



North  
Northamptonshire  
Council

# Homelessness Data Review

09.02.24

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# Introduction

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy based on a data review of all forms of homelessness in their local area at least every 5 years.

In developing the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 - 2029, a detailed review of data around homelessness and rough sleeping as well as other economic factors has been undertaken. This Homelessness Data Review identifies current and future trends and provides a comparison with the landscape in the East Midlands and the Country as a whole.

The purpose of this document is to provide the evidence base for North Northamptonshire Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024- 2029. A wide range of data has been collated in this document to help understand and provide an overview of homelessness locally and includes both internal management data along with nationally published data, key economic data and population statistics for North Northamptonshire.

## Local context

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, a new North Northamptonshire unitary council was formed, replacing the four district and borough councils of Kettering, Corby, Wellingborough, and East Northamptonshire, and splitting the former Northamptonshire County Council services into both North and West Northamptonshire Councils. This has produced several challenges including streamlining processes, procedures, and resources, which were previously different in each council to ensure that services can work efficiently for the new combined unitary areas.

According to the data collected in the Census of 2021, the population in North Northamptonshire has increased by 13.5% since the previous census in 2011 and is now an area with 359,525 people and a total of 148,900 households. This is a much higher increase in population levels than the 7.7% and 6.6% increase seen regionally and nationally. Also, North Northamptonshire Council is ranked as having the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest population out of the 331 local authorities that make up England and Wales. Out of these top 22 Local Authorities, North Northamptonshire has seen the largest growth (12.3%) in the number of households from 132,635 in 2011 to 148,900 in 2021, an increase of 16,265 households.

As a result of the increase in population North Northamptonshire has seen a growth of 30.4% in the population of those aged over 65 years according to the 2021 Census, and 17.9% of the population in North Northamptonshire are classed as disabled under the Equality Act (2010). This is only slightly higher than the national figure of 17.7% (Age Standardised Proportions) but represents that there may be an increased need for suitable housing provisions for older people and those with a disability.

There has been a decline in home ownership in the area with the percentage of North Northamptonshire population who were homeowners reducing from 68.1% in 2011 to 65% in 2021. Also, the area has seen an increase in the percentage of the population who were renting privately to 18.4% in 2021 from 14.1% in 2011 demonstrating the need to ensure the Private Rented Sector in North Northamptonshire is accessible and providing decent quality accommodation.

The percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were unemployed (excluding full-time students) in North Northamptonshire fell from 3.8% to 2.3%, while the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were retired (economically inactive) increased from 21.3% to 21.5%.

It is worth highlighting the latest Census 2021 data took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which was a period of rapid and unparalleled change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market and therefore needs to be considered when looking at these trends.

Average house prices increased by over £30,000 between June 2021 and June 2022, coinciding with the beginning of the cost-of-living crisis in the UK and have continued to rise since.

The ratio of median house price to median annual gross income in North Northamptonshire is 7.8, which means that the average price of a property in the locality is 7.8 times more than the average annual salary reflecting that home ownership is not an accessible option to all. In addition, according to the 2023 North Northamptonshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) 50.8% of households are likely to have insufficient income to afford lower quartile market housing rent. According to North Northamptonshire Council's Housing Performance report (Nov23), during 2022/23, 32% of all NNC tenants were claiming Universal Credit. This has increased to 37.2% in November 2023.

The cost of renting privately has been increasing year on year and the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which is a housing benefit scheme for people living in privately rented accommodation, has not increased since 2021 despite a rise in inflation and interest rates. The shortfall between LHA and median private rental figures for 2021/22 are between £50 and almost £250 per month depending on the nature (shared or self-contained) and bedroom capacity of the accommodation.

Landlord possession claims have increased since the removal of the Coronavirus Act in September 2021 and they have continued to rise throughout 2023, particularly claims made by private landlords.

The number of HMOs in North Northamptonshire has remained stable throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23 and is currently at a total of 428.

All these factors, although not all directly linked with homelessness, will have contributed to the homelessness and rough sleeping levels in North Northamptonshire.

## Homelessness in North Northamptonshire – Review of Data

The word 'homeless' is often widely used to refer to people who are rough sleeping however the actual definition is much broader. According to the Housing Act 1996, a person is considered legally homeless if any of the following apply:

- They have no accommodation available to occupy
- They are at risk of violence or domestic abuse
- They have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy it
- They have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it
- They have no legal right to occupy their accommodation
- They live in a mobile home or houseboat but have no place to put it or live in it

Every quarter, local housing authorities in England are required to submit data to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) relating to their responsibilities under the homelessness legislation. This data enables the Council to look at local trends over time, make comparisons with regional and national figures, and plan effectively for the future. This section will summarise the main findings from an analysis of the data collated for North Northamptonshire.

