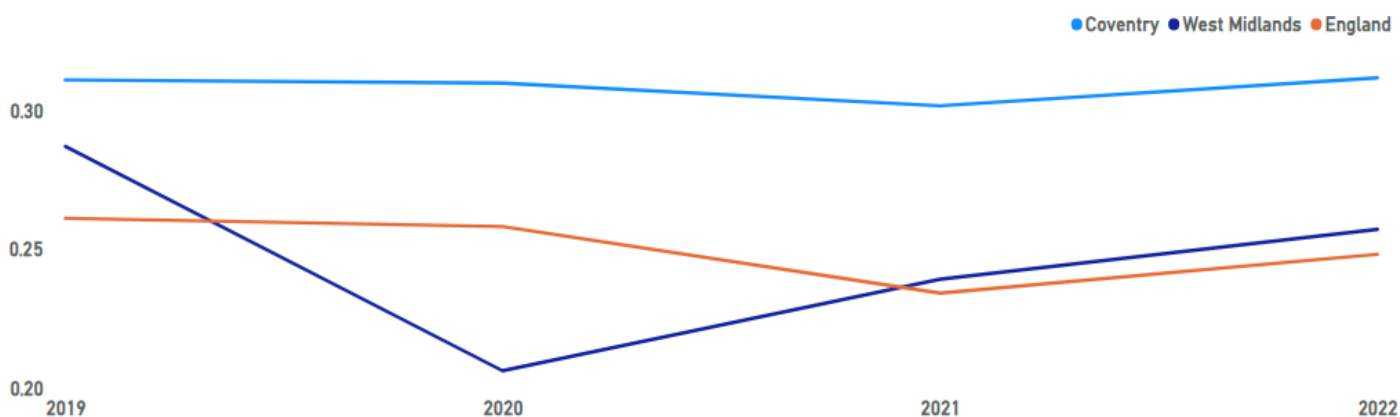


Figure 6 Ratio of Monthly Private Rent to Monthly Earnings

**Based On the Ratio of Private Rent to LHA Rates:** LHA rates are determined by The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), it is calculated based on the private market rents being paid by tenants in a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). In 2020, the rates were frozen and it was last set based on the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of local rents in April 2020 ([Commons Library](#)). This means with the rents increasing over the years, LHA rates will not be significant enough for claimants, which makes this factor significant in causing homelessness. However, the rates have been increased from April



2024 and it is intended to cover the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile for properties based on rental levels in September 2023.

### Table of LHA Rates, Average Rent and 30<sup>th</sup> Lower Quartile Rent

Size of property	2024 LHA Rates	2023 LHA Rates	2022 LHA Rates	LHA (2021)	LHA (2020)	LHA (2019)
Room	432.4	£335.83	£335.83	£335.83	£335.83	£302.64
One	575	£488.67	£488.67	£488.67	£488.67	£399.98
Two	675	£573.43	£573.43	£573.43	£573.43	£498.94
Three	775	£673.14	£673.14	£673.14	£673.14	£573.73
Four or more	1000	£872.60	£872.60	£872.60	£872.60	£763.85

Figure 7 LHA Rates Table

Size of property	Mean (2023)	Mean (2022)	Mean (2021)	Mean (2020)	Mean (2019)
Room	464	480	436	405	368
One Bedroom	698	665	623	613	592
Two Bedrooms	814	767	746	705	678
Three Bedrooms	946	883	848	807	766
Four Bedrooms or more	1,483	1,296	1,425	1,322	1,191

Figure 8 PRS Mean Rate

Size of property	Lower quartile 2023	Lower quartile 2022	Lower quartile 2021	Lower quartile 2020	Lower quartile 2019
Room	438	433	390	373	355
One Bedroom	625	595	540	525	500
Two Bedrooms	710	675	650	625	595
Three Bedrooms	800	780	750	725	695
Four Bedrooms or more	1,100	1,050	1,000	950	895

Figure 9 PRS Lower Quartile

### Summary of 30<sup>th</sup> Lower Quartile rents to LHA Rates in Coventry City

**Nb: For a ratio greater than 1, signifies it's less affordable.**

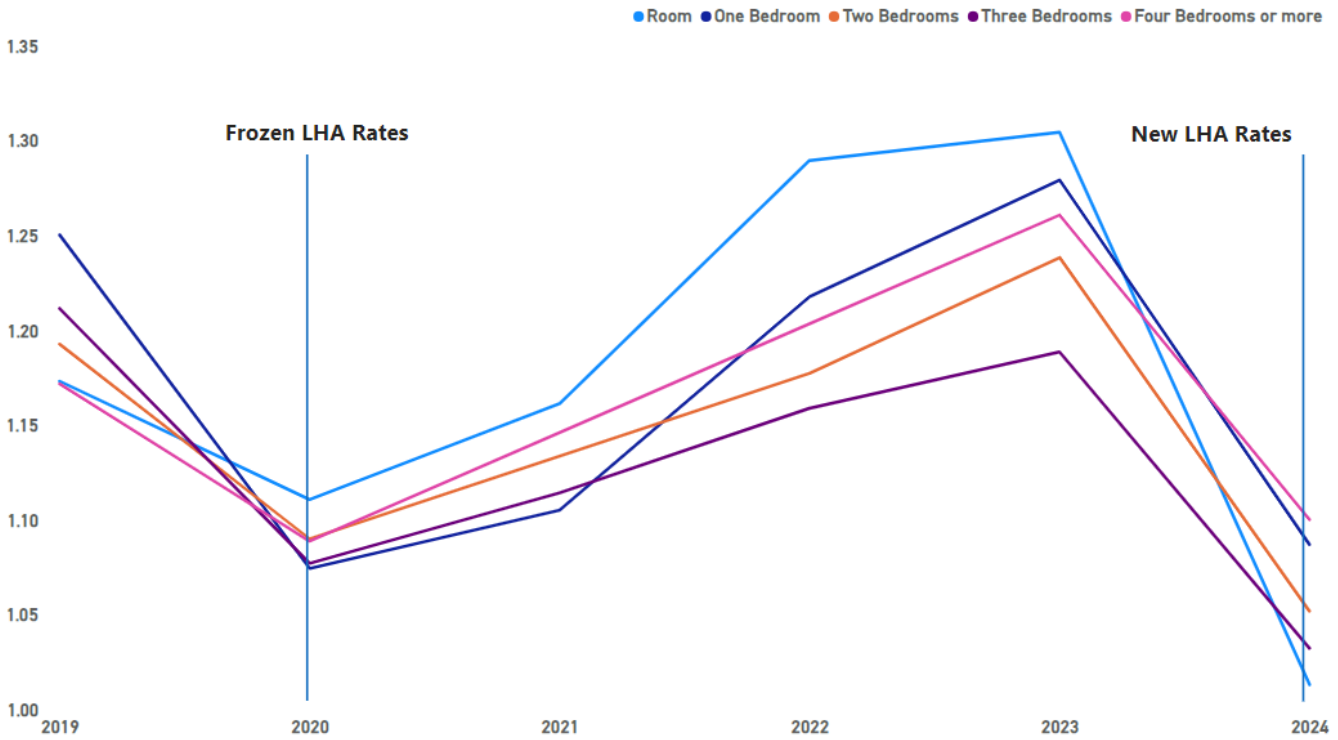


Figure 10 Trend of LHA Ratio to 30th Lower Quartile Rents in Coventry City

**NB:** The number of houses that fall under the 30<sup>th</sup> lower quartile will not be accessible to most of the claimants of LHA as the number of claimants is greater than the number of properties in the 30<sup>th</sup> lower quartile.

### Comparisons of 2023 Lower Quartile Rent Ratio of (2024 LHA Rates) to 2023 Mean Rent Ratio of (2024 LHA Rates)

**Nb:** For a ratio greater than 1, signifies it's less affordable.

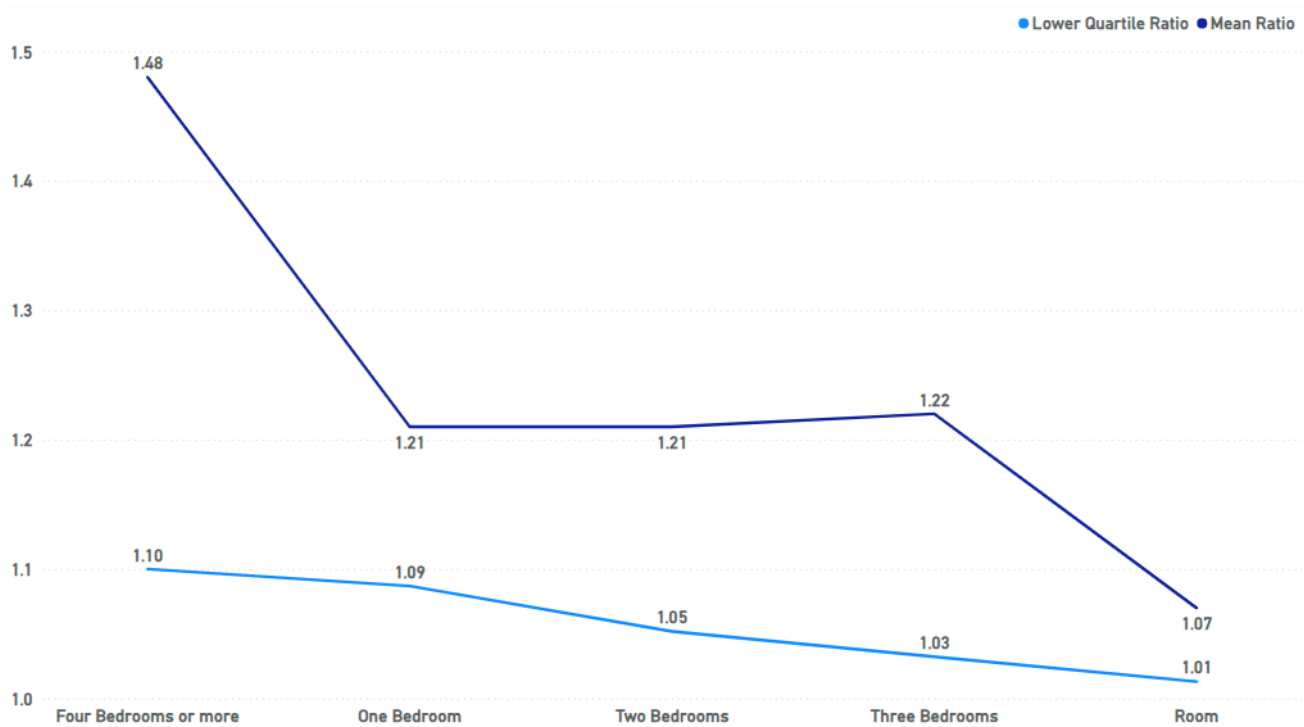
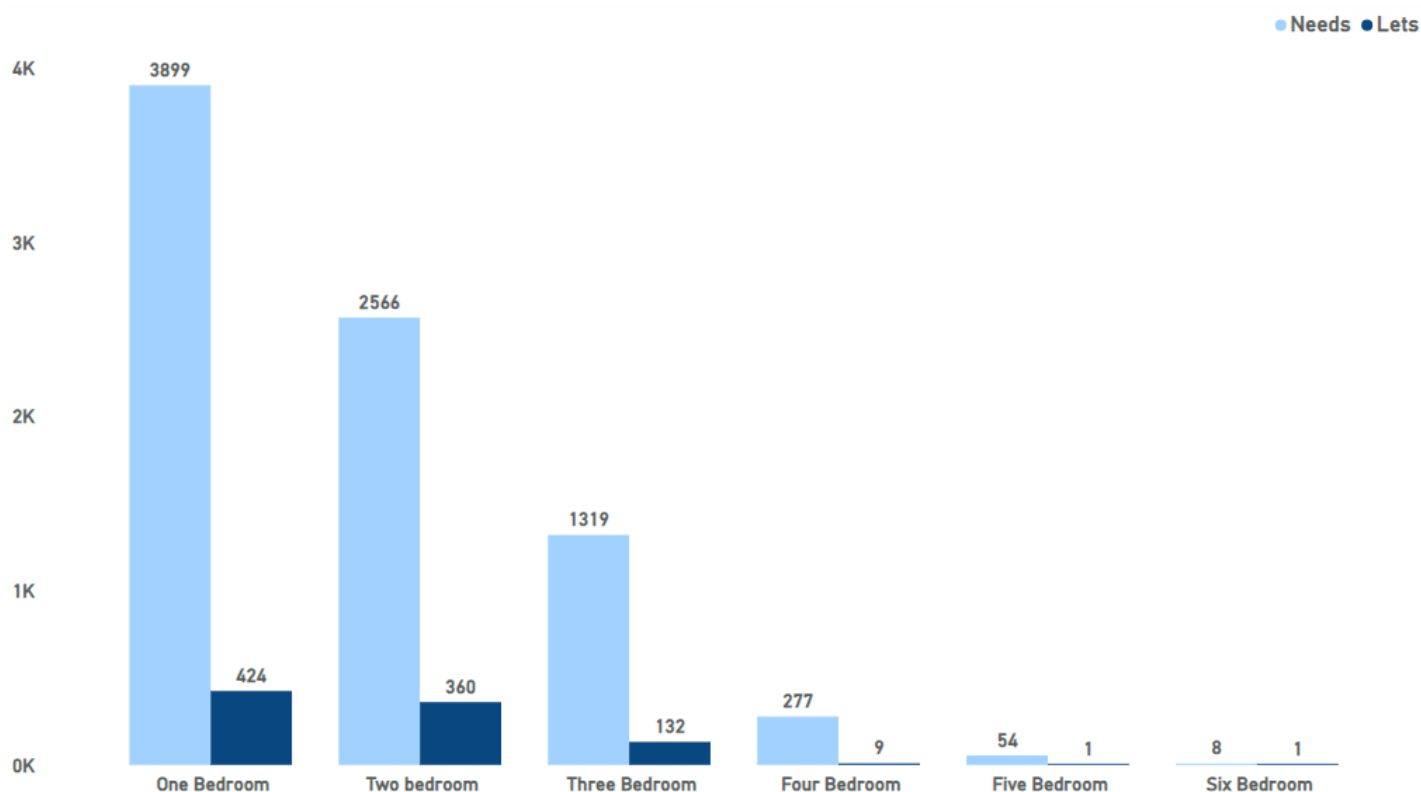


