

# Appendix 1 Evidence base

We have compiled this evidence base to support the creation of our new housing and homelessness strategy.

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# Statement of housing need 2024

## Lichfield District

Lichfield District is experiencing rising levels of housing need driven by affordability pressures, population changes, and an insufficient supply of homes across key tenures.

Data shows increasing numbers of residents living in unsuitable accommodation or experiencing homelessness, highlighting the urgent need for a responsive and well-targeted housing and homelessness strategy.

### **1. Unsuitable housing and housing register demand**

An estimated 2,200 households in Lichfield District are currently living in unsuitable housing, according to recent analysis. This includes households across all tenures who may be affected by overcrowding, poor conditions, lack of accessibility, or unaffordability. This figure is a critical baseline in understanding hidden and emerging housing need in the district.

Over the last 12 months, the housing register has grown from 518 to 591 households with a qualifying need for social or affordable housing. The pressure is most significant for 1, 2, and 3-bedroom properties, reflecting both smaller households and families with moderate space requirements.

Waiting times remain a concern:

- In 2023–24, the average wait across all property sizes was 169.4 days.
- Waiting times for affordable homes remain long, particularly for 3- and 4-bed properties. In 2023–24, the average wait time was 169 days, with 3-bed properties seeing the longest delays (308.6 days).
- While more 1 and 2 bed properties are available, these are also in high demand and turn over quickly.

This sustained growth in need, particularly for smaller and mid-size homes, points to a critical mismatch between local supply and demand.

### **2. Affordability challenges and tenure pressures**

Lichfield District's popularity as a desirable place to live has resulted in rising house prices and increased pressure in the private rented sector.

- The average monthly private rent in Lichfield District was £962 in April 2024, up from £896 in April 2023 – a 7.3% annual increase.
- Rents in Lichfield District exceed the West Midlands regional average (£862), creating affordability challenges for low- to moderate-income households.

- Lichfield District has approximately 6,000 privately rented homes, but access is limited by rising rents and fewer properties available at the lower end of the market.

This has led to:

- Greater demand for social and affordable rented homes.
- Increased financial strain on households not eligible for support but unable to afford market housing.
- Reduced mobility within the housing system as households struggle to transition between tenures.

Home ownership is also increasingly out of reach for many. Between 2011 and 2021, home ownership declined, reflecting a national trend driven by declining affordability. First-time buyers in particular are blocked from entering the market, contributing to a growing reliance on the private rented sector – itself becoming less accessible.

### **3. Homelessness, temporary accommodation and social pressures**

Lichfield District has seen a sustained increase in homelessness approaches. The leading cause remains ‘being asked to leave by family’, with domestic abuse, relationship breakdown, and affordability also prominent drivers.

From 2021 onwards, affordability entered the top five reasons for homelessness, overtaking causes such as sofa surfing. This aligns with rising living costs and stagnant wage growth during 2022–24.

The temporary accommodation system is under pressure:

- In 2024, the longest recorded stay was 488 days.
- Average stays have increased over the past two years, with larger families particularly affected due to a lack of suitable move-on properties.
- Limited provision within the district forces households to be placed in nearby areas such as Tamworth, Walsall, or Cannock Chase.

Social factors compound this challenge. Households with support needs (e.g., mental health, addiction, past trauma) require specialist services to transition successfully into stable tenancies. These needs extend the time spent in temporary accommodation and increase demand for tenancy sustainment support, which is currently provided by a small in-house team.

#### **4. Demographic change and specialist housing needs**

The district's population is growing and ageing. In 2023, 24% of residents were aged 65+, up from 15.5% in 2001. As life expectancy rises and the number of residents with mobility or care needs increases, the demand for accessible, supported, and extra care housing will continue to grow.

This demographic shift also affects the type of homes needed:

- Ground floor flats, disabled access, bungalows, and extra care schemes will need to be incorporated into future housing supply.
- The council is working in partnership with Staffordshire County Council to deliver housing with care in alignment with the Staffordshire Housing with Care Strategy.
- The council is also purchasing its first fully accessible temporary accommodation units in 2025.

#### **5. Strategic response and remaining gaps**

The council has made significant progress in responding to local need:

- Delivered 959 new affordable homes since 2019.
- Acquired 12 properties for use as temporary accommodation.
- Established Lichfield District Homes to manage lettings and housing advice services in-house.
- Supported over 2,300 residents through the Warmer Homes Scheme.
- Introduced new services for tenancy sustainment and partnership-based homelessness prevention.

However, despite these efforts, the evidence shows a persistent gap between demand and supply, especially for:

- Affordable housing, particularly 1, 2 and 3-bed homes.
- Temporary and supported accommodation for vulnerable groups.
- Homes for older people and those with accessibility or care needs.

The rising cost of living, coupled with declining affordability and limited housing options, underscores the need for sustained investment, new development, and policy innovation in meeting Lichfield District's housing challenges.

# 1. Housing need

## Estimated number of households living in unsuitable housing (with or without housing)

This table sets out an estimate of the number of households within each category. It shows an estimated 2,200 in Lichfield living in 'unsuitable housing' The data covers all tenures.

	Concealed and homeless households	Households in overcrowded housing	Existing affordable housing tenants in need	Households from other tenures in need	Total
Lichfield	139	238	57	277	710
Burntwood	118	188	33	210	549
Rest of District	273	236	39	357	905
Lichfield District	530	662	129	844	2,164
Tamworth	425	799	129	623	1,975
Study area	955	1,461	257	1,466	4,140

Source: Icen Analysis

## Estimated housing need and affordability by tenure

	Number in unsuitable housing	% unable to afford	Current need after affordability
Owner-occupied	599	5.9%	35
Affordable housing	451	83.4%	376
Private rented	585	58.0%	339
No housing (homeless/concealed)	530	100.0%	530
Total	2,164	59.2%	1,280

Source: Icen Analysis

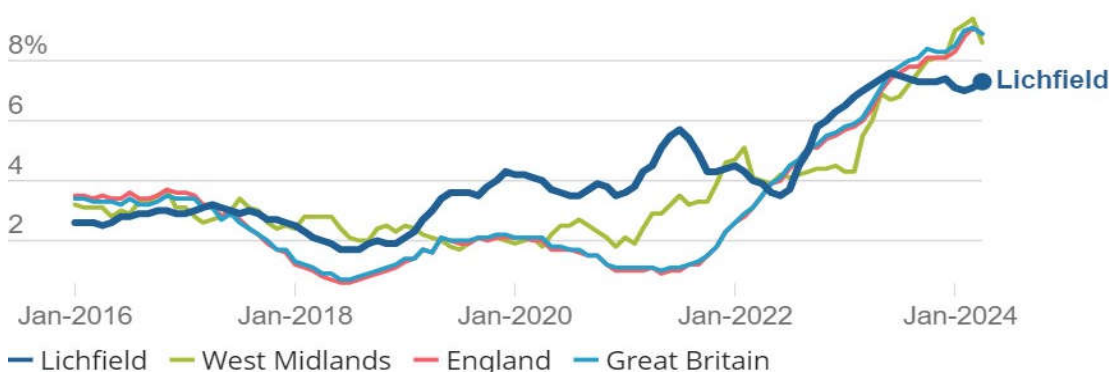
## Affordability - owner occupier

Home ownership in Lichfield District has become increasingly unaffordable for many residents, particularly younger people and single-income households. Despite a strong desire to buy, rising house prices have outpaced income growth, creating a significant barrier to entry. Data from the Census further down shows a steady decline in home ownership, with many would-be buyers instead remaining in the private rented sector or returning to family homes. The need for affordable home ownership products, such as shared ownership and first homes, remains high, particularly for those seeking to stay within the district but unable to access market prices.

## Affordability – private rented

Lichfield District is a desirable area to live which has driven the prices on the rental market up. There are approximately 6000 private rented homes in the district. The average monthly private rent in Lichfield was £962 in April 2024. This was an increase from £896 in April 2023, a 7.3% rise. Across the West Midlands, the average monthly rent was £862, up from £794 a year earlier. The chart below shows the differences between 2016 and 2024 in Lichfield compared to other areas. Due to higher-than-average private rents in Lichfield, residents on a low income are unable to afford these and there has been an increase in those looking to move to a social rent property. The graph below shows the changes since 2016 both locally and on a national level.

Private rental price annual inflation, Lichfield, January 2016 to April 2024



Source: Price index of private rents from the Office for National Statistics

## Average waiting times on housing register (affordable housing)

Average wait time by applicants' bedroom need - 2021 - 2022				
Bedroom need	Total lets	Total days on the register	Average wait in days	Percentage of allocations
1-bed	120	11,858	98.8	36.62%
2-bed	136	24,834	182.6	41.23%
3-bed	68	21,418	314.9	20.62%
4-bed	5	29,39	587.8	1.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>61,049</b>	<b>185.5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Housing register data