## Homelessness Approaches

Each local housing authority has a duty to provide advice and information to any person that approaches as homeless or at risk of homelessness. In North Northamptonshire it is the

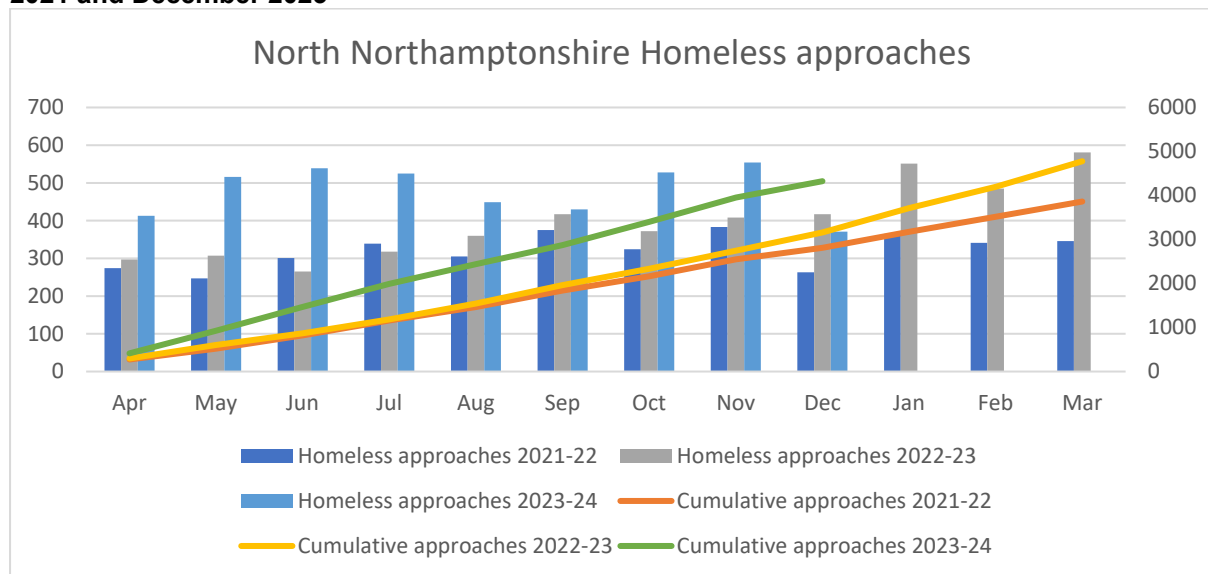
Housing Options Team that will provide support to these households, highlighting what help is available both from North Northamptonshire Council and its partners, and how to access this help.

Whilst a household member may approach the Council for advice and support in relation to their housing situation at any stage, it is more likely that approaches are made when a household is threatened with the possibility of losing their accommodation, for example after being issued with a possession notice from their mortgage lender or a section 21 notice from their landlord, or at the point where they have to leave their existing place of residence with no settled place to move to.

Figure 1 provides a comparison of the number of people who have approached the Council for advice and support since day one of North Northamptonshire Council. During 2021/22, a total of 3,843 households approached the Council as homeless which was an average of 320 approaches per month. During the following year, 2022/23, 4,778 households sought the assistance of the Council in relation to their housing situation which equates to an average of 398 approaches per month. This represents a 24% increase in homeless approaches year on year highlighting the increasing demand on the service.

Between April 2023 and December 2023 there were a further 4,325 homeless approaches indicating that the number of people who are approaching the Council for help is continuing to rise. During that time period, although the number of approaches fluctuated, the number recorded each month remained higher than the previous year. The only exception was December '23 when there were 371 approaches compared with 417 in December of the previous year.

**Figure 1: The number of homelessness approaches in North Northamptonshire between April 2021 and December 2023**



Source: NNC Homelessness Monitoring Performance

Reviewing the 4,778 approaches made during 2022/23, 3,308 were closed before reaching assessment stage and 1,470 of those households (31% of all approaches) completed a full housing assessment. This may be due to various factors including lack of further engagement from the household who have approached, lack of eligibility often due to immigration status, households returning to custody or having found their own accommodation before the application process has begun.

Comparing with the same dataset from 2021/22, out of the 3,843 approaches made, 2,439 were closed before reaching the assessment stage and 1,404 households (36.5% of all approaches) completed a full housing assessment.