Figure 11 Comparison of 2024 LHA Rates Ratio to Mean and Lower Quartile Rent

## 8.8. Availability of Affordable Housing in Coventry City

As a non-stock holding local authority (all council housing stock was transferred in 2000 to Whitefriars Housing, now Citizen), social housing in Coventry is owned and managed by Registered Providers. 35 Registered Providers operate in Coventry, but most of the stock is held by the ten Registered Providers who are partners in Coventry Homefinder, the choice-based lettings scheme by which social housing is let in the city. There are just over 25,600 Registered Provider properties in Coventry <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/private-registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2022-to-2023> (22,341 general needs, 2,633 supported housing/housing for older people, 634 shared ownership). In 2022/2023 927 houses were let via Home Finder and the breakdown of these lettings' vs the housing needs in 2022/2023 is as follows:



## 9. Reasons for Homelessness in Coventry

Homelessness is a social and political issue. The reasons for homelessness include poverty, systemic inequality, and incomes that are failing to keep up with rapidly rising rents and the cost of living. Life events can also be a source of considerable strain and be a cause of homelessness, this could be a job loss, domestic abuse in the home or a relationship breakdown. Physical and mental health conditions and substance misuse can also be both a cause or a result of housing insecurity and homelessness.

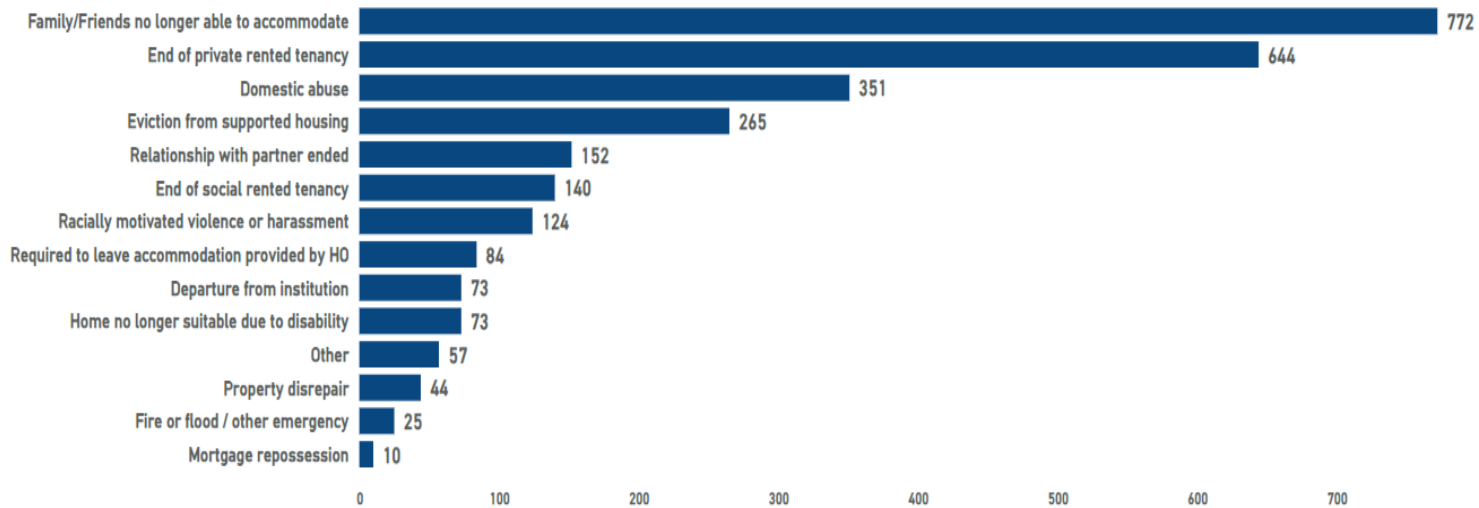
Homelessness stems from various structural, social, and personal factors, including a dearth of affordable housing, poverty, unemployment, and life-altering events.

In determining why households are homeless, we took a holistic view of the data collected during the assessment of households that approached the council for homelessness support. The main reasons for approaches to the local authority for assistance were.

- Family/Friends no longer wanting to accommodate,
- End of private rented or social rented tenancy,

- Domestic Abuse,
- Eviction from supported housing,
- Relationship ended with partner,

**Breakdown of top main reasons for households losing their last settled accommodation in 2022/2023.**



**10. Duty to refer.**

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced a duty on specified public bodies in England to refer consenting people they believe to be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days to a Council's Homelessness Service. The duty applies to a range of public bodies:

- Social Services Authorities (Adults and Children's Social Care)
- NHS Services - A&E Services and Urgent Treatment Centres (Walk in Centre)
- NHS Services – Hospitals (when providing in-patient care)
- Job Centre Plus
- Prisons (Public and Private)
- Probation Services (including Community Rehabilitation Companies)
- Youth offender institutions
- Youth Offending Teams
- Secure Colleges and Training Centres
- The Secretary of State for Defence (in relation to members of Royal Navy, Royal Marine, Army)

In addition to the above agencies who have a statutory duty to refer, Coventry City Council actively encourages referrals from all agencies who work with households who are at risk of homelessness.



## Summary of 2022/2023 Referrals by Agencies

In 2022/2023, the council received 606 referrals from agencies that had a duty to refer, and an additional 539 referrals from agencies that do not have a duty to refer. Most referrals came from the National Probation Service and Supported Housing. The breakdown of the agencies and the number of referrals made is as follows:

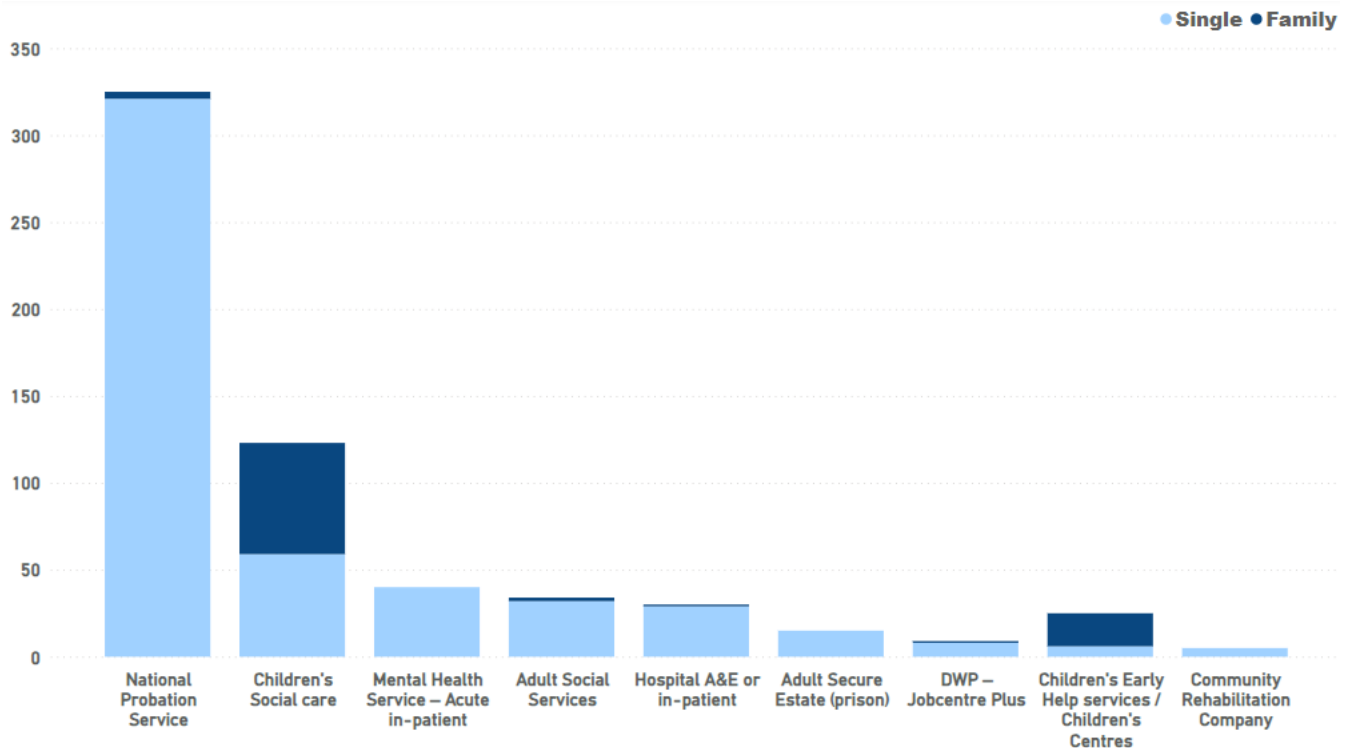


Figure 12 Families and Singles Referred by Agencies (No Duty to Refer)