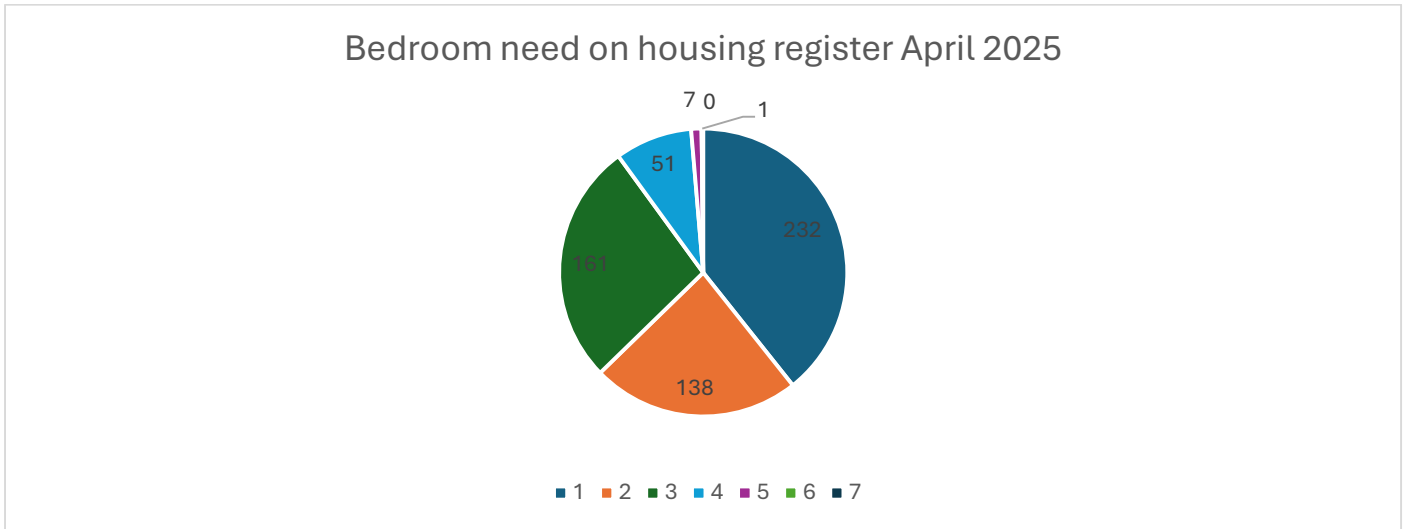
Average wait time by applicants' bedroom need - 2022-2023				
Bedroom need	Total lets	Total days on the register	Average wait in days	Percentage of allocations
1-bed	170	59,04	34.7	37.94%
2-bed	174	15,750	90.5	38.83%
3-bed	94	23,336	248.2	10.93%
4-bed	10	4,155	415.5	2.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>49,145</b>	<b>109.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Lichfield District Homes Data

Average wait time by applicants' bedroom need - 2023 -2024				
Bedroom need	Total lets	Total days on the register	Average wait in days	Percentage of allocations
1-bed	149	23,946	160.7	39.52%
2-bed	152	16,763	110.3	40.32%
3-bed	70	21,602	308.6	18.57%
4-bed	6	1,569	261.5	1.59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>63,880</b>	<b>169.4</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Housing register data

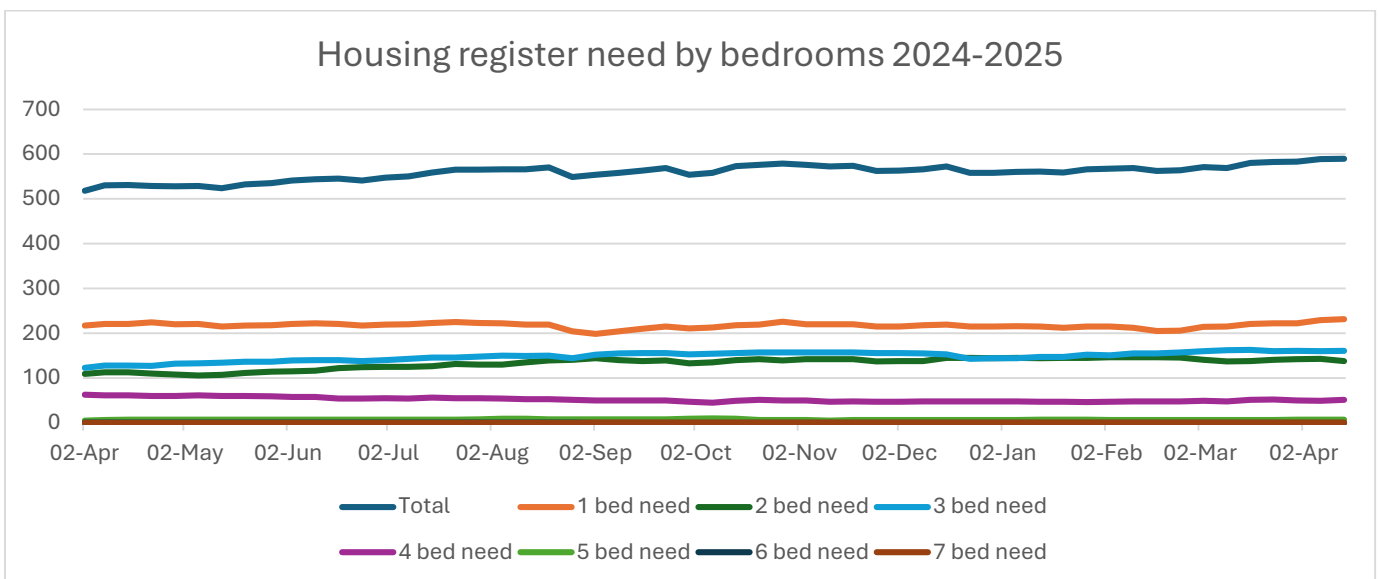
### Current housing register need for social rent properties



Source: Housing register data

### Current housing register need by bedrooms

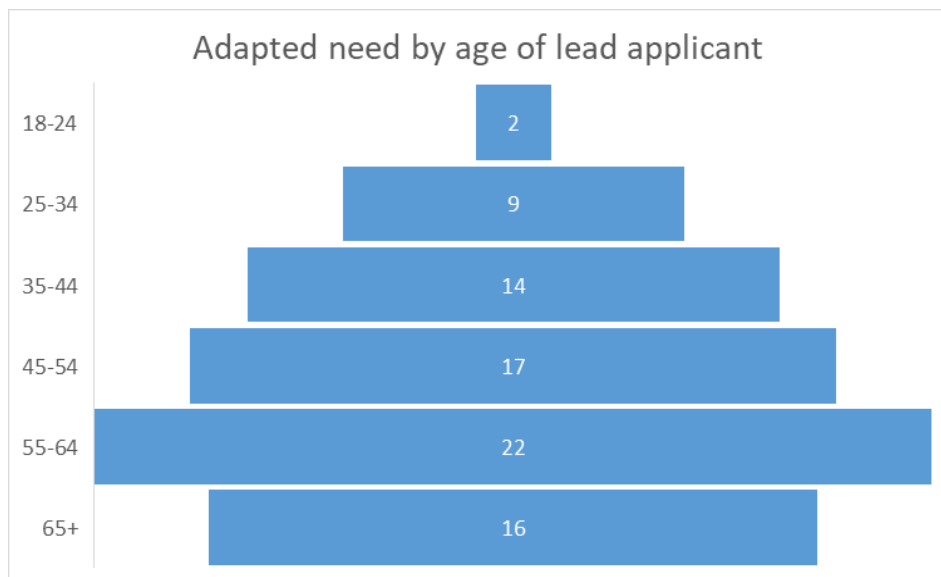
Overall housing register numbers have increased over the past 12 months from 518 households to 591 households with a qualifying need. There is a notable rise in demand for 1, 2, and 3-bedroom properties.



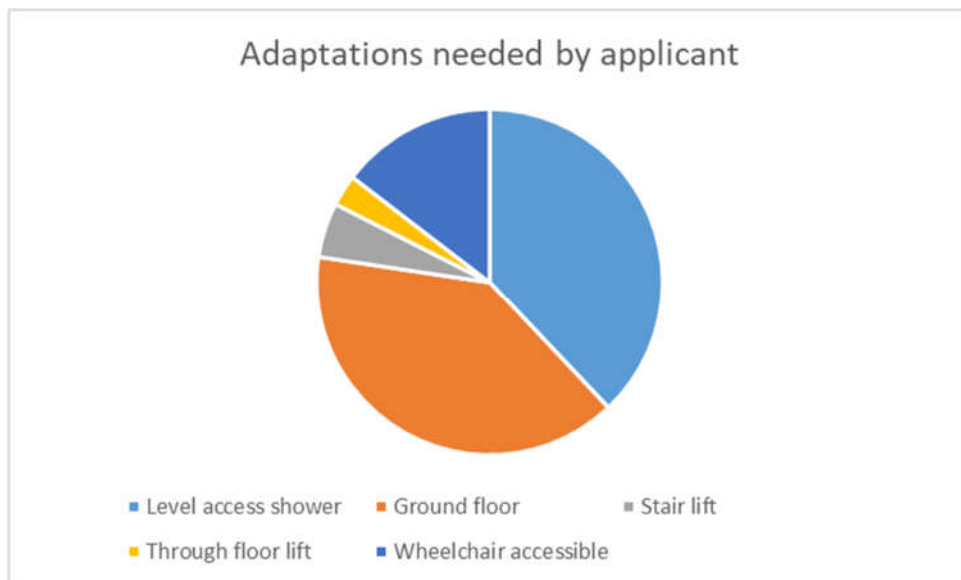
Source: Housing register data

## Current housing register need for adapted properties

The data below highlights a clear need for accessible housing within the district, with a particularly high demand among individuals under the age of 55 that are looking for an adapted property to rent. This highlights the importance of effectively utilising the Disabled Facilities Grant budget aiming to spend 100% of the budget each year to ensure residents can access the necessary aids and adaptations in their homes. Additionally, the findings suggest that the development of ground floor properties such as bungalows, should not be restricted to specific age groups where possible, as accessibility needs span a broader demographic.