## Duty to Refer

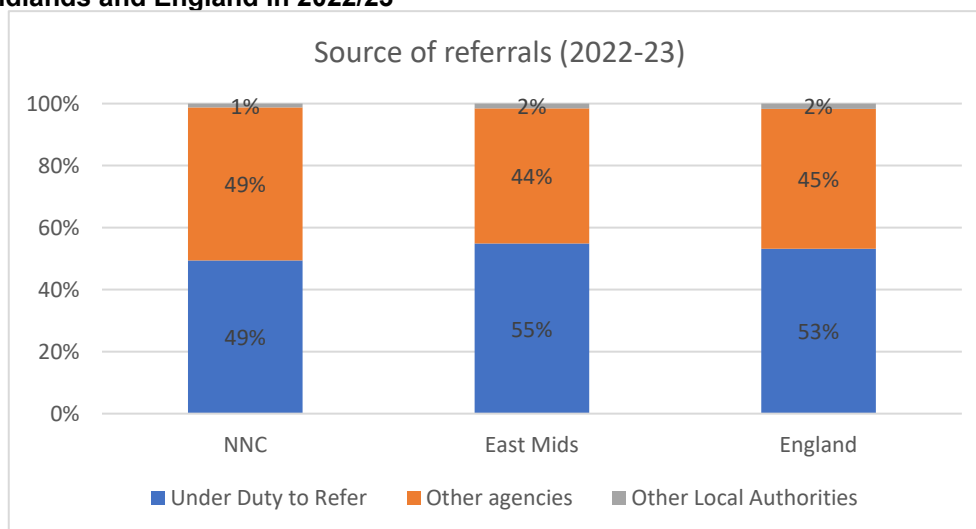
The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a duty on public authorities (Prisons, Probation Service, Health Partners, Youth Offending Teams, and Services for example) to refer, with their consent, any service user that they suspect is homeless or threatened with homelessness to a local authority of the service user's choice.

The duty to refer aims to help ensure that all public services are working together effectively to prevent homelessness by ensuring that peoples' housing needs are considered when they contact other public authorities. Local housing authorities therefore work with local partners and agencies to promote and facilitate effective referrals, by encouraging early intervention and hopefully increasing the chance of preventing homelessness cases locally.

In the financial year 2022/23, 50% of all referrals made from other organisations to North Northamptonshire Council were made through Duty to Refer which represented 132 actual cases out of a total of 264 referrals received. This was a slight reduction from 53% in 2021/22 and was slightly below the percentage of referrals made through this service at regional and national levels in 2022/23. This highlights an area of focus going forward to ensure that homeless cases can be prevented at an early stage through stronger partnerships to intervene earlier.

In North Northamptonshire the highest number of the referrals were made by the National Probation Service (NPS) (41%), followed by Hospital A&E department, urgent treatment centres or in-patient care (22%) and Adult Social Services (15%). Job Centre Plus was also responsible for 9% of the overall referrals through Duty to Refer which accounted for 13 referrals.

**Figure 2: % of referrals made through duty to refer in North Northamptonshire compared with East Midlands and England in 2022/23**



Source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

## Homelessness Caseload

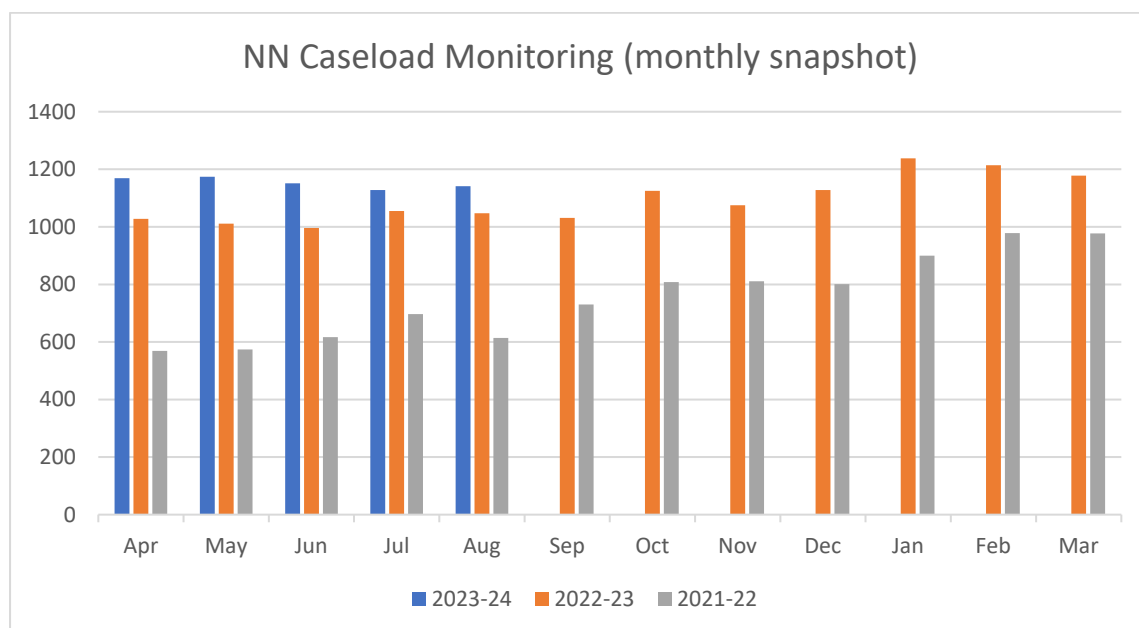
Homelessness caseload refers to all households currently being supported by the Council's Housing Options Team and who are in one of the following stages of the homelessness process:

- having approached the council and are awaiting a full housing assessment,
- households in the homelessness application process,
- households who are accepted as being owed a prevention duty, relief duty or main housing duty.