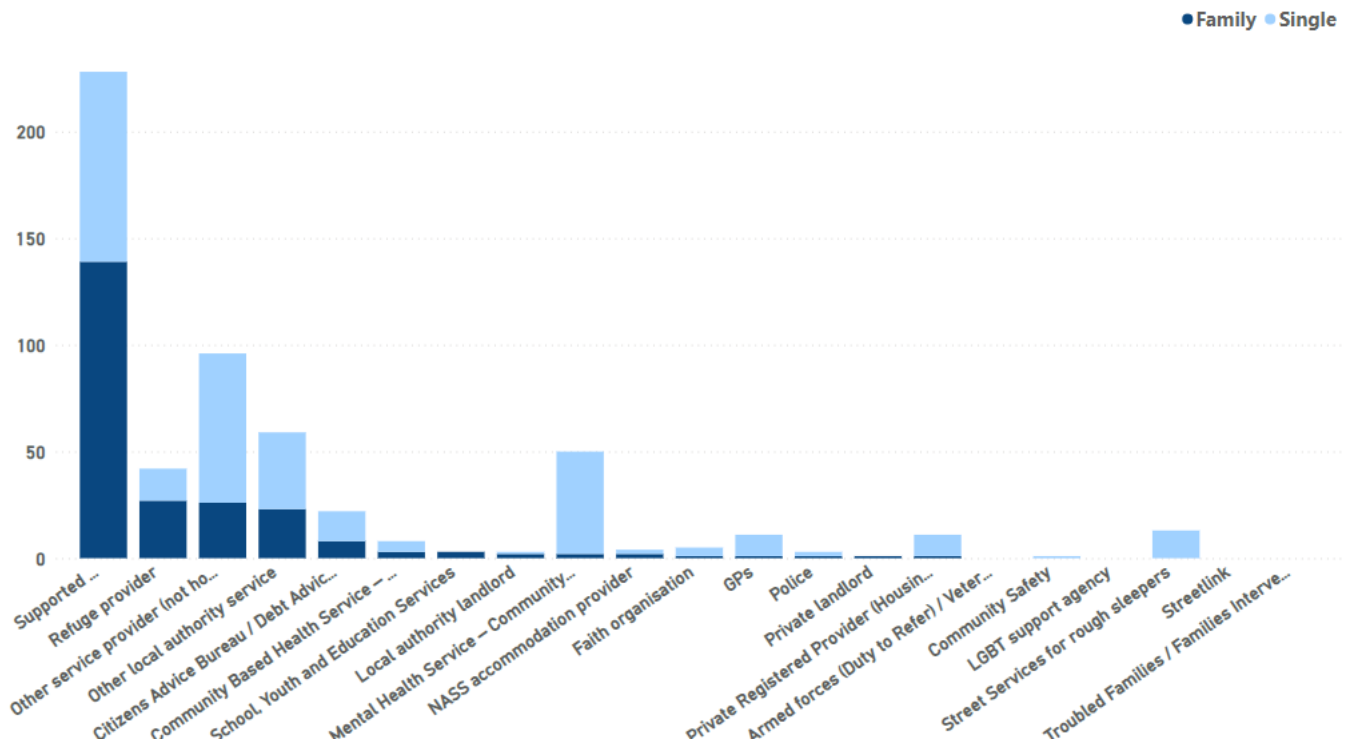


Figure 13 Families and Singles Referred by Agency (No Duty to Refer)

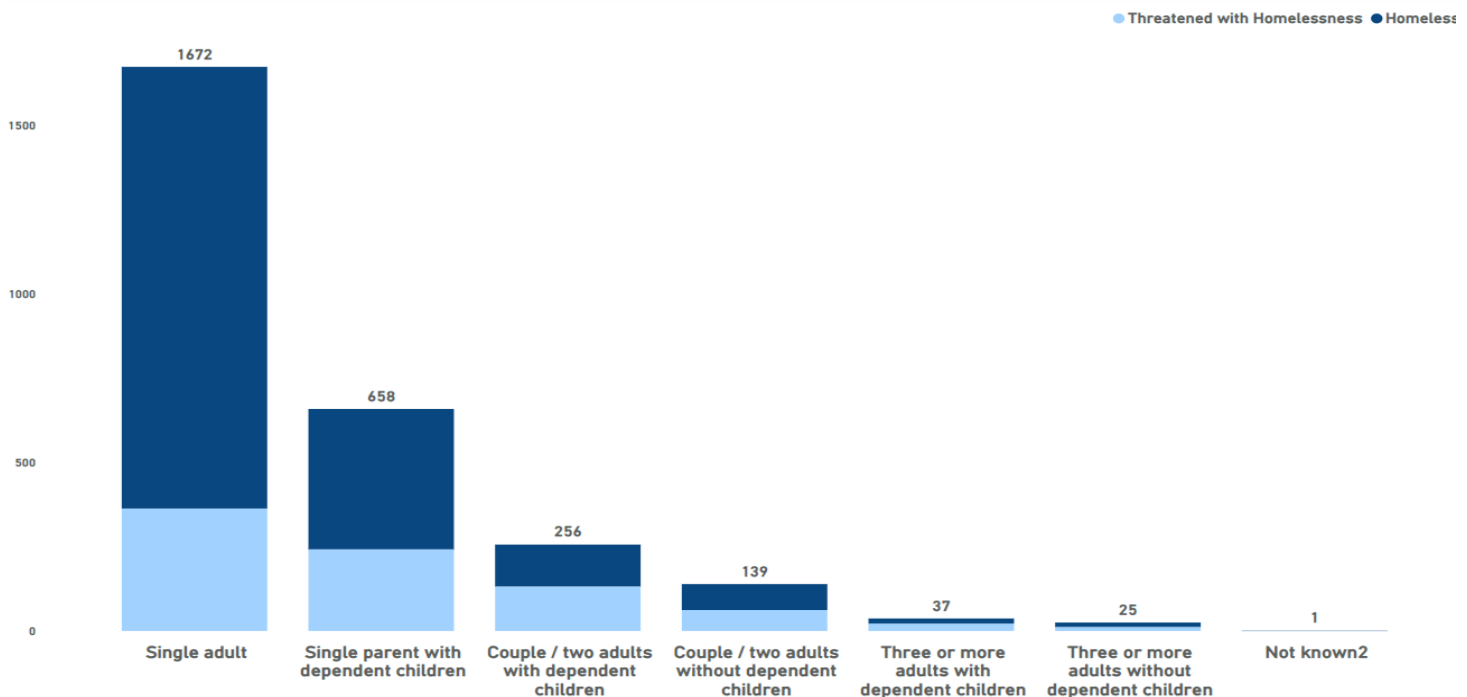
## 11. The scale of Homelessness in Coventry

The following is a detailed analysis of the assessments carried out by the service to evaluate the current scale of the homelessness in terms of households and individuals approaching the homelessness service in Coventry. This evaluation gives a scope of the demand for the service, who requires the service, duties carried out, and the outcome of the duties.

### 11.1. Front line approaches

In 2022/2023, the council had 5797 individual household approaches to its homelessness front-line service which translates to an average of 16% growth rate since 2019. Among the households that approached the council, 2848 completed a homelessness assessment which resulted in 2788 households being owed a housing duty. 30% of the households being owed a duty were assessed as being threatened with homelessness and 70% were assessed as already homeless. The 2949 households who did not complete a full homelessness need assessment were provided with housing-related advice.

#### Summary of Assessments carried out (by Household Make Up)



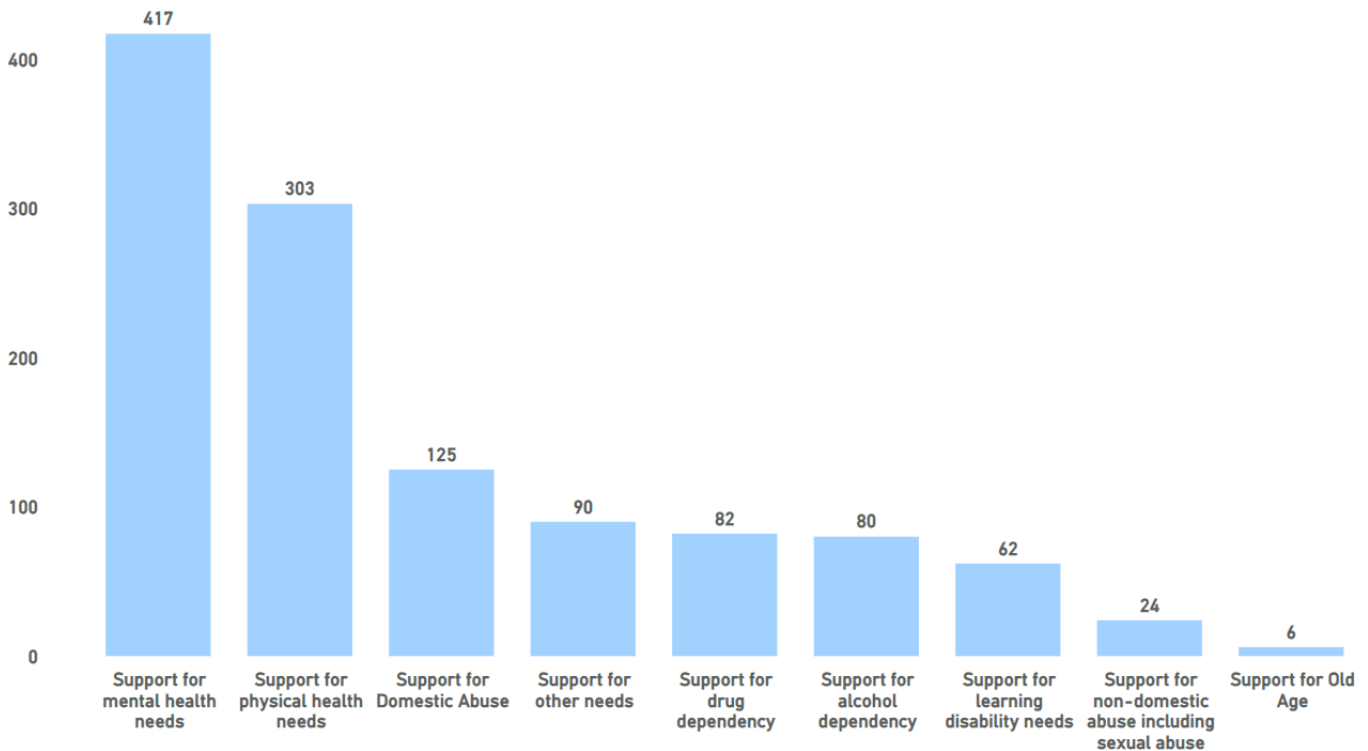
### 11.2. Demographic of households approaching

The demographic profile of those who approached the councils homeless service generally mirrors the national picture. In Coventry, the majority of applicants were white, constituting 53.4% of the assessed households. Moreover, the demographics skewed towards younger age groups, with 53.4% of those threatened with homelessness or already homeless falling within this category. Among those assessed, 42.2% were unemployed, and 12.2% were unable to work due to a long-term illness or disability—a figure significantly lower than the national average of 14.1%. Single applicants comprised the largest portion of those facing homelessness or the threat of it, aligning with the national trend observed in 2022/23.

### 11.3. Support Needs of homeless Households in 2022/2023

When a homelessness application is made, a housing needs assessment is completed, the assessment looks to quantify the support needs of the household/ individual.

**In 2022/2023, 1189 households were assessed as having identified support needs. The breakdown of the needs are as follows.**



During 2022/23, a notable number of cases presented complexities requiring more than just housing support, notably mental health assistance. Out of 1189 who were assessed as being owed a prevention or relief duty, additional support needs were identified. Mental health emerged as the primary support requirement, accounting for 35.5% of cases, followed by physical health needs at 25.5%. Substance misuse also played a significant role, comprising 13.6% of cases among individuals seeking assistance from the council's homeless service.

## 12. Statutory interventions

### 12.1. Breakdown of Homelessness Duties

Homelessness Duties, the following are the duties the council owes an eligible household, ([Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

- **Prevention duty:** where a local authority must take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness within 56 days to secure accommodation. To successfully discharge the duty, the applicant must have suitable accommodation available to them for 6 months or more.