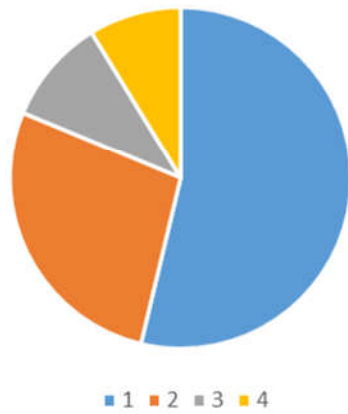
Source: Housing register data



Source: Housing register data

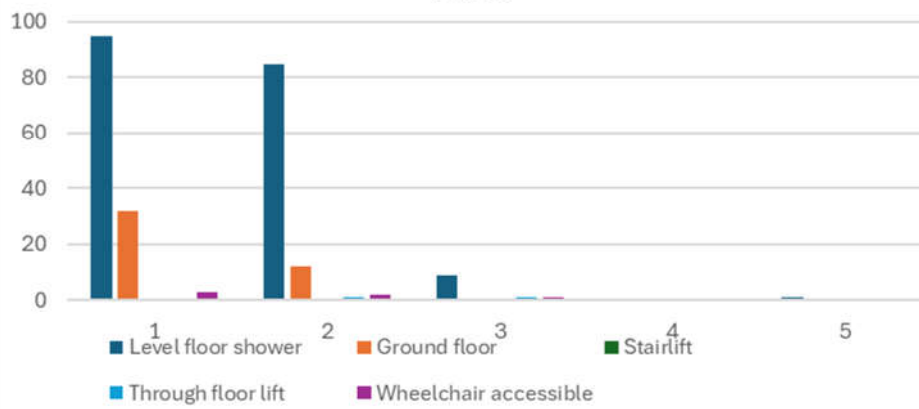


### Adapted need on the housing register by bedroom size required



Source: Housing register data

### Number of adverts for adapted homes by bedroom and adaption type - Lichfield District Homes 2021-2025



Source: Housing register data

## Extra care provision

Through our delivery plan with the Staffordshire County Council, we will work together to identify where specific individuals with adult social care needs are affected by homelessness and rough sleeping. As part of their Housing with Care Strategy, Staffordshire County Council will work collaboratively with the council to provide support to meet care needs in settings that seek to prevent or address homelessness and rough sleeping.

Area	2024 Schemes	2024 Flats	Approved schemes	Proposed Flats	2027 Schemes	2027 Flats
Cannock	3	187	1	0	4	187
East Staffordshire	2	96	0	0	2	96
Lichfield	2	200	2	150	4	350
Newcastle-under-Lyme	6	355	1	19	7	374
South Staffordshire	5	289	1	32	6	321
Stafford	5	321	2	110	7	431
Staffordshire Moorlands	2	154	1	57	3	211
Tamworth	2	93	0	0	2	93
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1695</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2063</b>

Source: Staffordshire Housing with Care Strategy

## Projected demand for extra care properties

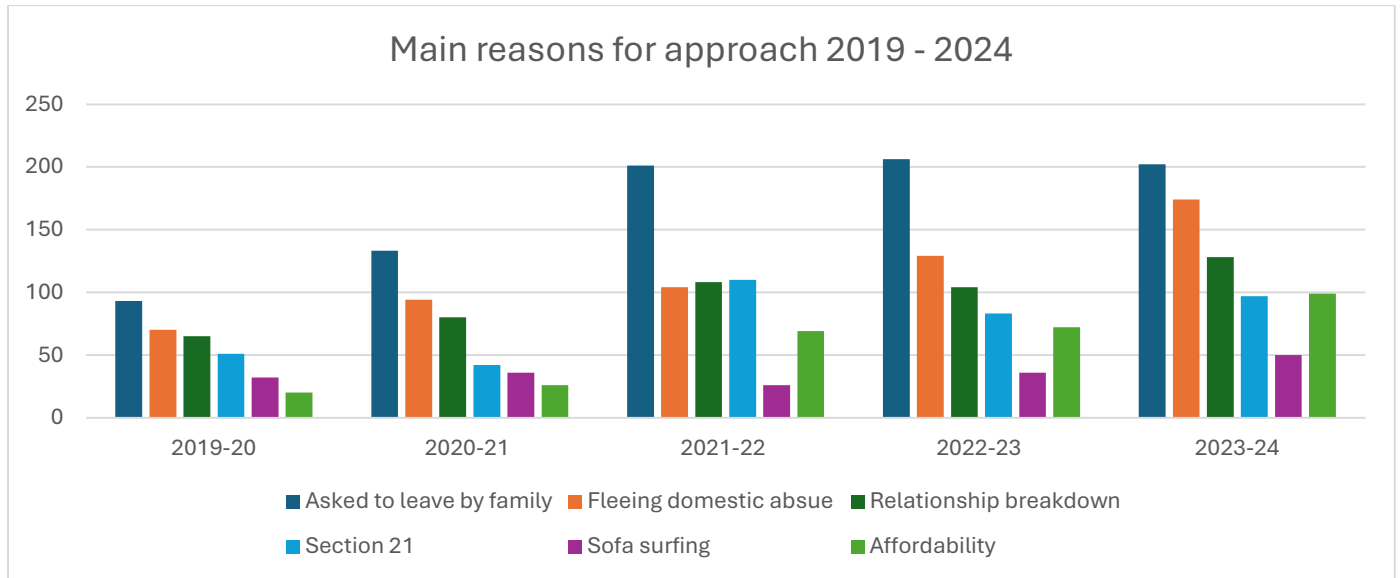
Area	2027 gap	2032 gap	2037 gap	2042 gap
Cannock	-14	-18	-22	-23
East Staffordshire	-28	-32	-36	-37
Lichfield	10	20	19	18
Newcastle-under-Lyme	-2	-4	-7	-7
South Staffordshire	-5	-7	-10	-10
Stafford	1	-1	-5	-6
Staffordshire Moorlands	-7	-9	-11	-11
Tamworth	-19	-21	-23	-23
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>-63</b>	<b>-73</b>	<b>-93</b>	<b>-98</b>

Source: Staffordshire Housing with Care Strategy

## 2. Homelessness and rough sleeping

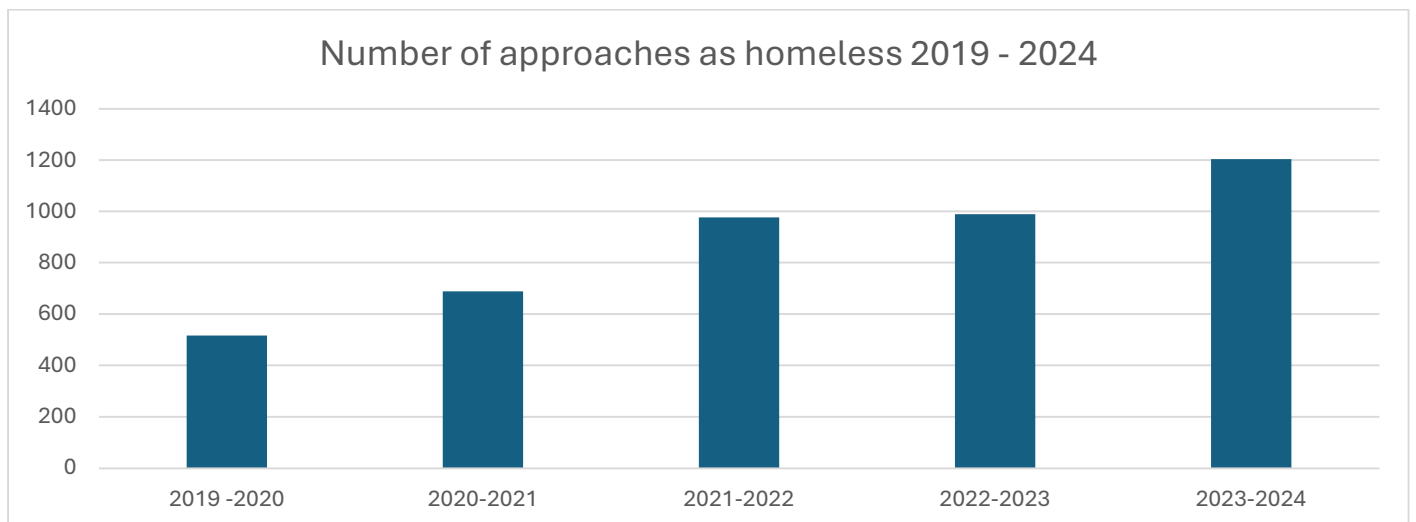
### Reasons for homelessness

Between 2019 and 2024 the main reason for homelessness was due to being 'asked to leave by family'. Over each of these five years this has been the largest single reason for approach as Homeless to Lichfield District Council.

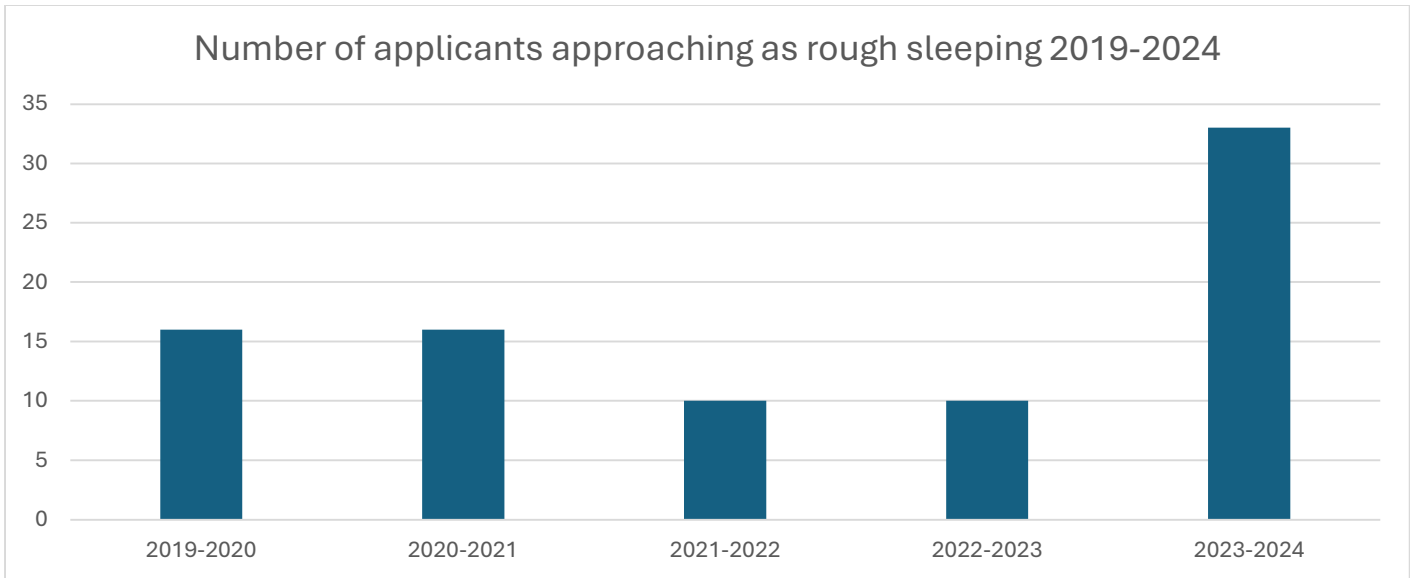


Source: Council monitoring data

There was a change to the top five reasons for approach in 2021 to include 'affordability' demonstrating the impact of the rise of the costs of living. This replaced 'sofa surfing' in the top 5 reasons from 2021 onwards and in 2023-24 rose above the number of those receiving a Section 21. Compared with the data in the last strategy we continue to see that 'asked to leave by family' has been the reason for most approaches since 2014. In the 2019-24 strategy the second and third highest reasons for approach were 'relationship breakdown' and 'Section 21'. We can see that the second and third highest reason for approaches is 'fleeing domestic abuse' and 'relationship breakdown'