Monitoring of caseload through each stage of the homelessness process can highlight where there may be resource pressures that need addressing or identify areas to focus on in conjunction with partner agencies to ensure continuous development and improvement of services and processes to prevent and relieve homelessness across North Northamptonshire.

Figure 3 shows that caseload continually increased between April 2021 and March 2022 and throughout the following year (2022/23) there were consistently over 1,000 households being assisted by the Council due to being homeless or at risk of homelessness at any one time. This increased to 1,238 in January 2023 and has remained consistently above 1,100 cases between February 2023 and August 2023. This increasing pressure being placed on the Housing Options Team to support a larger number of households identifies that resources need to be sufficient to meet the consistently high level of demand being seen to ensure homeless households can be supported efficiently.

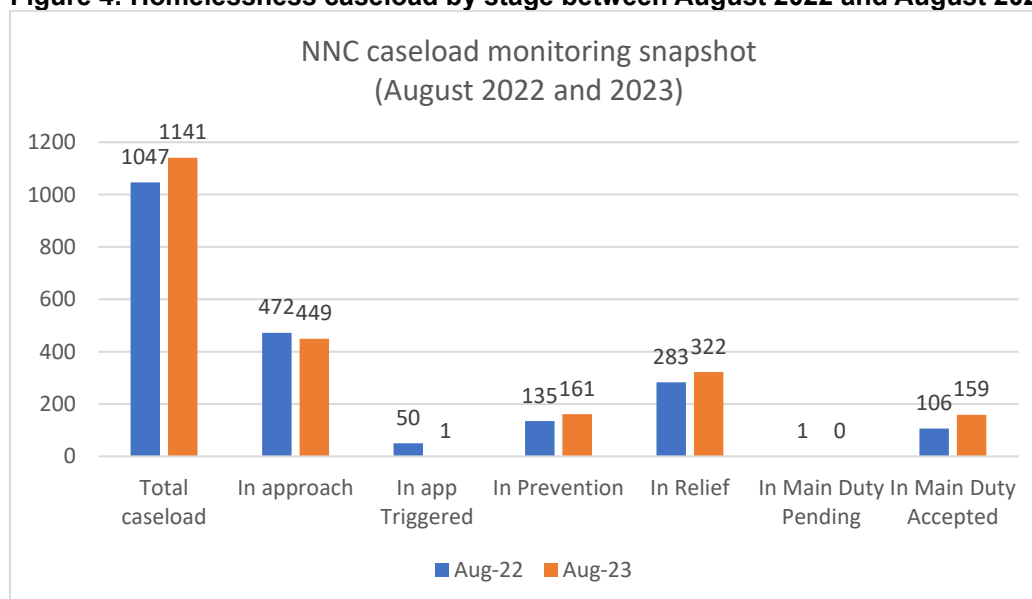
**Figure 3: Monthly snapshot of caseload in North Northamptonshire from April 2021 to August 2023**



Source: NNC Housing Options performance management system

Figure 4 provides a snapshot of how caseload is divided by which stage the cases are at in the homelessness process in August 2023. The total caseload for the month was recorded as 1,141 households, of which 39% were in approach, 14% were accepted as being owed a Prevention Duty and 28% were accepted as being owed a Relief Duty. Comparing this data with a snapshot of August 2022, with the exception of the number of households in approach, there has been an increase in the number of households at each stage, highlighting an increase in caseload and therefore added pressure on the Council's homelessness service year on year. The number of households in the approach stage has reduced to 39% from 45% in the previous year.

**Figure 4: Homelessness caseload by stage between August 2022 and August 2023**



Source: Housing Options performance management system

The Council monitor the number of cases that are in the approach stage for longer than 30 days. At the beginning of October 2023, 36% of cases had been in the approach stage for more than 30 days. This has reduced by 14% since a peak in May 2023 when 50% of cases in the approach stage had been at that stage for more than 30 days.

It is also notable from the data in Table 1 that the overall number of cases in approach for longer than a month has gradually fallen since the beginning of 2023/24. This indicates that cases are beginning to be moved to the next stage quicker, but this remains an area of focus for the Council going forward to ensure more cases are supported sooner in order to maximise all opportunities to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage.

**Table 1: The number and % of cases that are in approach for longer than 30 days in 2023/24**

Date	Number of cases	Number in approach for more than 30 days	%
01.04.2023	529	217	41%
01.05.2023	515	258	50%
01.06.2023	529	236	45%
01.07.2023	486	217	45%
01.08.2023	468	174	45%

Source: NNC Housing Options Backlog project

## Prevention and Relief Duty

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 brought significant changes to the way local authorities deal with those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Two new duties were added to the previous statutory rehousing duty (main housing duty): a prevention duty and a relief duty for all eligible households.