- **Relief duty:** where a local authority must take reasonable steps to assist someone who is already homeless. The local authority has a duty at this point to provide interim accommodation to those who are in priority need. The duty ends successfully where the accommodation has suitable accommodation available to them for 6 months or more.

- **Main duty:** Is owed to applicants following the Relief Duty where it has been assessed that the applicant is not homeless intentionally and that they have a local connection to the area. To successfully discharge the main housing duty, the local authority must make one suitable offer of accommodation to the applicant, which will be available for at least 12 months.

In 2022/2023, 835 households were owed the prevention duty, with, 49.46% of these successfully prevented from becoming homeless. A total of 2,114 relief duties were conducted, with 31.08% being successful. Furthermore, 944 households were assessed as being owed a main duty after the relief duty had ended. 748 main duties were discharged in 2022/2023.

### Summary of Duties owed 2022/2023.



### 12.2. Outcome of Duties owed in 2022/2023.

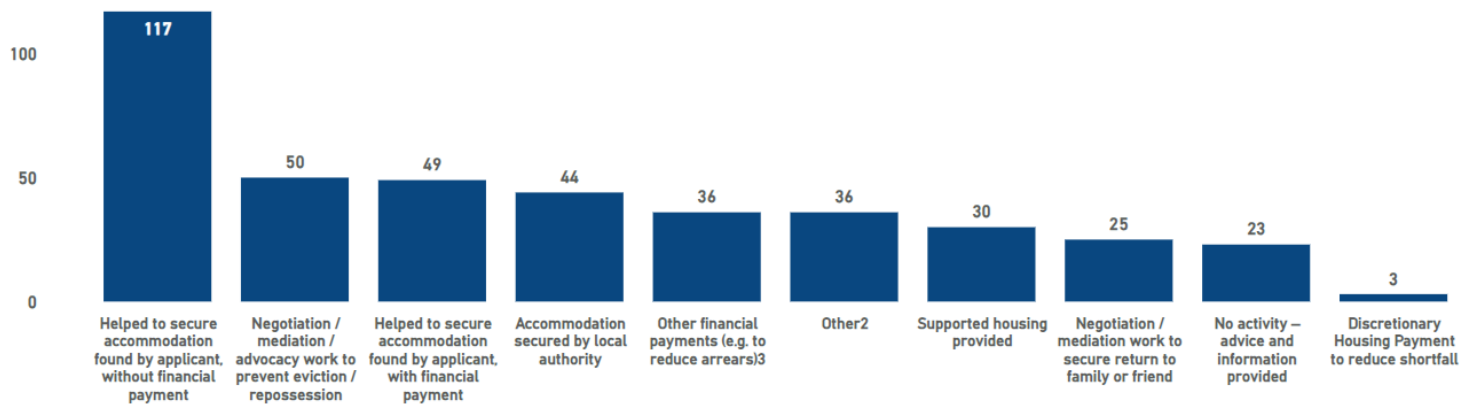
Examining the successful prevention cases in 2022/2023, 54% moved into alternative accommodation, while 46% remained in their existing accommodation. Also, 48.91% of the households who were successfully prevented from being homeless accessed the private rented sector, while 36.32% secured social rented housing, and 11.86% stayed with family or friends. The composition of households whose homelessness was prevented showed a predominance of single/couple households at 55.93%, compared to family households at 44.07%. A detailed analysis of the unsuccessful cases revealed that 83.18% became homeless, 11.14% resulted from contact loss, 2.84% were due to the elapse of 56 days, and 2.13% occurred because the household withdrew its application.

An analysis of the successful relief duties indicated that 50.99% secured socially rented housing, 30.14% secured privately rented accommodation, and 11.57% stayed with families or friends, the remaining successful relief duties ended with the applicants securing other types of accommodation. The unsuccessful relief duties revealed that the majority, constituting 85.59%, were unsuccessful within the 56-day timescale. Additionally, 8.6% resulted from contact loss, 4.19% involved withdrawn applications, 0.3% were intentionally homeless with no further duty being owed to either of these groups and 0.5% were ended due to a local connection referral to an alternative local authority.

Of the households where the main housing duty was discharged, 69.8% accepted an offer of social housing, 4.5% refused an offer of social housing, 5.7% accepted an offer of a Private Rented Sector (PRS) property, 0.4% refused an offer of PRS, and 19.5% did not go on to receive a final offer of accommodation as the main housing duty was discharged due to them refusing a suitable offer of temporary accommodation, ceased to occupy the temporary accommodation that had been made available to them, ceasing to be eligible for assistance or withdrawing their application for assistance.

## Summary of the Successful Outcome of Duties Owed by the Council.

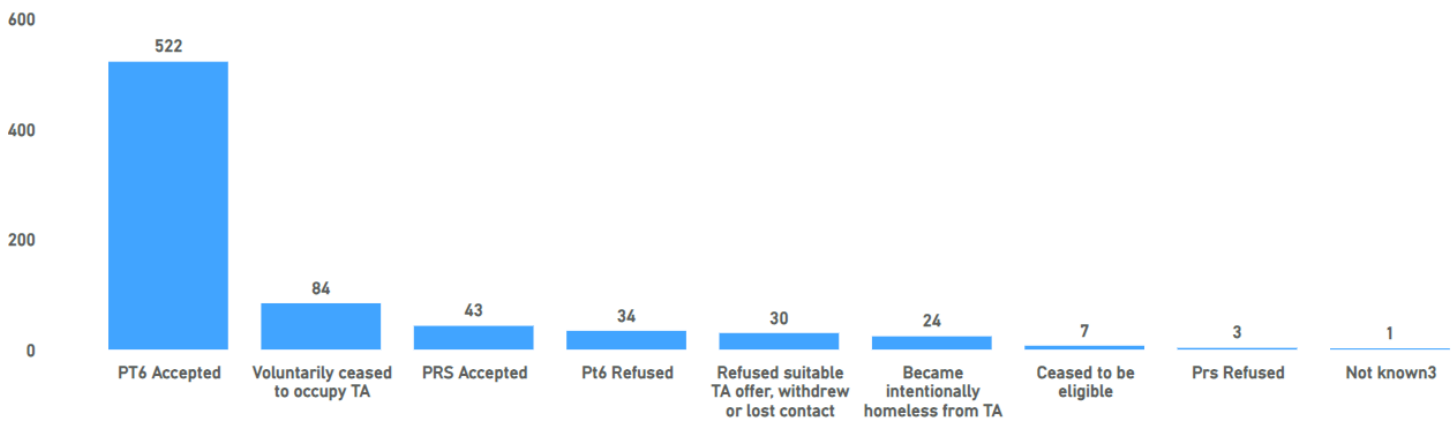
### Prevention Duty:



### Relief Duty:



### Main Duty:

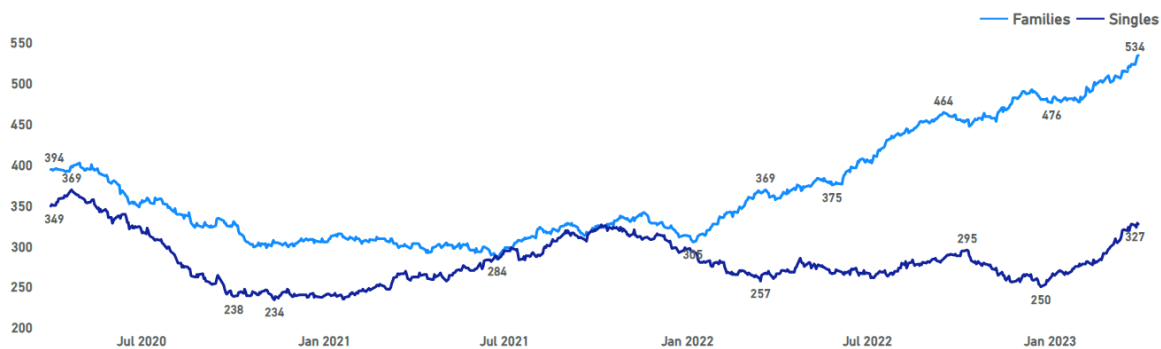




### 12.3. Temporary accommodation provision

In 2022/2023, over 2495 households were accommodated in temporary accommodation, which was a 24% growth rate from the last financial year. With a significant portion of the accommodation being for family households.

#### Trend of Households Accommodated in Temporary Accommodation



In addition to the general temporary accommodation, there is a specialist Supported Temporary accommodation (STA) service run by the council for single people with high and/or complex support needs.

The STA opened in November 2020 and became fully operational the following March with the opening of 96-98 Holyhead Road. STA provides emergency, temporary accommodation for 92 single homeless people, many of whom have complex needs and/or entrenched behaviours who have been determined as being owed a homeless duty in-line with Coventry City Councils statutory obligations under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. The service sits alongside the Accommodation Team and within the wider Housing & Homelessness service. One benefit of STA is the reduced reliance on private temporary accommodation and reduced financial burden on the council by using our own, council owned accommodation and recovering all costs via Housing Benefit, at the same time as providing increased support and helping residents to find long-term settled accommodation.

#### Service make-up

STA consists of 13 HMO properties and one larger 26 bed accommodation building. The HMOs are spread across the city and are made up of 3–6-bedroom properties. The HMOs are male only, whilst the female STA provision is based at 96-98 Holyhead Road where staff control access in and out of the building. This decision was made to ensure the safety of women accessing the service and who may be fleeing or trying to move away from an abusive relationship. The accommodation at 96-98 Holyhead Road typically provides accommodation for the most complex people accessing the service, helping them to live more independently before hopefully moving them to one of the HMO's ahead of a move into long-term settled accommodation



*Communal space at one of the HMO properties*

## The STA team

The team is made up of two service managers and eight Supported Accommodation Housing Officers (SAHO's) and is supported by our own in-house repairs and maintenance team. Whilst the SAHO's provide the housing management for all the properties, the resident support comes from our commissioned support provider, P3. The P3 team provides 'housing related' support for all residents in living in STA. All three teams are based out of the STA office at 100 Holyhead Road which is located adjacent to 96-98 Holyhead Road and can therefore respond quickly to the support needs of the most vulnerable residents.