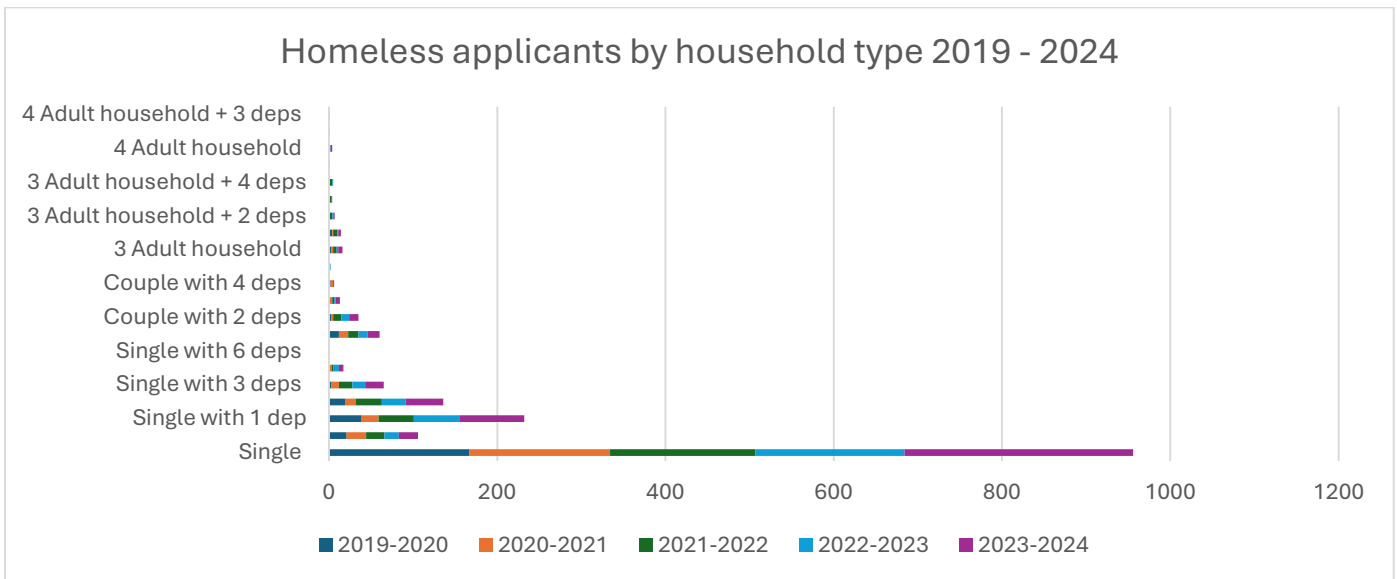
Source: Council monitoring data



Source: Council monitoring data

### Applicant household type

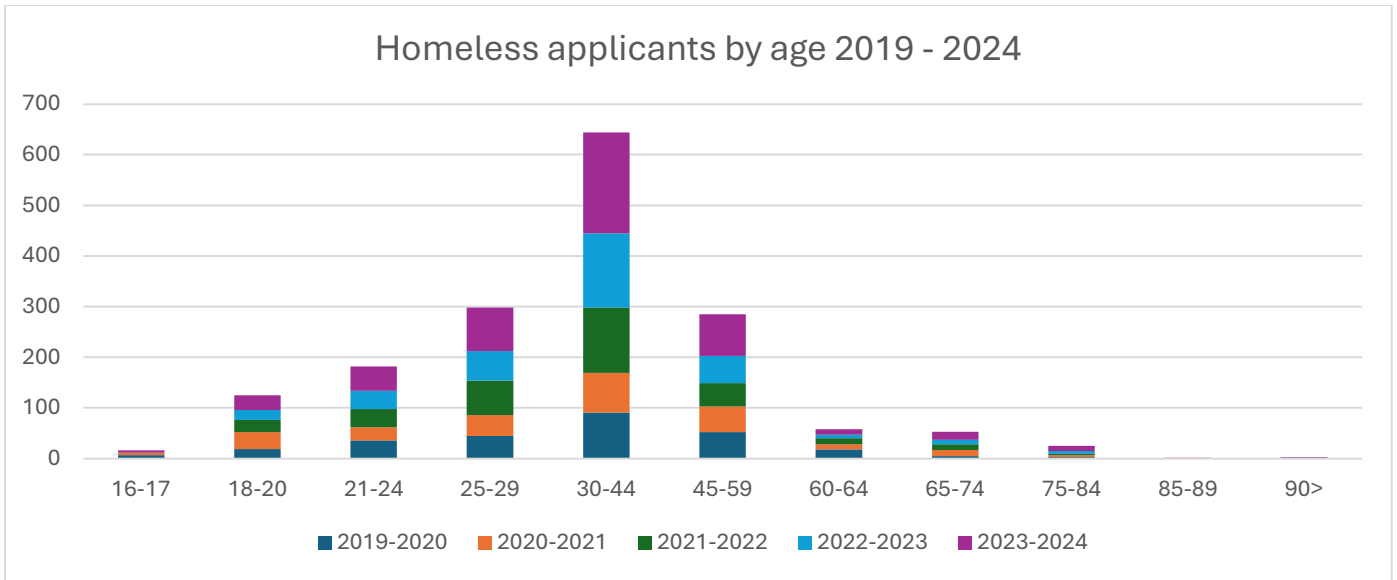
Year on year the highest proportion of homeless applicants are single people. The reasons for this include lack of affordability on a single income, lack of support network, vulnerable following a relationship breakdown, familial breakdown and leaving care.



Source: Council monitoring data

### Age of applicants

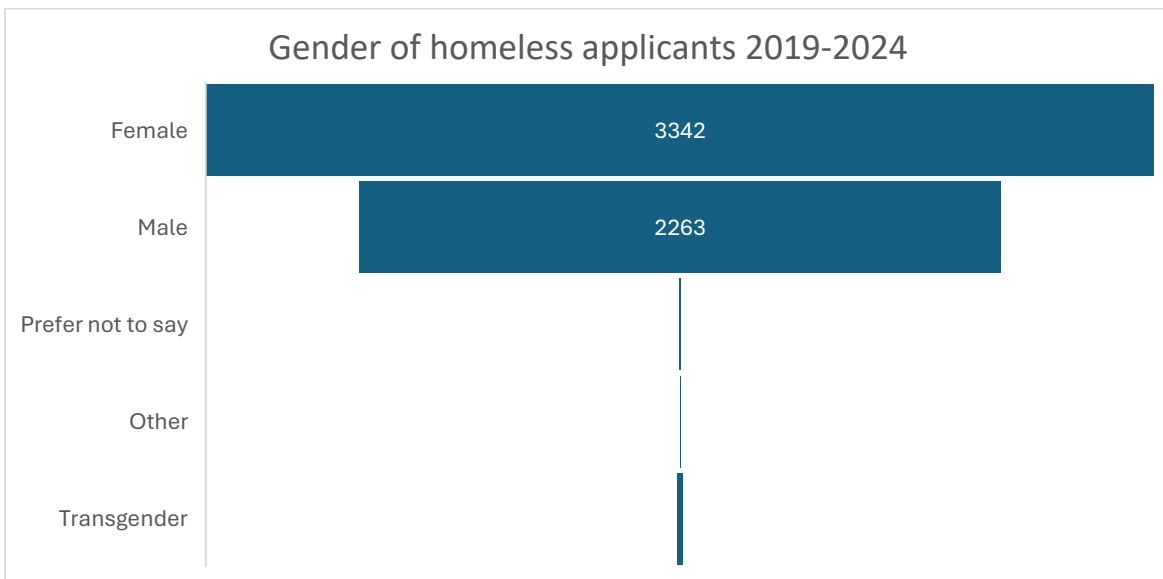
With regards to age, we can see from the graph below that over the last 5 years people aged 30-44 years old have made the highest number of approaches as homeless to Lichfield District Council. This aligns to the national average age of someone who is homeless which is 32 years old. There is no known single reason for this age group to be the most likely age group to be homeless locally and nationally however, similarly to other age groups they could be experiencing financial hardship, domestic abuse and other difficult situations causing them to become homeless.



Source: Council monitoring data

### Gender of applicants

The data below from 2019 to 2024 indicates that females are the gender most at risk of homelessness in the district. Women are more likely to experience less visible forms of homelessness, such as staying with friends, living in temporary accommodation, or residing in unsafe environments. A considerable proportion of homeless women are escaping domestic abuse, often seeking refuge in informal or short-term housing to avoid sleeping rough.