The prevention duty places a duty on the Council to take all reasonable steps to prevent any eligible person who is threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless. The Council is focused on preventing or relieving homelessness at the earliest opportunity by supporting households to remain in their current accommodation by liaising with landlords, arranging mediation with family or friends, or if needed finding alternative suitable accommodation to ensure homelessness is prevented.

The length of time a household can be considered as threatened with homelessness was extended from 28 days to 56 days by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which encourages a focus on intervening and preventing homelessness at an earlier stage.

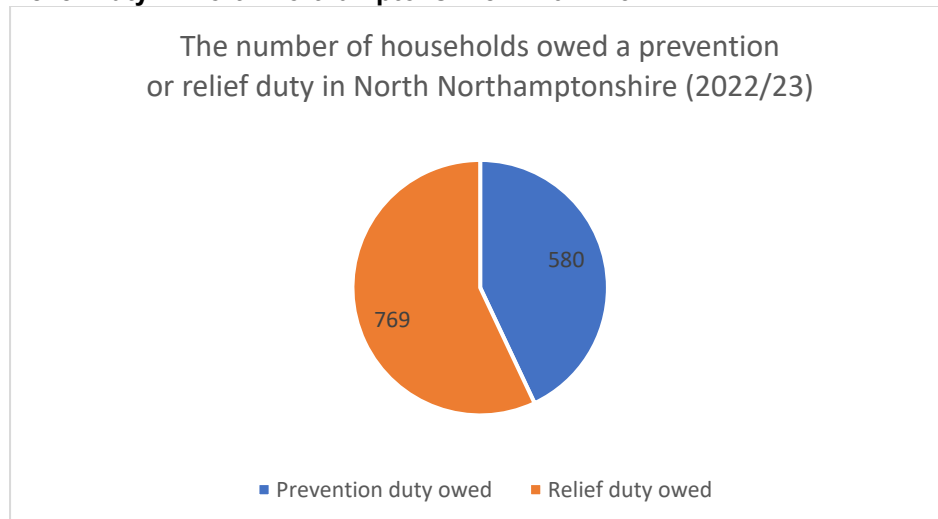
The relief duty places a duty on the local authority to help relieve a household who is homeless and eligible by taking reasonable steps to help the household secure suitable accommodation that is available for a minimum of 6 months.

The reasonable steps to be taken by both the Council and the household to help secure accommodation will be set out within a personalised housing plan drawn up and reviewed regularly by the Housing Options Team and the household together.

Figure 6 provides the total number of households in North Northamptonshire who were accepted as being owed a prevention or relief duty between April 2022 and March 2023 (2022/23) at initial approach. In total, 580 households were accepted as being owed a prevention duty compared with 769 who were accepted as being owed a relief duty.

In the same year there were a further 183 households who were owed a relief duty, however these were households who had previously been owed a prevention duty by the Council but were not prevented from becoming homeless at that point. Out of all households who were owed a relief duty in 2022/23, 19% were previously owed a prevention duty with the Council and 769 (81%) were accepted as being owed a relief duty from the approach stage. This highlights a need to look at how households can be helped in a timely manner whilst in the prevention stage and also shows that a high number of people are approaching the Council when they are at crisis point and homeless rather than at an earlier stage, before the loss of accommodation, when their homelessness has more chance of being prevented.

**Figure 6: The number of households who were accepted as being owed either a Prevention or Relief Duty in North Northamptonshire in 2022/23**



Source: NNC Housing Options Performance Monitoring Database 2022/23

According to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, a successful prevention means that a household is either assisted to remain in their current property or that new accommodation is secured prior to them becoming homeless. A successful relief is when a household is secured alternative suitable accommodation within 56 days of the relief duty being accepted. In both cases the accommodation secured for or by the applicant must be available for at least six months.

In 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire, 257 households were successfully prevented from becoming homeless by being accommodated in secure accommodation for six months or more. This accounted for 49% of all households who were owed a prevention duty and was the same as for the previous year. This was an improvement on the previous year when 46% of households were prevented from becoming homeless in North Northamptonshire, however, it is slightly lower than the 57% and 53% recorded regionally and nationally respectively.

During 2022/23, North Northamptonshire successfully relieved 331 households of homelessness by helping them to find secure accommodation for six months or more. This accounted for 37% of all households owed a relief duty and was on par with the previous year in North Northamptonshire as well as the data recorded at a national level. However, it was notably lower than the 45% of households who were relieved of homelessness in the East Midlands.

Table 3 shows that a large proportion of households are not receiving a decision or the appropriate help before their prevention duty is ended or within the stated 56-day relief period. In April 2023, 55% of households owed a prevention duty were overdue to receive assistance or a decision, with an increase to 65% of households in August 2023.