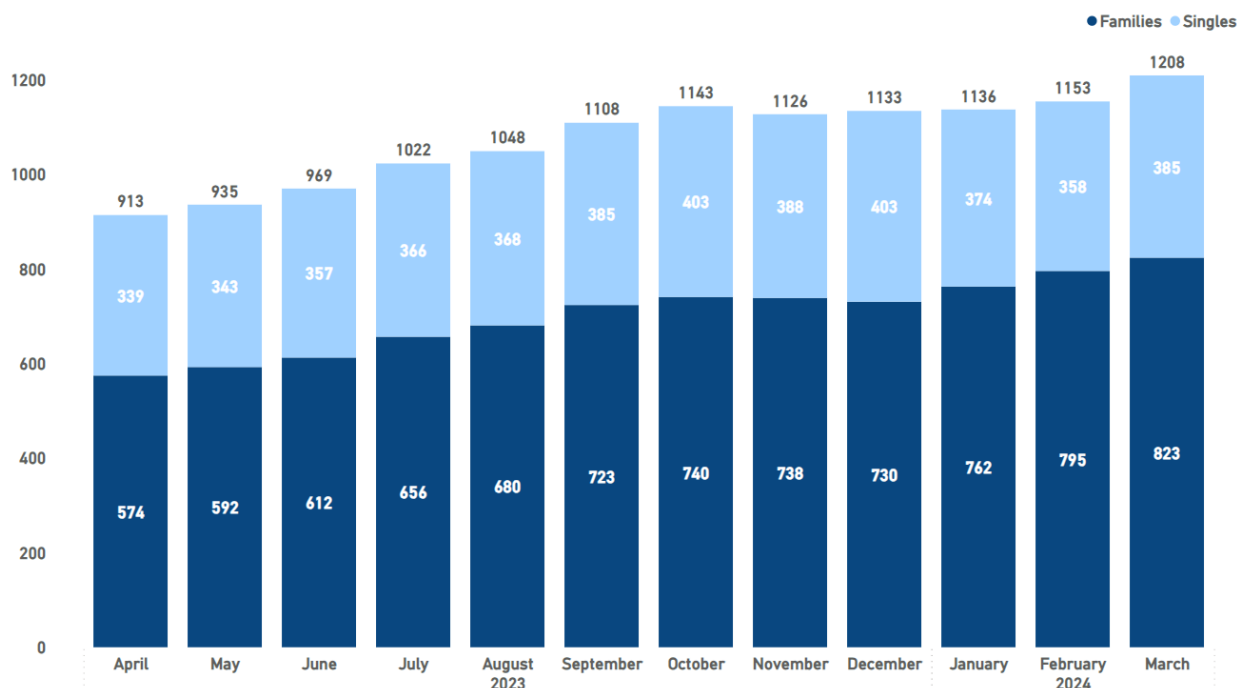
## 2022/23

- During the 2022 calendar year moved-on **200** people
- Of those moving out of STA in 2022/23, **139** moved-on in a planned way
- This included **128** moving to either PRS, RSL or further long-term Supported Accommodation
- **34** of those moving on from STA were women
- The average length of stay of those leaving STA in 2022/23 was just **122** days
- Throughout the whole of the 2022/23, only **10** people were evicted

## NOTE

This review focuses on the last full financial year 2022/23, however, we noted that during 2023/24, 5710 households had already approached the services as of December (quarter 3), in which the council has carried out 819 prevention duties, of which 58% has been unsuccessful and 42% were successful. 2181 relief duties have been carried out with 24% being successful and 76% unsuccessful. Finally, 1424 households have been deemed eligible for main duty which 1071 were owed a duty and 631 main duties have been concluded so far, of which 71% accepted either a Part 6 social housing offer or a Private rented housing offer. Finally, the council accommodated 2492 in temporary accommodation during 2023/24.

## Summary of 23/24 Temporary Accommodation households.



### 13. Non-Statutory Interventions

#### 13.1. Housing related support

Alongside the council’s statutory duty regarding homelessness there are 4 commissioned contracts that deliver both accommodation and floating support for individuals who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless. The commissioned support provision uses the positive pathway which is a nationally recognised framework and model for supporting those in housing need with an emphasis not only on supporting people in crisis but recognising that prevention and recovery are key to enable long term tenancy sustainment. The housing related support contracts went live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – at that point, the country had been in a national lock down due to the Coronavirus pandemic for approximately 1 week.

#### 13.2. P3- families and Singles floating support

The P3 commissioned service provides comprehensive support aimed at preventing homelessness for families and single adults aged 25 and over in transitioning to safe and secure accommodation. This includes early intervention to identify and address housing-related support needs impacting wellbeing and tenancy management. Floating support services offer time-limited assistance to individuals and families in temporary accommodation and move-on support to aid in the transition to an independent tenancy by providing essential support such as setting up utilities and acquiring necessary household items. P3 collaborates closely with Coventry City Council and other agencies to deliver these services effectively, with a focus on empowering individuals to achieve their own housing goals.

In 2022/2023, P3 supported 358 families and 153 singles, in which a total of 339 families and 89 singles achieved a positive move on.

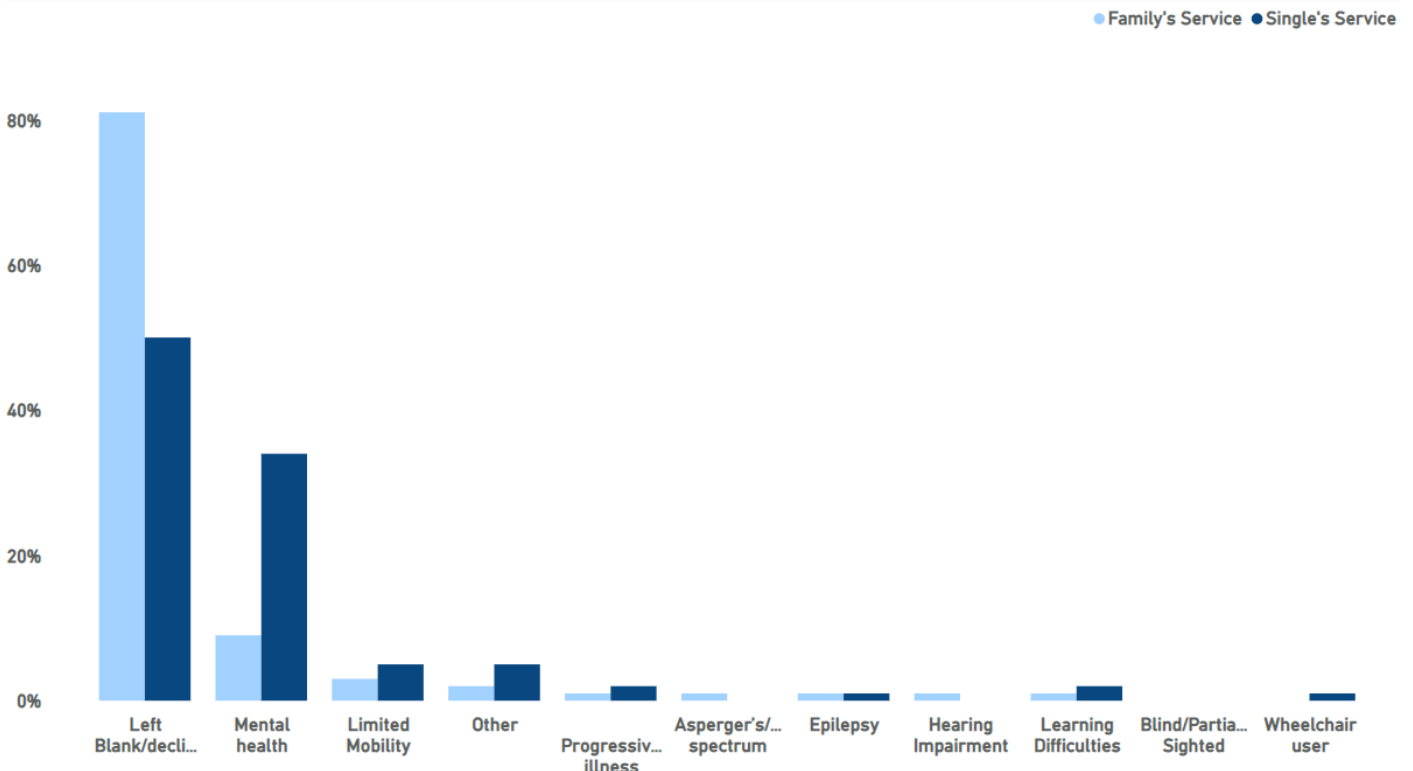


Figure 14 Disability breakdown for households supported by P3

### 13.3. The Salvation Army- complex needs and Ex offenders

The Salvation Army plays a vital role in addressing homelessness and supporting individuals with complex needs in Coventry through various programs and services. The Steps for Change initiative operates as a drop-in hub, offering housing advice, referrals to supported accommodation, benefit advice, access to essential resources like food bank vouchers and computers, and general support to single homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. Steps for change collaborates with partner agencies to deliver interventions effectively, serving an average of 68 unique individuals daily and assisting over 1600 individuals in 2022/2023.

Additionally, the Salvation Army provides supported accommodation across two sites for those with complex needs, Harnall Lifehouse and Axholme House, totalling 100 units, with specific provisions for vulnerable females. Moreover, in partnership with Langley House Trust and Green Square Accord, they offer specialist services for individuals with offending behaviour, providing 52 units of supported accommodation.

In 2022/2023, the Salvation Army supported 1634 individuals via steps for change with 1271 being supported regarding Accommodation ( Referrals made or enquiries) , provided accommodation for 210 rough sleepers via the emergency bed provision with the longest stay being 26 nights , and accommodated 267 individuals at Harnall Lifehouse and Axholme House, additionally 143 individuals were accommodated via the ex-offender service.

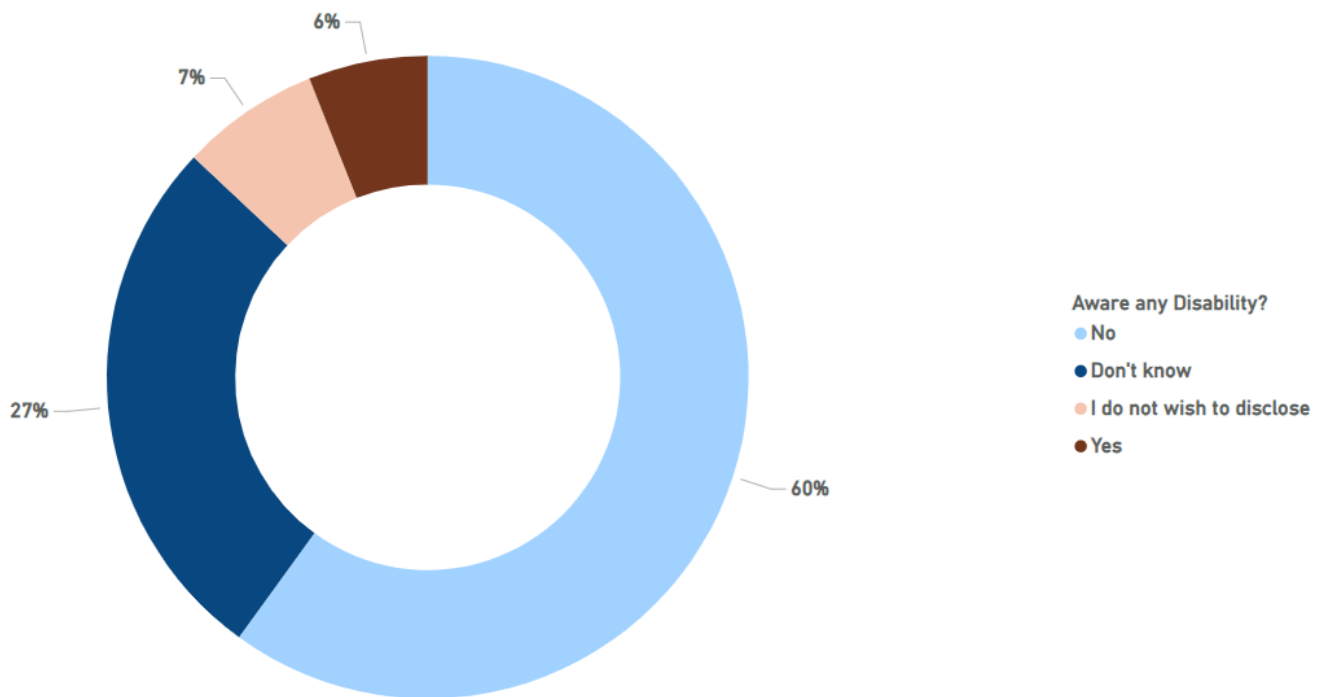
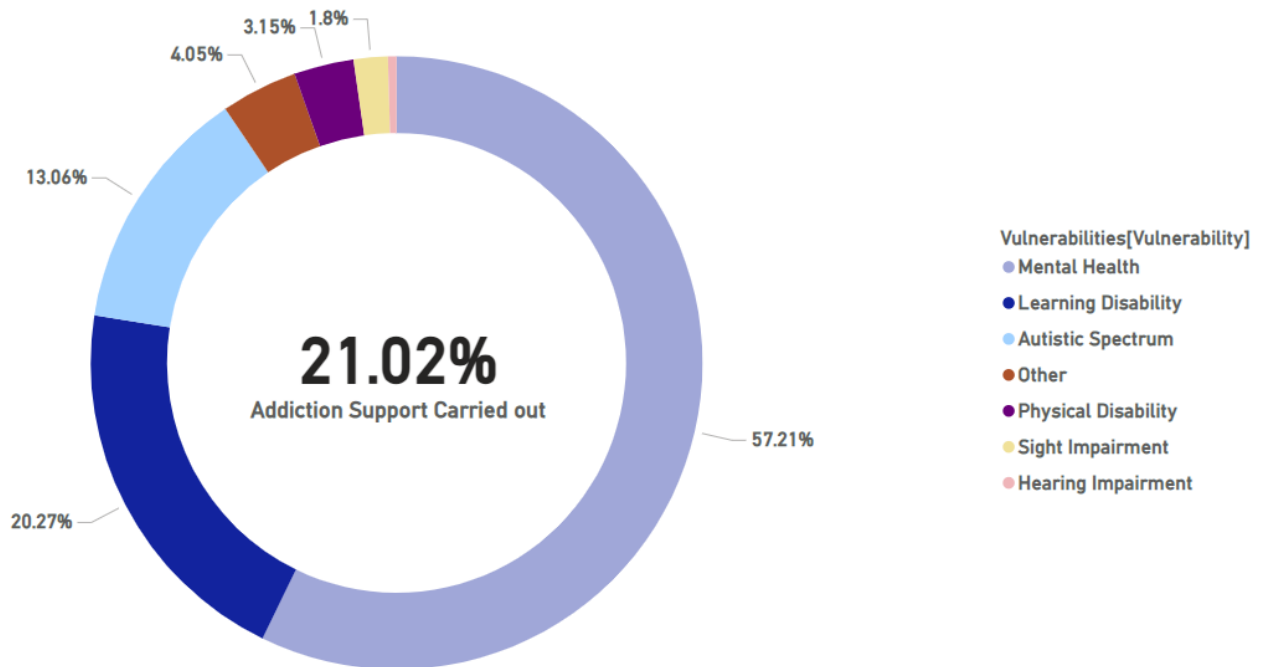