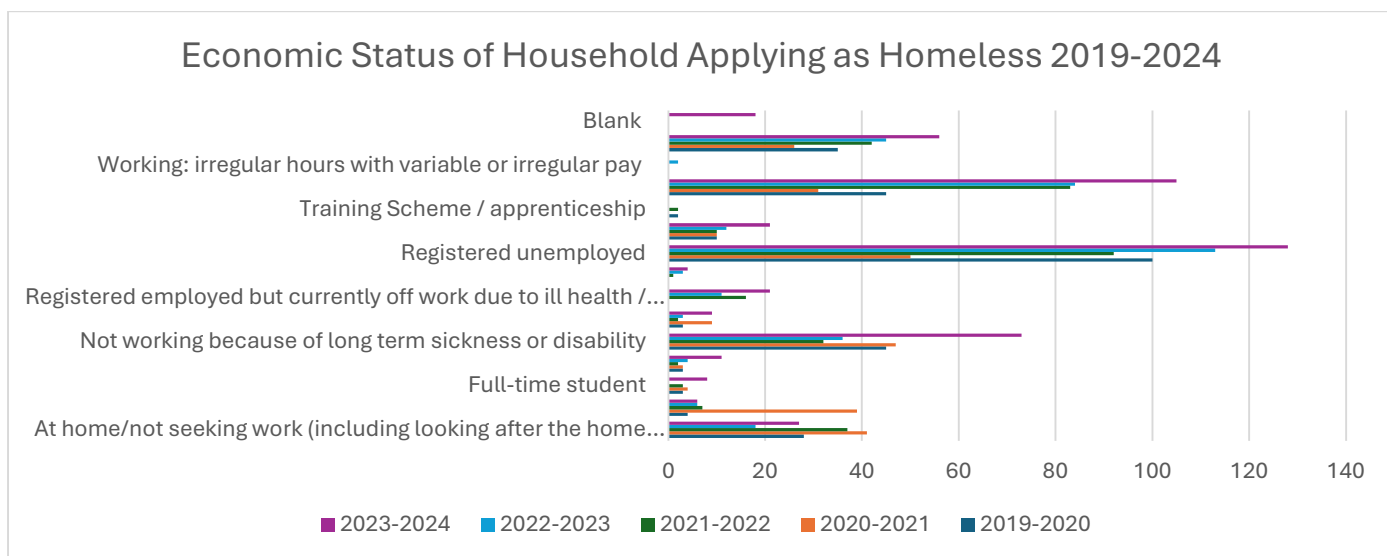
Source: Council monitoring data

### Ethnic background of applicants

Lichfield District's population is predominantly white British which is reflected in the homeless acceptance figures. Between 2019 and 2024, 86% of approaches were white British. The top five approaches were from white British (86%), white other (2%), mixed white and black Caribbean (2%), black or black British Caribbean (1%) and mixed white and Asian and mixed other (1%). Three percent chose not to disclose their ethnic background.

## Employment status of applicants

The employment status of applicants approaching the council as homeless varies, but a significant proportion are either in low-paid or insecure work or are unemployed. The impact of zero-hours contracts, short-term employment, and the gig economy has contributed to housing instability. Many employed applicants still face affordability challenges, especially in the private rental market where rents are high relative to local wages. A growing number of households fall into the category of the 'working poor' – those who are employed but unable to sustain suitable housing. This has reinforced the need for truly affordable housing and tenancy sustainment support that accommodates the realities of modern employment patterns.

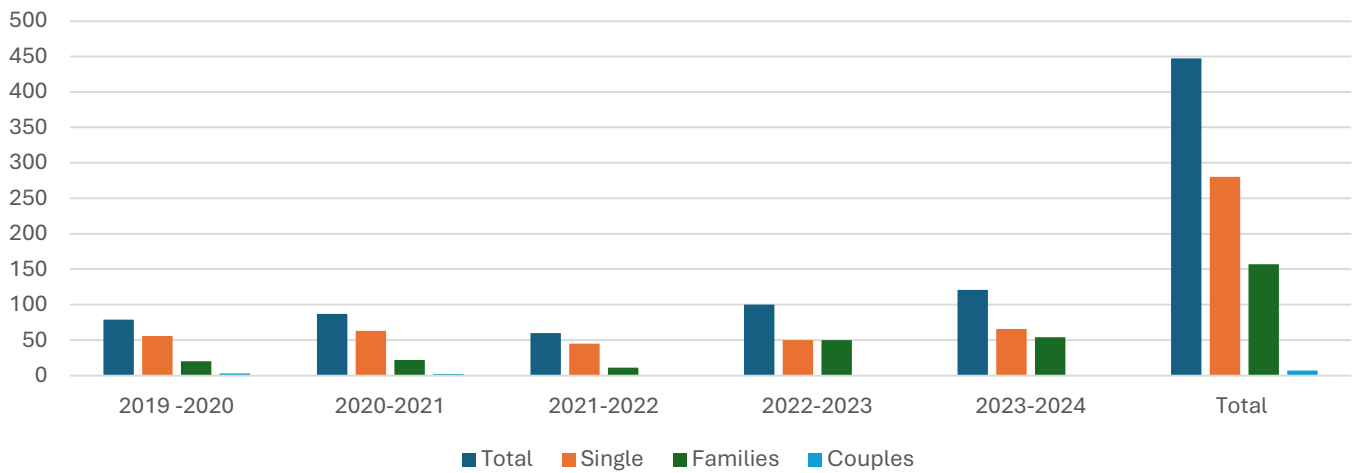


Source: Council monitoring data

## Homelessness prevention

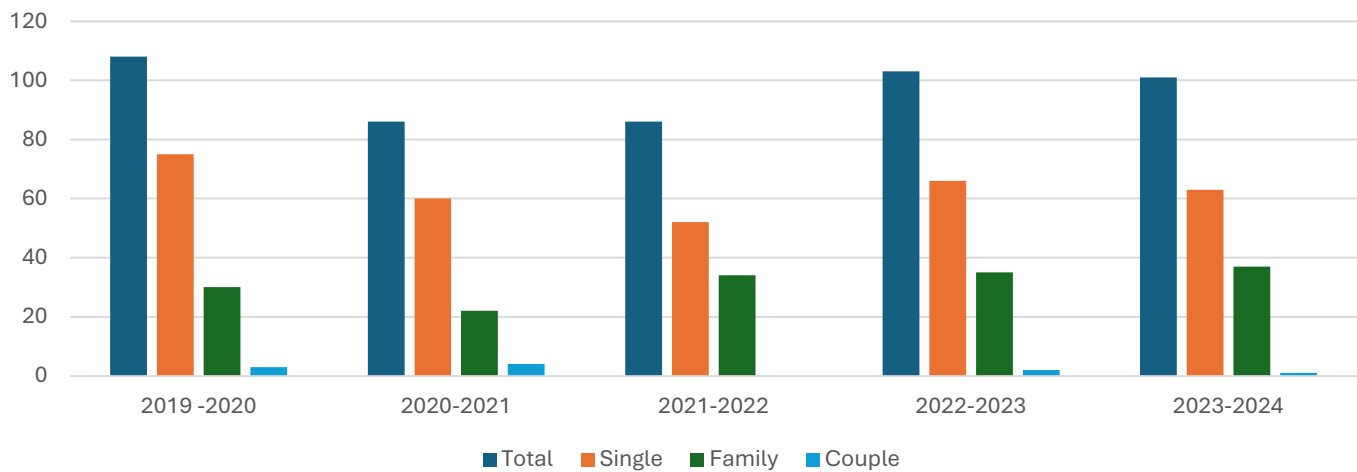
Lichfield District Council continues to focus on early intervention and prevention to reduce the risk of homelessness. This includes targeted support, advice services, and partnership working with voluntary sector organisations and statutory bodies. Prevention efforts often involve helping people remain in their current homes through negotiation with landlords, family mediation, or assistance with rent arrears. Other measures include support with securing alternative accommodation before a crisis point is reached. The Homelessness Prevention service has become increasingly critical as the cost-of-living crisis has driven more households to the edge of affordability. Continued investment in early-stage support is key to reducing the number of people entering temporary accommodation.