Of households owed a relief duty in April 2023, 49% were not assisted within the 56 days specified and this then increased to over 50% each month until August 2023, when the percentage of overdue households reduced to 46%. These overdue cases may be for various reasons; households failing to provide information in a timely manner, the gathering of information for a case taking longer than expected or possibly due a backlog of cases. Each Housing Options Officer has an individual caseload and previous data highlights the continued increasing demand on the service which will impact the ability to efficiently support all cases and the current housing market conditions making housing solutions more difficult to secure.

Monitoring this caseload data closely is helping to monitor the level of demand and will help identify barriers in the process that can be reviewed. It will also provide an evidence base for when a restructure takes place for the teams within this service.

**Table 3: Breakdown of caseload showing those households in Prevention or Relief Duty and the number of those households who are overdue a duty.**

Caseload	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23
<b>Total caseload</b>	1169	1174	1151	1128	1141
<b>In prevention / of which overdue</b>	177 / 93	171 / 111	167 / 77	156 / 83	161 / 105
<b>% of overdue prevention cases</b>	55%	65%	46%	53%	65%
<b>In relief / of which overdue</b>	290 / 142	294 / 158	290 / 149	308 / 159	322 / 147
<b>% of overdue relief</b>	49%	54%	51%	52%	46%

Source: NNC Housing Options Backlog project

## Main Housing Duty

A household will be accepted as being owed a main housing duty if they are found to be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance, have a priority need, and when the Council has been unable to achieve a positive housing solution during the prevention and relief stages of the homelessness process.

An applicant will be assessed as in priority need if they are:

- at risk of abuse from a partner, ex or family member
- pregnant or living with someone who is pregnant

- living with their dependent children
- homeless because of things like fire, flood or other disasters
- vulnerable due to old age, mental illness, a learning disability, physical disability
- vulnerable due to having been in custody or a member of the armed forces
- age 18-21 and were in care
- at risk of harm due to violence from another person

When a person is accepted as being in priority need and therefore, owed a main housing duty, the Council has a duty to help them secure settled accommodation that is available to them for at least six months.

During 2021/22 there were a total of 310 households accepted as being owed the main housing duty compared to 298 households in 2022/23 which is 75.4% in 2021/22 and 70.3% in 2022/23 of all main duty decisions. This highlights a small decrease year on year despite the noted increase in initial homelessness approaches to the Council and is 20% of the total number of applicants which puts significant pressure on the need to find and secure suitable accommodation. Between April 2023 and November 2023, the Council had already accepted 308 main duties, therefore a significant increase is expected for the year 2023/24. The percentage of main duty decisions which end in a main duty being accepted by North Northamptonshire Council is higher than in the East Midlands (65.6%) and slightly lower than at a national level (71.1%). However, in the East Midlands and England, the trend is that this percentage is increasing year on year.

## Profile of Homeless Applicants

The profile of homeless applicants is monitored to ensure that services are accessible to all members of the community, and current and future responses can be delivered and planned based on needs and trends local to North Northamptonshire as well as being able to draw comparisons regionally and nationally to inform service delivery.

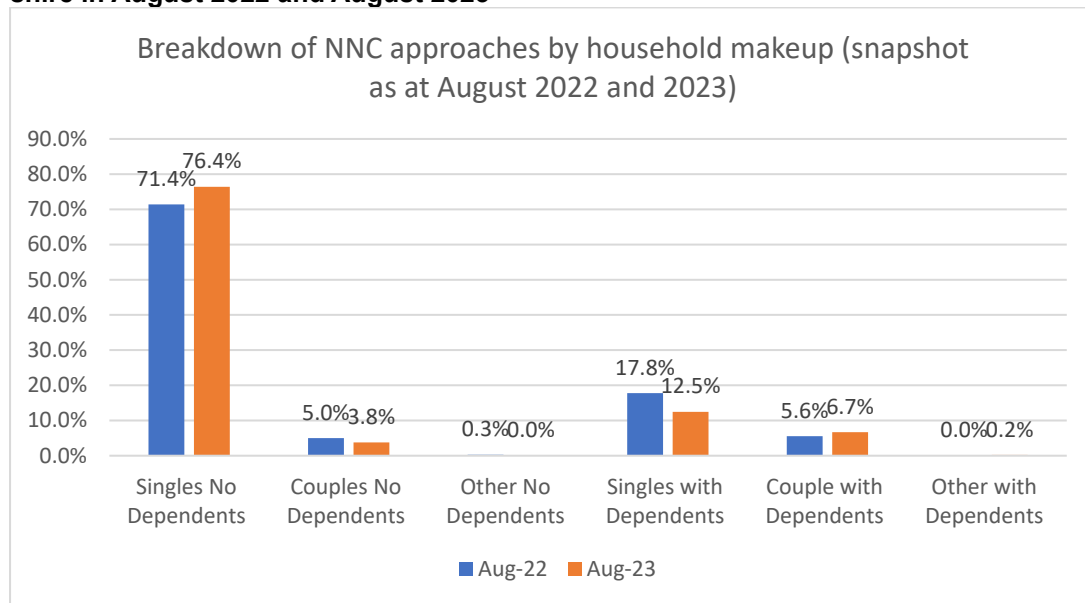
The following pages provide a breakdown of homeless applicants by:

- Household type
- Age group
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- National Identity
- Support needs

### Household Type

In August 2023, the highest percentage of homelessness approaches (82.4%) were made by single adults with no dependents and among the remaining 17.6% of approaches, the majority were from single adults with dependents. This reflects that most homelessness cases in North Northamptonshire are from single people and, as reflected in Figure 7, this has remained the same since the same period last year (August 2022).

**Figure 7: The breakdown of homeless approaches by household type in North Northamptonshire in August 2022 and August 2023**

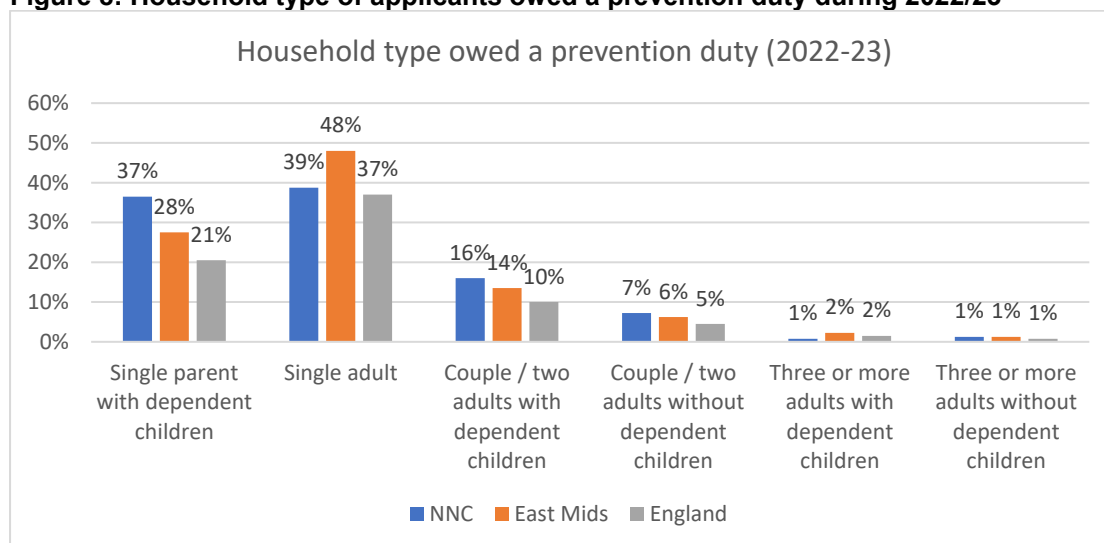


Source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

Figure 8 provides a breakdown of the total number of households accepted as being owed a prevention duty by household type. This highlights that single adults with dependents and single adults with no dependents accounted for 37% and 39% respectively and represented the largest proportion of households owed a prevention duty.

In comparison to other areas, North Northamptonshire saw a higher percentage of single adults with dependents owed a prevention duty than levels seen both regionally and nationally (28% and 21% respectively). However, the number of single adults with no dependents who were owed a prevention duty was lower in North Northamptonshire than in the East Midlands as a whole but similar to the number recorded for England. Compared to the previous year, the breakdown of household types has remained similar in North Northamptonshire although a slight increase in single adults can be noted; 36% of households owed a prevention duty were single adults with dependent children and 42% were single adults with no dependents in 2021/22.