Figure 15 Disability breakdown of households supported by The Salvation Army

### 13.4. St Basils

St Basil's plays a crucial role in addressing youth homelessness in Coventry through two main programs. Firstly, they provide supported accommodation for singles and couples aged 18-24, including care leavers. This service offers direct access beds and flexible support tailored to each individual's journey towards independent living. St Basil's emphasizes achieving successful outcomes for their residents, aiming to maximise the number of young people transitioning to or maintaining independent accommodation while empowering them to live independently and contribute positively to the community. Additionally, St Basil's offers floating support and prevention services for young people under 25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This includes early intervention to support those at risk of losing their tenancies and ongoing support for individuals in temporary accommodation or transitioning to independent living. The focus remains on achieving positive outcomes, facilitating independent living, and promoting engagement in education, training, or employment.

In 2022/2023, St Basil supported 246 individuals through its floating support and accommodation provision.



**Summary of Demographics of households supported through the Commissioned services.**



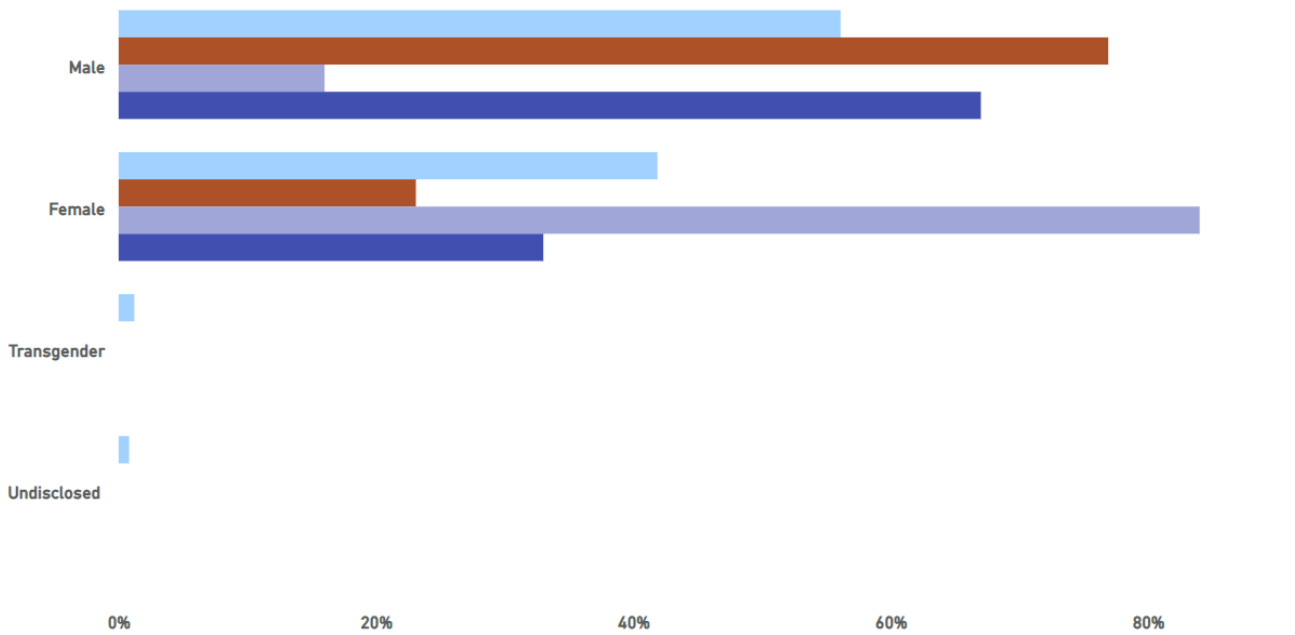


Figure 16 Gender Breakdown of the households supported through the Commissions.

66% percent of people supported via the commissioned support services were males, this correlates to the number of approaches of single people who approached the council for support. There are more single females with dependent children supported than single males with dependent children.

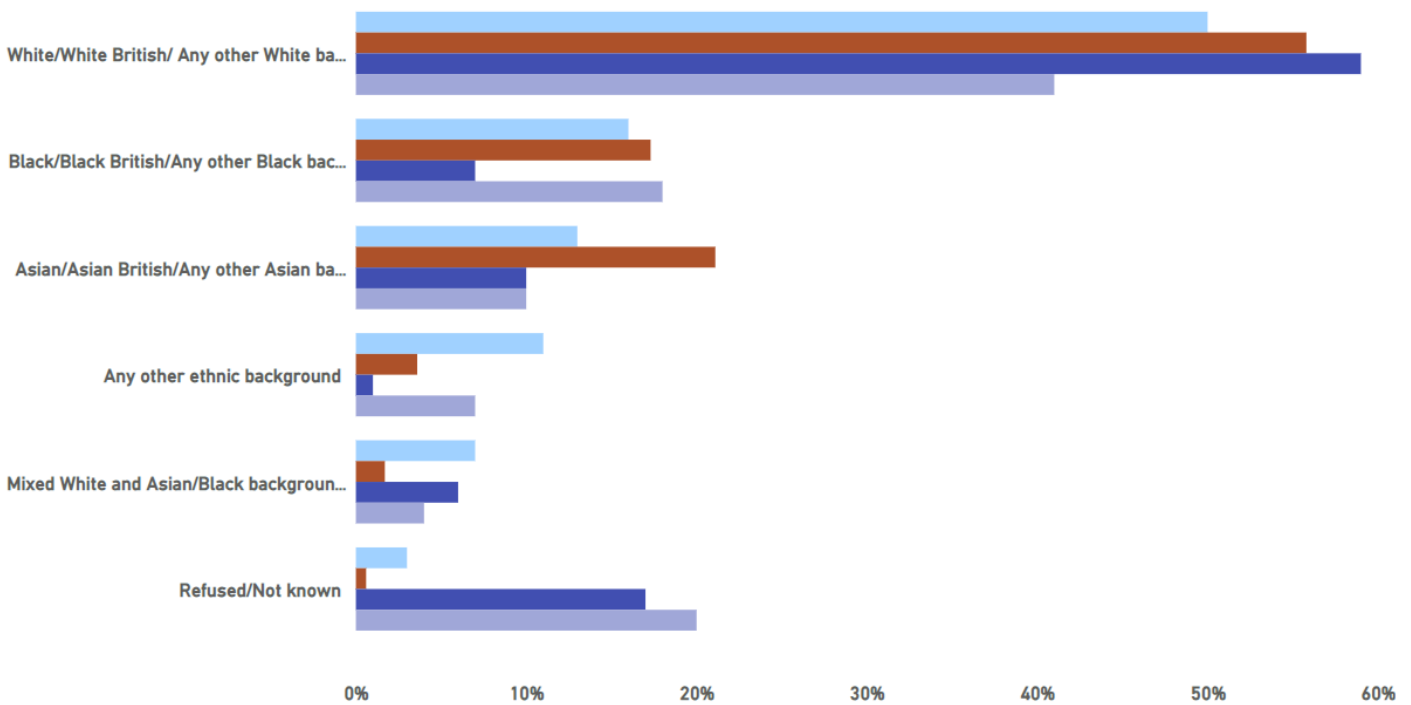


Figure 17 Ethnicity Breakdown of Households Supported through the Commissions.

The majority of households receiving support via the commissioned support services were White British which is reflective of the demographic profile of the city. Furthermore, black ethnic groups make up 16% of the households, and Asian ethnic groups make up 17% of households receiving support via the support services. Comparing this to the demographic profile of the city shows that the numbers are relative which means support services are inclusive.

### Rough sleeping support

Alongside the commissioned housing related support provision, the city has a Department of Levelling Up Communities and Housing (DLUHC) grant funded rough sleeping service.

The funding is used to employ a team of outreach workers including specialist roles (Complex needs, Women, NRPF, Prison release and dedicated housing solutions officer).

The rough sleeping team works closely with partner services to support rough sleepers to move on to both interim and settled accommodation. The provision is dual in terms of its function; engaging those it finds rough sleeping along with supporting those newly accommodated, by removing barriers and increasing opportunities in persistent and creative ways.

The team carries out early morning outreach 5 days per week, The team is well connected in the city and works closely with partners to seek shared solutions, using what they know about individuals, the resources available, and the gaps and challenges those who rough sleep face to find appropriate solutions.

Rough Sleeping work is both localised and ever evolving, using resources and interventions to meet the complex needs of those that are found rough sleeping.

In the calendar year of 2023, an average of 12 individuals were found rough sleeping in a single night with an average of 64 unique individuals being found per month. A total of 168 individuals moved into long-term accommodation.

In the calendar year of 2023, the people rough sleeping who had been released from either hospital or prison were 8.7%, while 29% were long-term rough sleepers who were well known to the service and 8.6% had returned to the street after a period in settled accommodation.