### Successful preventions by household type 2019 - 2024



Source: Council monitoring data

### Successful relief of homelessness by household type 2019-2024



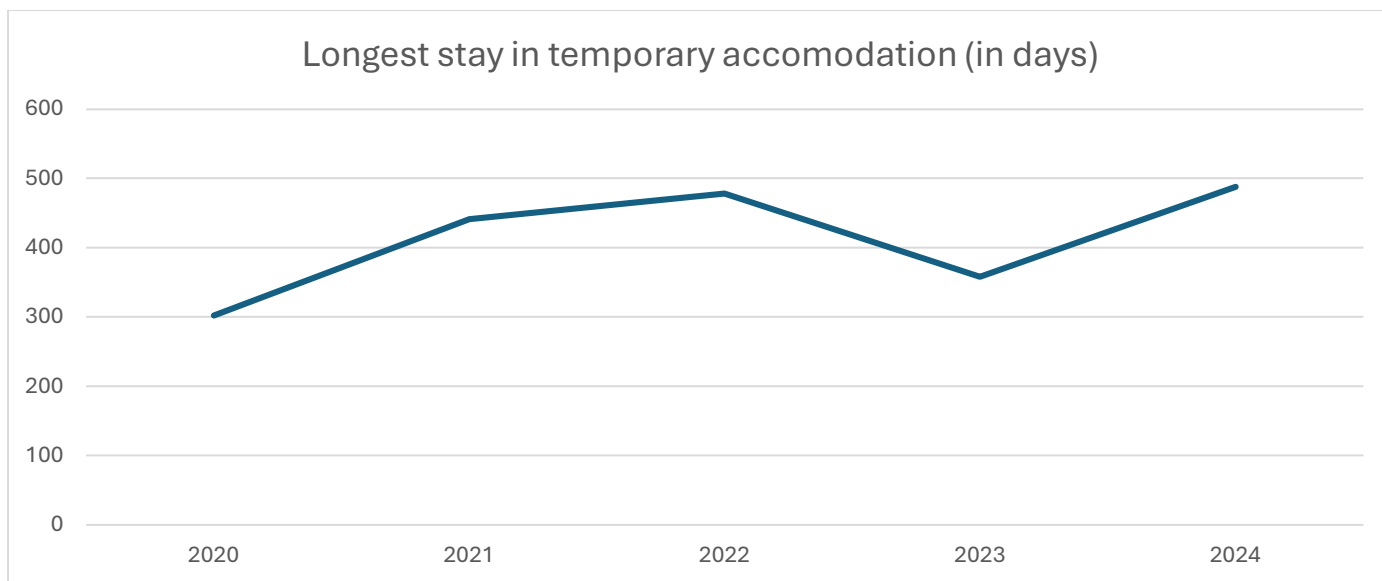
Source: Council monitoring data

### Temporary accommodation

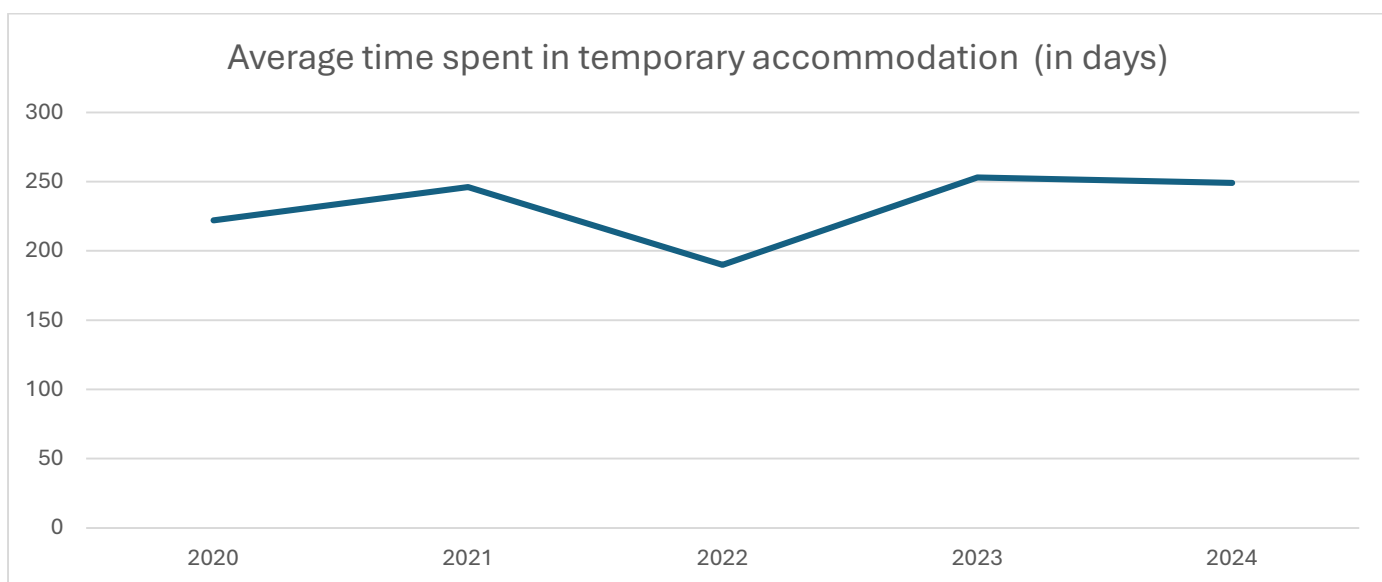
The temporary accommodation provision in Lichfield district is very limited, often individuals and families are allocated temporary provision further away, for example in neighbouring local authority areas such as Cannock Chase, Tamworth and Walsall, due to the lack of availability in the district.

In response to the lack of temporary accommodation, the Lichfield 2050 Strategy sets out that the council will intervene in the provision and look to secure and supply additional options for temporary accommodation provision across the district. The focus will be on Burntwood and nearer to Lichfield City. To date, Lichfield District Council have become a registered provider and have purchased/acquired 12 properties for use as temporary accommodation. At present the waiting time to move into a permanent home from temporary accommodation is substantial. Larger families are likely to have a prolonged stay due to the availability of suitable and affordable accommodation.

As shown below in the graphs for time spent in temporary accommodation 2024 saw a record of longest stay at 488 days. The average time spent in temporary accommodation shown in the graph below has increased in the last two years between 2022 and 2024.



Source: Council monitoring data



Source: Council monitoring data

As shown, there is an increase in the time spent in temporary accommodation, the factors behind this vary and could be partly due to the increase in demand for social housing. The housing register numbers have shown an increase which means that the amount of people waiting is more each year with demand often outstripping supply.

Social challenges also impact the amount of time spent in temporary accommodation. These include the level of support needs for example people who have a background of substance abuse or any other needs for support may make transitioning to a permanent property a longer process.

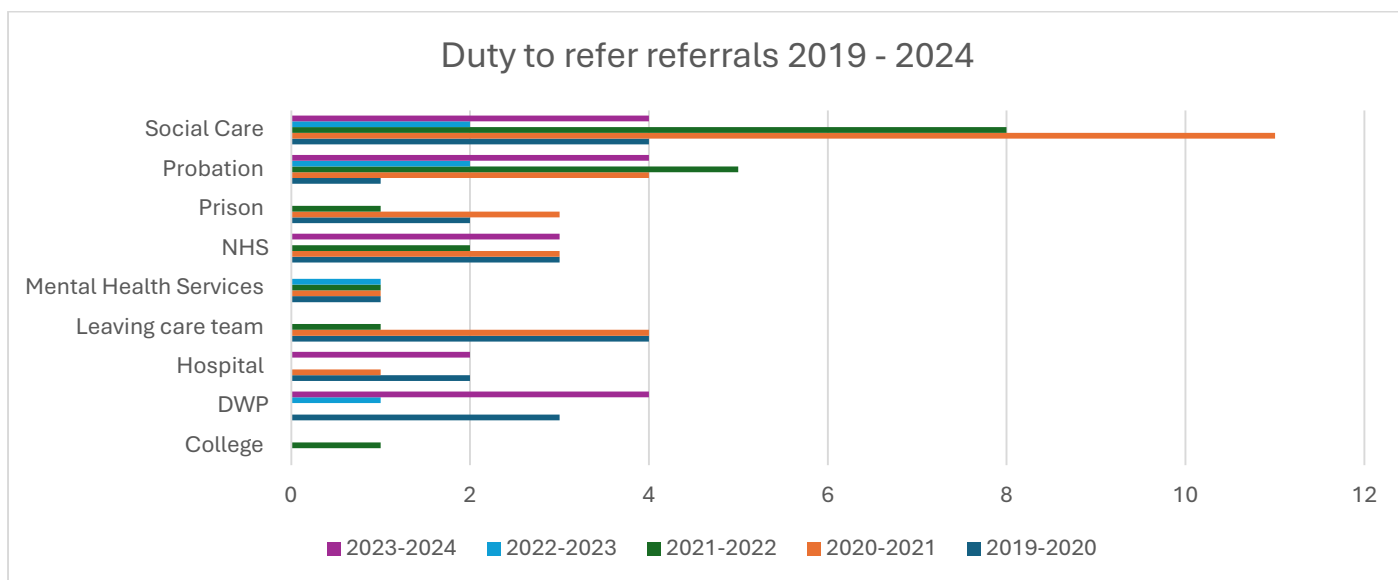


The rise in the cost of living has surged due to inflation in the period 2022-2024 and has impacted people's disposable incomes. This situation has caused people who may have otherwise been able to afford private rent into temporary accommodation.

### Duty to refer

From October 2018, as part of the HRA, certain public bodies have a duty to refer, which places an obligation on specified public authorities to notify the relevant local authority of households they consider may be at risk of homelessness within 56 days. This means a person's housing situation must be considered whenever they meet wider public services.

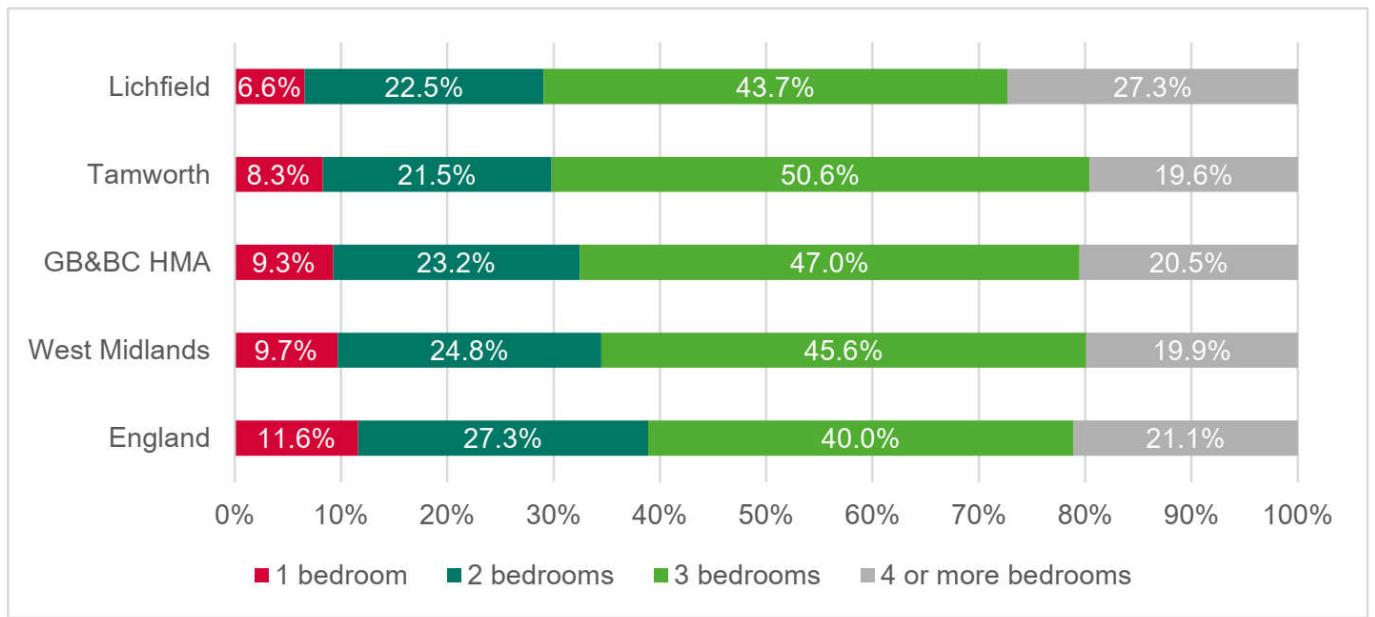
The aim of the change is to intervene at an earlier stage when a person is at risk of becoming homeless and giving meaningful assistance to someone who may not yet have contacted their local authority. In 2020-21 there was an increase in referrals due to the requirements to ensure 'everyone in' could be achieved during the pandemic. Partner agencies and authorities play a key role in referring, the council aims to increase knowledge of duty to refer through partnership networks and its Homeless Forum.