### Percentage Makeup of Different Rough Sleeping Indicators per Month.

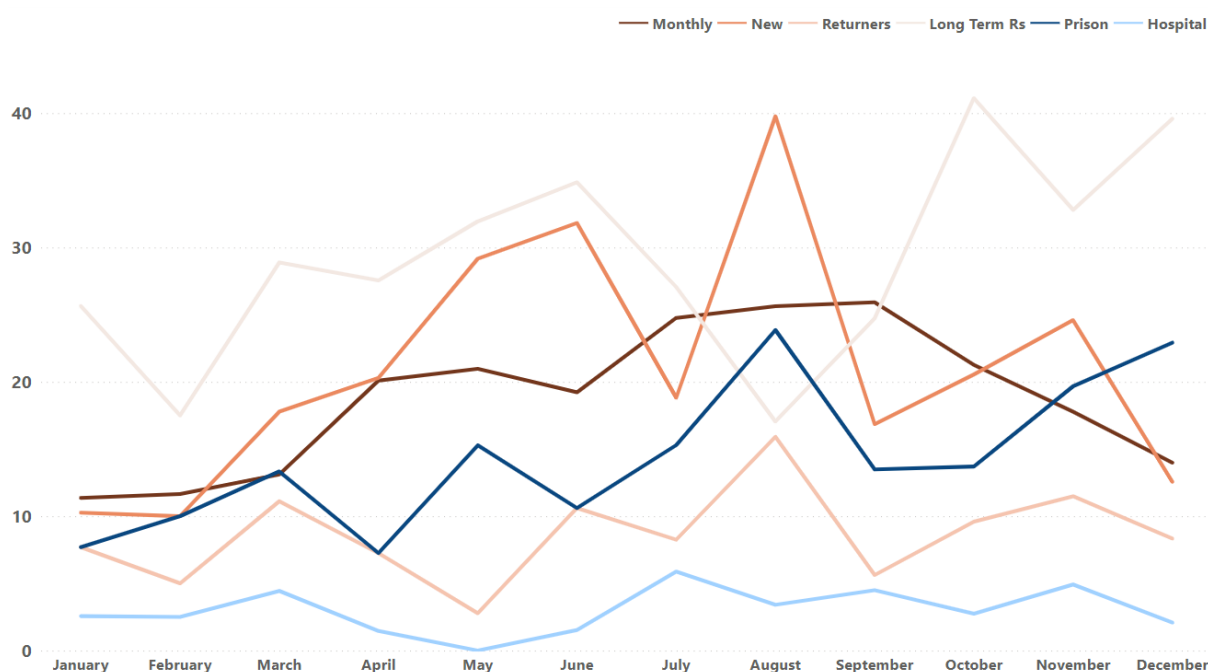


Figure 18  
Trend of  
Rough  
Sleepers  
Indicators per  
Month

## Summary of Rough Sleepers demographics (Numbers Found Per Month)

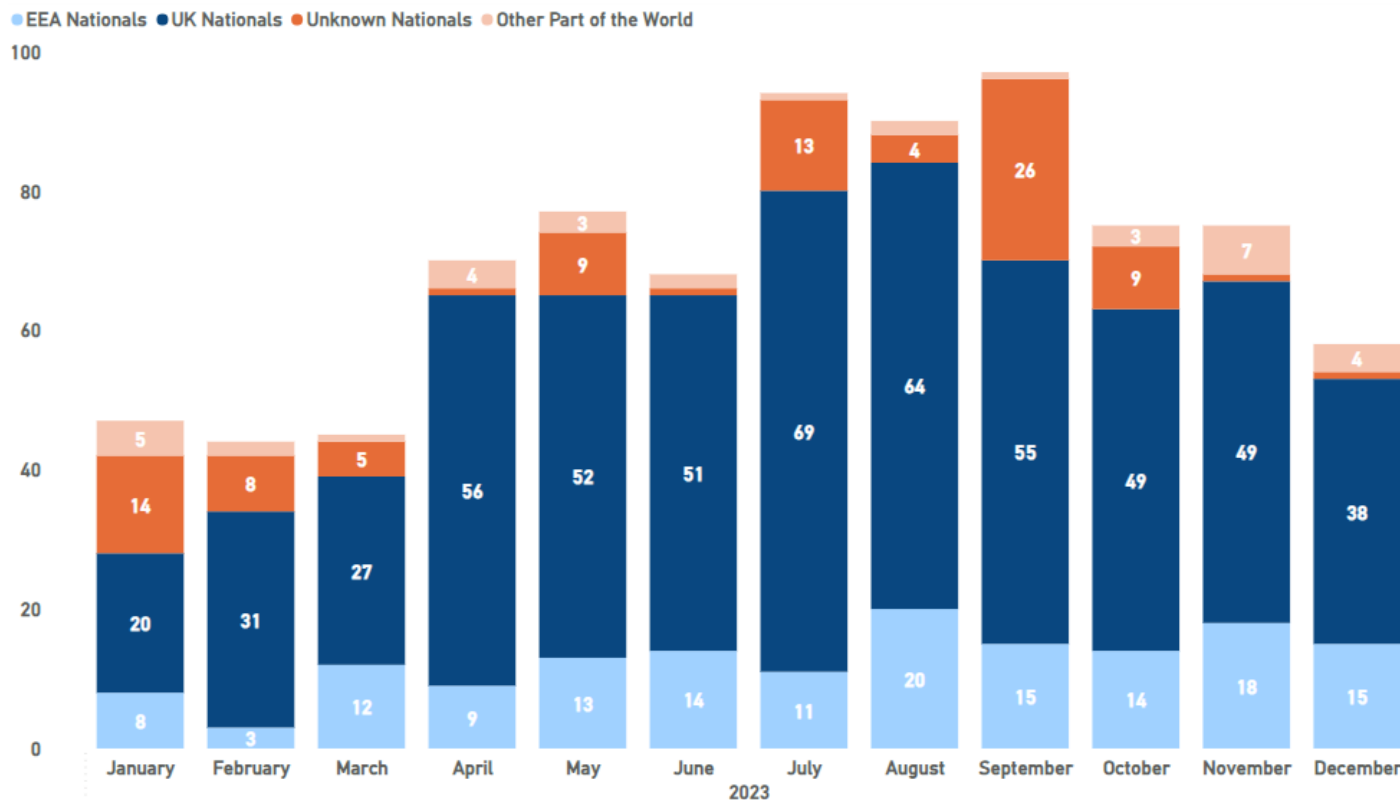


Figure 19 Breakdown of Nationality for Rougher Sleepers Per Month

## SWEP (Server Weather Emergency Protocol)

SWEP is a provision of shelter for people particularly when the temperature feels like zero although can also be activated in times of prolonged heat. The provision is activated under a harm reduction approach to prevent serious harm to those that would otherwise have nowhere else to go.

During 2022/23 **SWEP** was activated from 01/11/2022 to 04/04/2023 in which The Salvation Army provided 540 emergency additional **bed spaces** as part of the SWEP response.

Although there is no strict definition of what counts as 'severe weather,' SWEP will normally operate when the temperature falls below freezing and is forecast to remain below freezing for a period of at least three consecutive nights. Coventry activates SWEP when the Met Office forecasts that there is a feel like factor of 0c, for one night or more.

During 2022/23 SWEP provision in Coventry consisted of

- 5 'off the street' ensuite rooms in the Salvation Army
- 7 camp beds located in 4 separate rooms in the Salvation Army
- Plus, spot purchased hotel rooms when required

## 2022-23

Services saw **252** unique individuals' approach for accommodation under SWEPE.

The longest period **SWEPE** ran for 2022/23 was **17** nights consecutively. **SWEPE** was active for 45 nights in total.

During the period of **SWEPE**, the service met the needs of a diverse group of people who were seeking support and help for a variety of different reasons and circumstance including: relationship breakdowns, people with no recourse to public funds, people out of area, people that have been asked to leave by family or friends. During SWEPE, no body rough sleeping is refused accommodation.

During **SWEPE**, predominately Harnall Lifehouse is used as a place of safety, however if due to demand Harnall Lifehouse reach capacity a referral is made to the Councils EDT (Emergency Duty Team) who offer a placement under **SWEPE** in other emergency or temporary accommodation.

Once an individual is in service under **SWEPE** staff will seek to engage with the individual and work under a personalised approach to find suitable accommodation, seek to bring into service on a more permanent basis or refer onto services more appropriate to the need.

November 2022: Not activated.

December 2022: 70 people over the month – max on one night - 31

January 2023: 88 – max on one night - 45

February 2023: 81 – max on one night - 39

March 2023: 66 – max on one night 33

### Emergency beds

As part of the covid response all shared sleeping spaces were closed in the city. In partnership with The Salvation Army, the opportunity was taken to remodel the old shared sleeping space in Harnall Lifehouse and create 5 emergency of the street rooms. As people are found rough sleeping or known rough sleepers return to the streets the outreach team are able to offer a of the street "Ebed" at The Salvation Army Harnall Lifehouse for up to three nights.

During 2022/23 210 individuals were accommodated via the ebeds with the longest stay being 26 nights

### Gateway

The Gateway is a 63-bed hostel managed by Citizen Housing, that provides accommodation to homeless individuals over the age of 18. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of winter night shelters/shared sleeping spaces, this highlighted a gap in accommodation

provision for rough sleepers. Therefore, a funding application was submitted to create new bed spaces across Coventry for rough sleepers and those with a history of rough sleeping. A successful funding bid was submitted to the then Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) which allowed Citizen to build an extra 16 flats at The Gateway. The introduction of another 16 flats, has increased The Gateway's capacity to 79 flats. The 16 flats created are available for use by those with a history of or at risk of rough sleeping. During 2022/23 20 individuals were accommodated via the Gateway rough sleeping provision.

### **RSAP (Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme)**

Coventry City Council partnered with Citizen Housing and Stonewater to provide 15 self-contained properties for the sole use of rough sleepers. The project aims to provide move-on accommodation for those who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. The Rough Sleeper Team at Coventry City Council has a dedicated worker who offers intensive support to those who have been referred to the project working alongside housing officers from Citizen and Stonewater. Stonewater have purchased 5 properties and Citizen 10 properties that are dotted around the city. While CCC offers support to the clients to work with them to make sure they are tenancy-ready the RP is responsible for housing management which makes it easier for us to support the client. Clients are given 2 years to work with their support worker to make them tenancy-ready before they can move into alternative permanent affordable housing.

During 2022/23 17 individuals were accommodated via the RSAP rough sleeping provision

### **Housing First**

There are a small number of people for whom traditional supported housing models (hostels and HMO's do not work) and for those the evidence shows that more dispersed models of support, such as Housing First maybe more appropriate. There is currently a Housing First scheme in Coventry, run by the council, which has supported 80 individuals throughout the project into permanent self-contained accommodation. The scheme is part of the DLUHC funded national Housing First Pilot that was administered through the WMCA and was commissioned by Coventry City Council in 2019. Housing First is a support service for individuals with complex needs or a history of entrenched/repeat homelessness that traditional services do not work for, for a variety of different reasons. The key difference between housing first and other supported housing provision is that there are no conditions around 'housing readiness' before providing someone with a home, rather secure housing is viewed as a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed. Housing First offers a choice-led approach, which fully respects the choices of each individual.

During 2022/23 46 individuals were supported via the housing first programme.

### **Stepping stones**

As part of the cities response to rough sleeping the council works in partnership with Spring housing to deliver the Stepping Stones Project. Stepping Stones allows rough sleepers up to 3 months accommodation to stabilise before accessing and securing settled accommodation. The project is funded so where individuals are not in receipt of benefits due to immigration issues the cost of accommodation is covered by a grant from DLUHC. The project operates out of an existing supported housing project which is staffed 24 hours a day – this ensures tenancy breakdown due to ASB is minimal. Individuals who access Stepping Stones have the opportunity to transition along the pathway into more settled accommodation and/or resolve any immigration issues.

During 2022/23 7 individuals were accommodated via stepping stones



## **CRMC house**

Coventry Refugee and Migrant centre (CRMC) provide 4 rooms for people who are NRPF (not in receipt of public funds) and work intensively via a navigator to resolve peoples immigration status and support individuals into employment/settled accommodation.

During 2022/23 14 individuals were accommodated via CRMC

## **Rough sleeping drug and alcohol treatment grant**

Change Grow Live (CGL) is the substance misuse service in the city, providing treatment for drug and alcohol misuse to adults. CGL receives funding via the Rough sleeping drug and alcohol treatment grant to deliver a targeted rough sleeping provision for individuals currently rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.

The current team consists of Outreach workers, community worker, women's worker, Polish support worker, Complex worker, and an Outreach Nurse. The support that the team offers is person centred and ensures a non-judgemental approach from the first point of entry.

The primarily objective is to support clients with their substance misuse need, either through Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), Psychosocial Intervention and ongoing Recovery Support.