Source: Council monitoring data

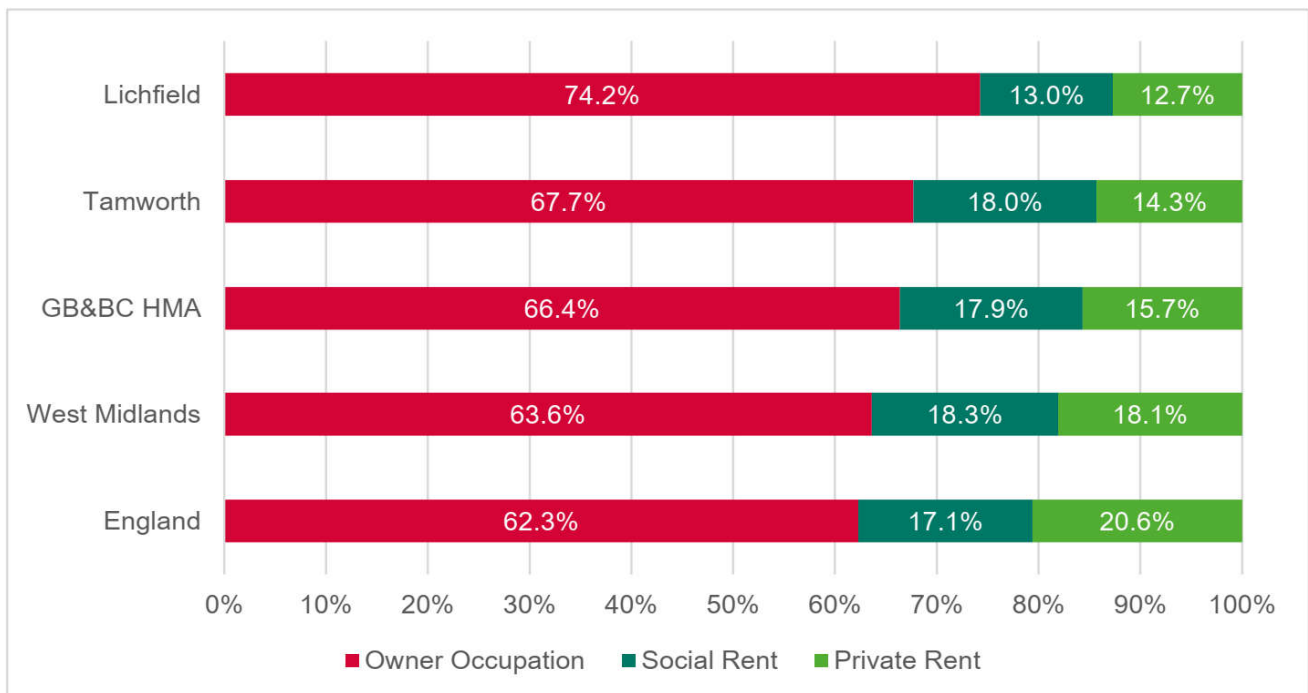
### 3. Local housing stock

#### Dwelling by size (all tenures)



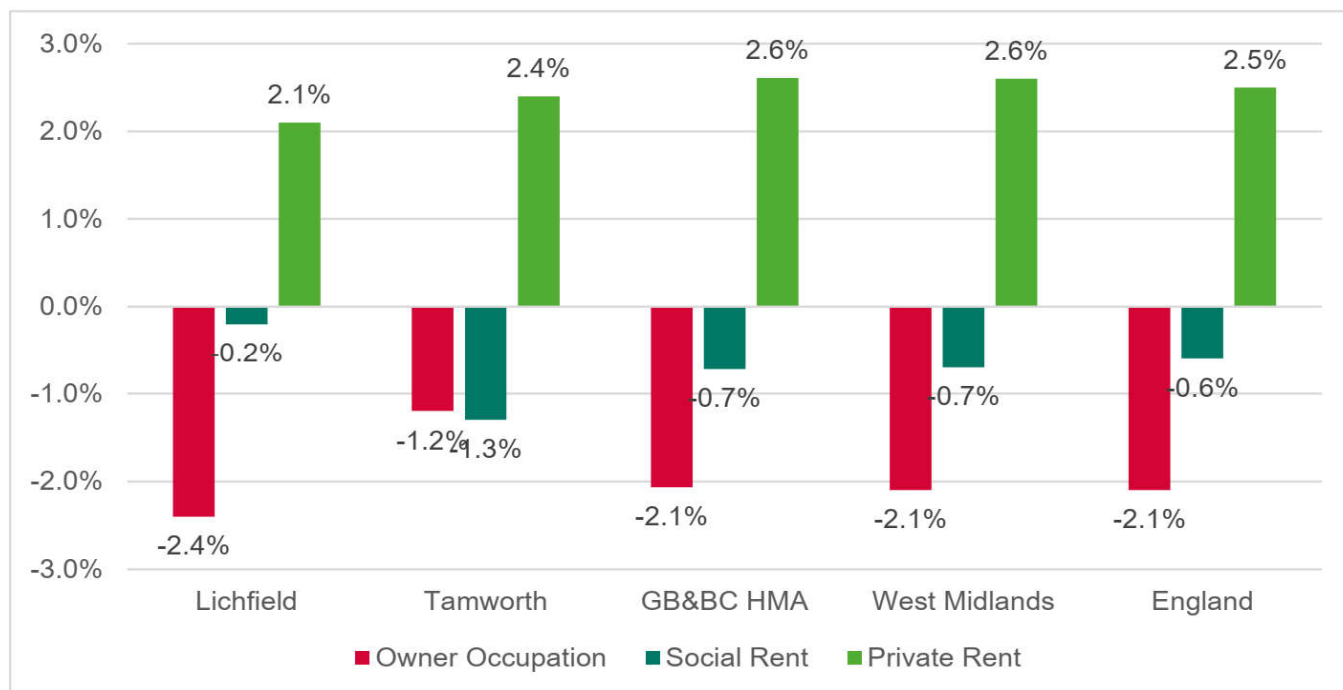
Source: Census 2021

#### Dwellings by tenure



Source: Census 2021

## Change in tenure types (2011-2021)



Source: Census 2021

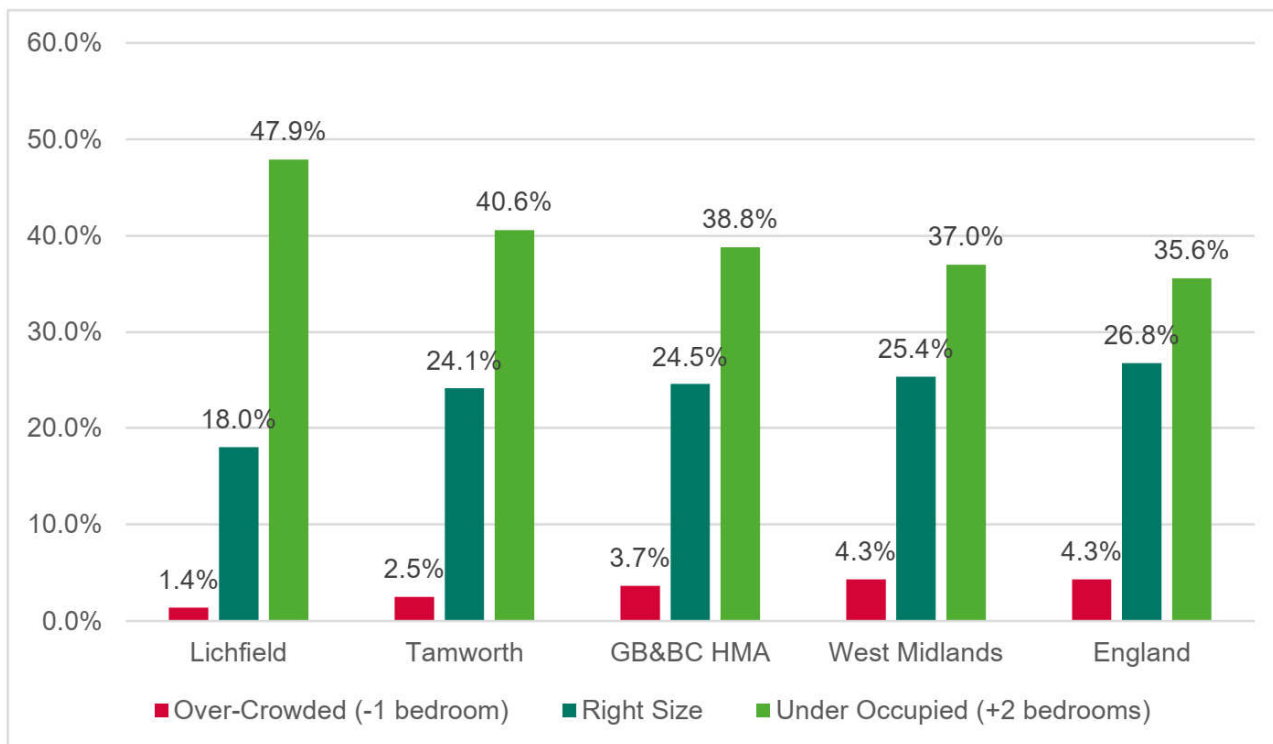
Home ownership has declined in all areas between 2011 and 2021. This is a factor of declining levels of affordability across the country which blocks potential first time buyers from purchasing. As a result of declining home ownership and social renting, all areas have seen increases in private renting, putting significant pressure on the private rental market, as increased demand often sees increased costs, making this sector less affordable and limiting housing options. Nationally the private rented sector has increased in response to lower levels of home ownership. However, the degree to which this has happened in Lichfield District is less than the national growth.

## Occupancy rating by tenure

Owned	Lichfield	Tamworth	W. Mids
Over-Crowded	0.6%	1.1%	2.4%
At Capacity	8.7%	11.6%	12.7%
Under Occupied	59.3%	53.6%	50.7%
Social Rented	Lichfield	Tamworth	W. Mids
Over-Crowded	5.5%	6.1%	8.6%
At Capacity	59.4%	60.0%	56.0%
Under Occupied	8.8%	11.5%	9.4%
Private Rented	Lichfield	Tamworth	W. Mids
Over-Crowded	2.2%	4.1%	6.5%
At Capacity	30.3%	37.8%	39.0%
Under Occupied	21.6%	15.6%	16.7%

Source: Census 2021

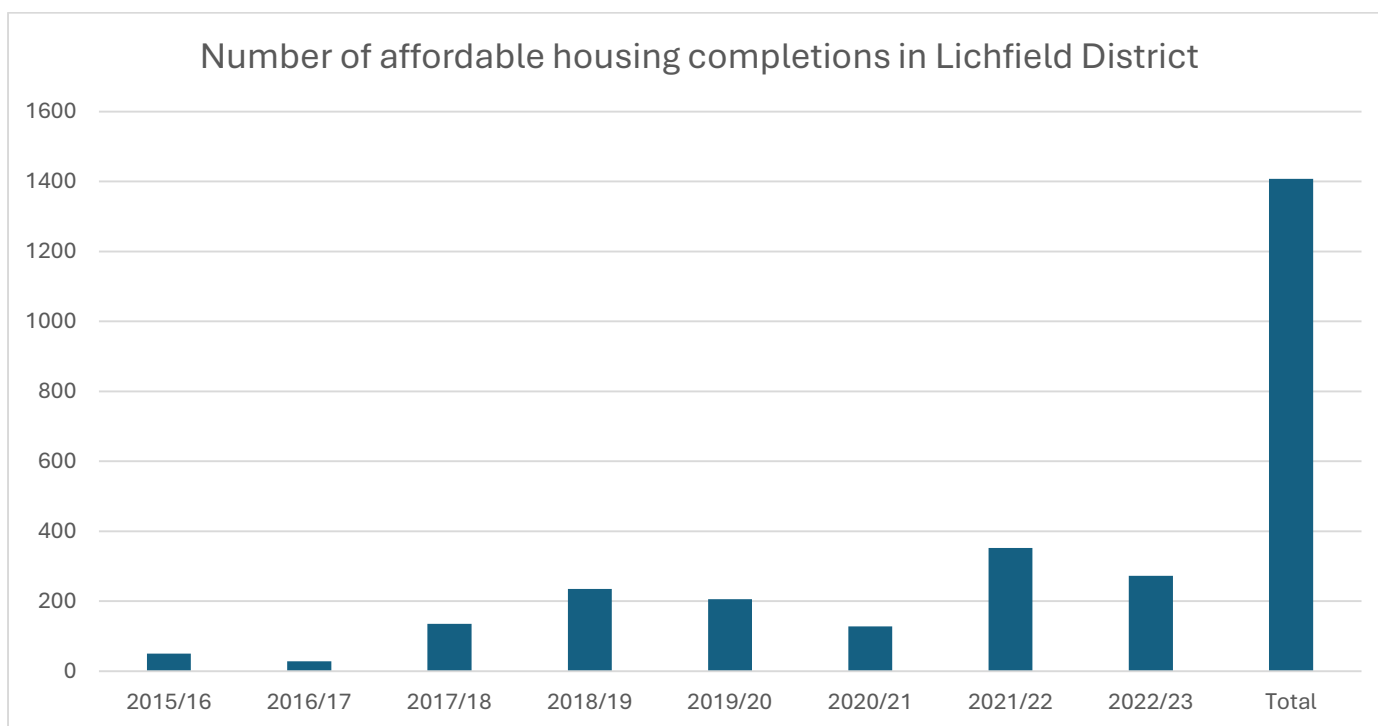
## Occupancy rating (bedrooms)



Source: Census 2021

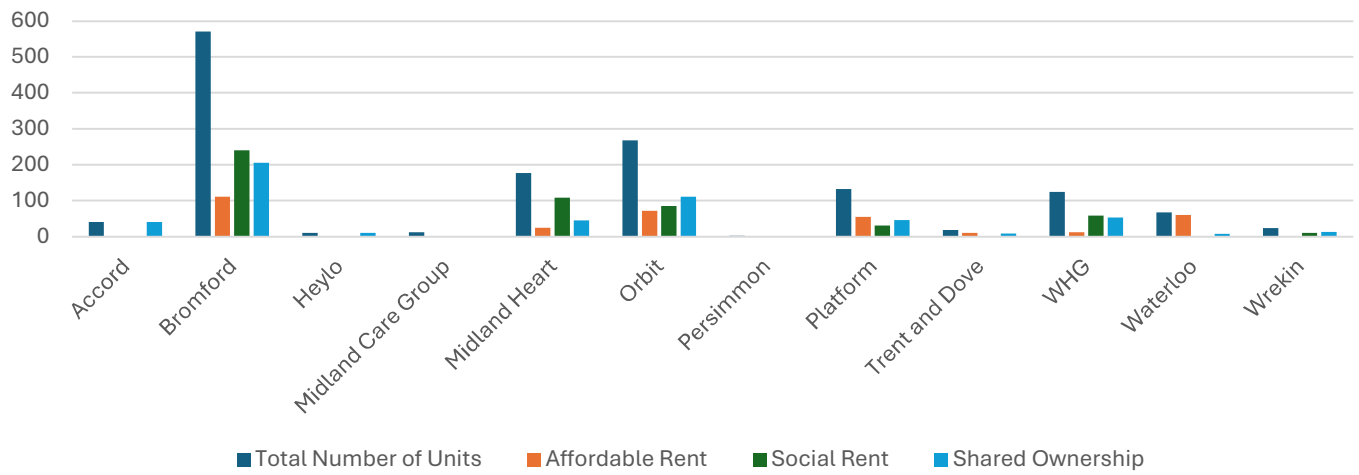
The occupancy rating differs significantly between tenures. Social rented dwellings are more likely to be overcrowded, or at capacity compared to other tenures. This is due to access to choice and household finances.

## New housing supply in Lichfield District



Source: Council monitoring data

## Housing built between 2014 and 2024 by registered providers



Source: Council monitoring data

## 4. District profile

In 2022 the total estimated population of Lichfield District was 108,352, midyear estimates in 2023 show that this had risen by more than 1.5% to 110,173. Since 2001, the largest population growth has taken place in the number of residents aged 65 years or over, and we expect this to continue in future years. In 2001, 15.5% of residents (14,437) were aged 65 years or older. In 2023 this had increased to 24% (26,365).

Age groups (2023 estimates)	Number of residents	%
4 years and under	5,274	5
5 to 9 years	5,890	5
10 to 15 years	7,355	7
16 to 19 years	4,374	4
20 to 24 years	4,868	4
25 to 34 years	12,902	12
35 to 49 years	19,616	18
50 to 64 years	23,529	21
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	<b>12,444</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>75 to 84 years</b>	<b>10,662</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>85 years and over</b>	<b>3,259</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Lichfield District Council Equality Statement 2025

In 2011, 18% of people living in the district (18,265 residents) had a limiting long-term illness. The 2021 census results showed this percentage remained largely the same 17.8% (18,944 residents).

Long term health or disability (2021)	Number of residents	%
<b>Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot</b>	<b>7,598</b>	<b>7.1</b>
<b>Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little</b>	<b>11,346</b>	<b>10.7</b>
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	8,252	7.8
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	79,240	74.4

Source: Lichfield District Council Equality Statement 2025

An ageing population will increase care needs and will create a growing need for housing with care and support. Housing with care and support can be in many forms including extra care housing, supported living, major and minor adaptations through use of Disabled Facilities Grants, homelessness and rough sleeping support for people with social care needs

## Achievements

Since the adoption of the last Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2019 we have:

- 450 successful homeless preventions.
- 3014 residents provided with housing advice.
- 959 new affordable homes delivered.
- 6 properties purchased for the Rough Sleeper Pathway Scheme
- 1 property converted into 5 studio apartments for temporary accommodation.
- £3m budget assigned for acquisition of properties for temporary accommodation.
- Lichfield District Homes launched in 2020, and the housing register is now managed through an in-house team.
- Recruitment of three Tenancy Sustainment Officers.
- 2,346 residents supported through the Warmer Homes Advice Scheme.
- Supported national refugee and resettlement initiatives.
- Reviewed the Allocation Policy to ensure housing is being allocated to those most in need.
- Successfully launched a Homeless Forum and annual Homeless Conference.
- Monthly housing advice surgeries with domestic abuse agencies.
- Launched the Tenancy Sustainment Panel.
- Annual strategic and operational meetings with registered providers.