## **Mental health homelessness pathway lead**

As part of the Mental transformation programme across Coventry and Warwickshire in 2022 the role of a Mental health pathway lead was created by Coventry and Warwickshire partnership trust (CWPT). The pathway lead works specifically with people who are at risk of homelessness or are currently homeless (temporary accommodation / rough sleeping) and acts as a conduit into mental health teams, as well as supporting the crisis team in terms of engagement and the execution of mental health act assessments for those who are homeless.

There is no formal data available in terms of outcomes for the role, however as we know from our data the largest support need for those accessing the homelessness services is mental health, therefore it can be assumed that the role is fundamental in terms of both supporting individuals, and also in regards to supporting staff who work with in homelessness service to navigate the mental health care system.

## **Vulnerable persons and complex needs forum**

The Vulnerable Person and complex needs Forum consist of a range of partners who meet monthly to discuss individuals who are both in permanent accommodation and those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless due to MCN.

There are (broadly three cohorts for the forum.

- 1- Vulnerable but housed (any housed)
- 2- Multiple needs
- 3- Homeless/Rough sleeping.

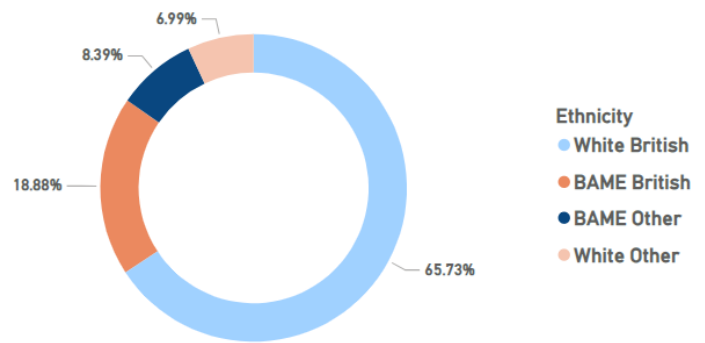
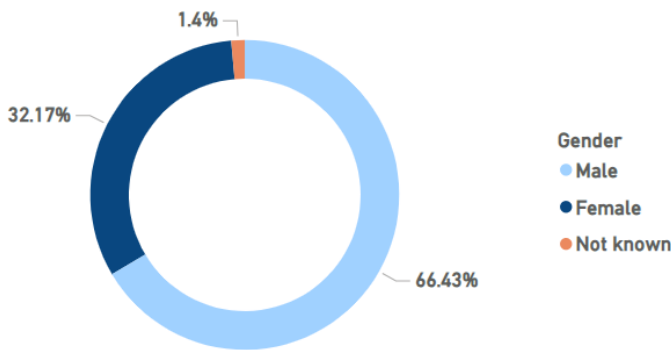
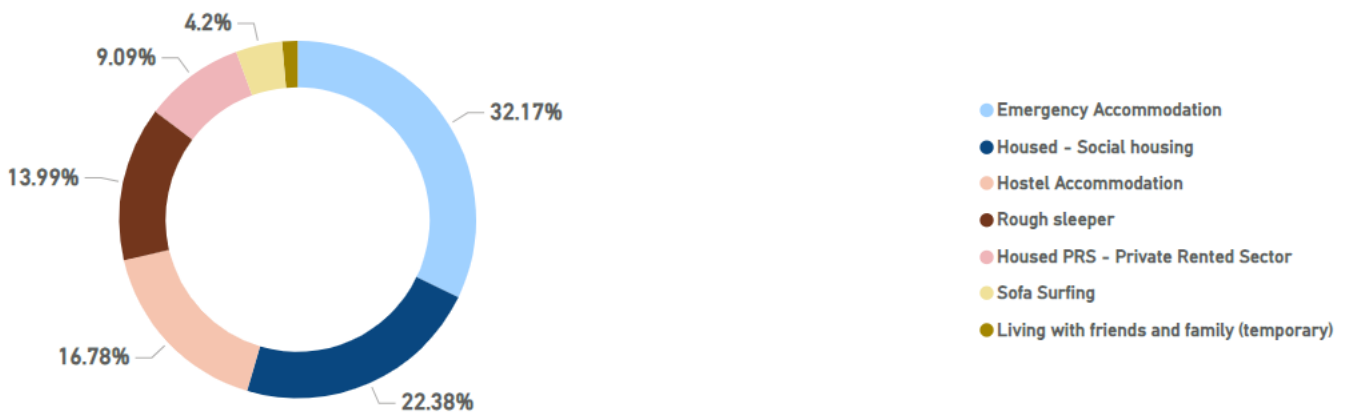
The purpose of the forum is to identify, and case manage individuals:

- Who are at risk of losing accommodation?
- A tenancy either social housing or private rented
- Hostel licence agreement
- Unsettled sofa surfing
- Hospital discharge
- Prison release
- Leaving children's care services (18-25)
- Street homeless due to complex needs or vulnerability

And to identify appropriate support, ensuring they are kept safe from harm, exploitation and if subject to hate crime appropriately supported, the forum will identify the needs of individuals and enable them to access support through a co-ordinate offer through a multi-disciplinary team to work together to support an individual and prevent homelessness .

In 2022/2023, 143 individuals were referred to the forum, with 66% identifying as male and 32% identifying as female. Among these individuals, 122 had housing needs, 95 had mental health needs, 81 had substance misuse issues, 20 were victims of abuse, 75 were involved with the criminal justice system, and 59 were disabled. Finally, 83.2% of cases of homelessness was prevented.

Accommodation on Referral

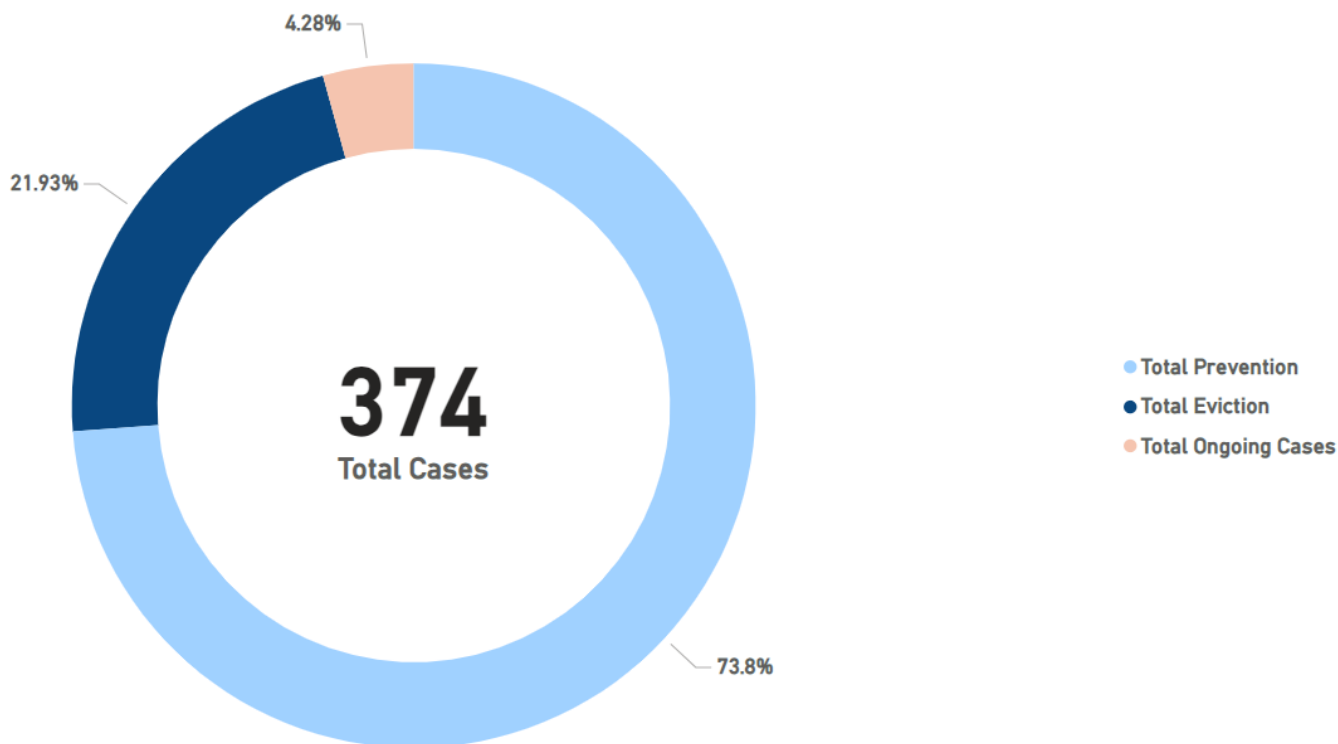


## Pre eviction panel

The pre- eviction panel was set up in February 2023 and is open to all commissioned and none commissioned exempt accommodation providers. The purpose of the panel is to identify all individuals at risk of homelessness from commissioned and none commissioned exempt accommodation who have been served a notice to quit and seek to find collective solutions to stay the eviction.

The panel will support housing providers in identifying innovative approaches to reduce the need for evictions, be a vehicle to share good practices, look to ensure individuals are housed in the most suitable accommodation, and review direct moves between housing providers if needed.

Between Feb 2023 and Feb 2024, 374 cases were discussed at the panel, in which 276 individuals were prevented from homelessness, 82 individuals were evicted, and 16 individual's cases remain opened to the panel.



*Figure 20 PEP Cases Breakdown*

### What our data tells us

- **Affordability:** The cost of housing, whether through buying or renting, is rising faster than household incomes, creating a disparity and the LHA rates have struggled to keep pace with the rising rents.
- **Health and homelessness:** it is well evidenced that people who are homeless experience worse health outcomes than the rest of the population, this includes both physical health as well as mental health and medical interventions and support for the use of substances.
- **Domestic abuse:** Domestic abuse is a key factor in terms of homelessness within Coventry.
- **Increased demand:** There has been a year-on-year increase in demand for support in regard to homelessness in the city particularly from young people, single adults, and single parents with dependent children.
- **Homelessness Prevention:** Early advice and intervention is key in preventing homelessness and our data tells us that households have better outcomes when they approach the service as early as possible.
- **Temporary accommodation:** The increased demand for temporary accommodation and length of stay, against the availability of permanent accommodation suggests that the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation will continue to rise if the supply of affordable housing does not increase.

- **Private rented accommodation:** PRS accommodation possesses two distinct challenges for homelessness services. Ending of a PRS tenancy is a key reason for the loss of the last settled accommodation and affordability in terms of moving on from temporary accommodation.
- **Supply:** The housing needs in terms of the number of households on the housing list in the city outpaces the availability of social rented housing, highlighting the gap in supply and demand.
- **Duty to refer:** Although the duty to refer have increased there are still key services who are not maximizing the opportunity to prevent homelessness by using the duty to refer.
- **Support needs:** The primary support need for those approaching the homelessness service is in relation to Mental Health closely followed by physical health, substance misuse, and domestic abuse.
- **Rough sleeping:** The number of individuals found rough sleeping is on an upward trend, with a notable increase in non-nationals being found.

### Our partners

It is not only the Housing and Homelessness service that has a role or function in terms of homelessness in the city – a number of internal and external partners work with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness daily. As part of this review our internal colleagues (Migration Team, Housing Enforcement, Children’s Service, Public Health, Adult Social Care, Benefits Service etc) were contacted and asked for information/data that may be relevant to this review.

The Coventry Homelessness Forum is a partnership of organisations in the city who work with people experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, or those at risk of homelessness. It provides a space to share information, guidance, and best practice, as well as networking and joining up services. The forum meets at least 4 times each year and has over 100 members. Members of the forum were contacted regarding the review and given the opportunity to contribute and comment in regard to how homelessness impacts their service.

Attached at appendix 1 is the collective feedback and information we have received from both internal and external partners.