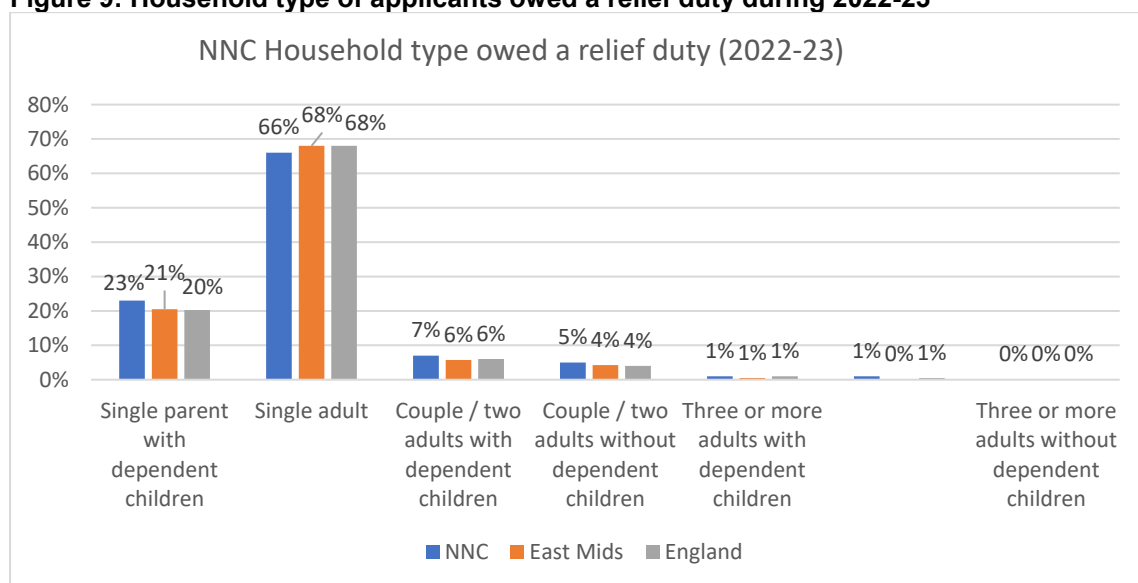
**Figure 8: Household type of applicants owed a prevention duty during 2022/23**



Data source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

The breakdown of household type amongst those who were accepted as being owed a relief duty during 2022/23 is set out in Figure 9. This differs from that seen amongst those who were owed a prevention duty. The majority of households (66%) were single adults with no dependents and adults with dependent children made up only 23% of those owed a relief duty. This is very similar to the data recorded in 2021/22 when 64% of households were single adults with no dependents and adults with dependent children made up 25% of those owed a relief duty. This pattern was reflected at both a regional and national level with single adults being the largest proportion of homeless households with a relief duty owed. This highlights that many single adults are in crisis when they approach the Council for support, and it is this household type that needs to be targeted to understand the reasons and causes of their homelessness. The Council also recognises a need to explore how it can, with the support of its partners, help to encourage earlier proactive steps to be taken by those at risk of homelessness and to review accommodation provision locally to ensure the needs of single homeless individuals can be met.

**Figure 9: Household type of applicants owed a relief duty during 2022-23**



Source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

### Age group

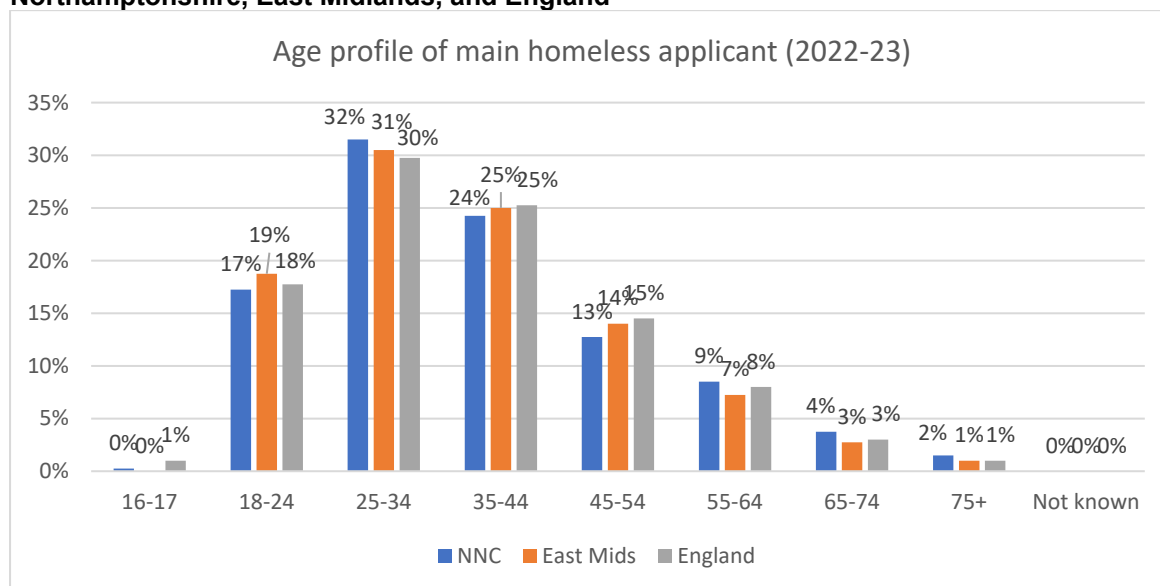
According to the 2021 Census, the average age in Northamptonshire is 40 years old which is slightly lower when compared to the East Midlands region (41.6) but the same as England as a whole (40).

In North Northamptonshire, during 2022/23 just over 30% of homeless applicants accepted as being owed either a prevention or relief duty were between 25-34 years old which represented the largest group as shown in Figure 10. The second largest age group owed a prevention or relief duty, at almost 25% were those aged between 35 and 44 years old, therefore highlighting that over 50% of all homeless applicants were aged between 25 and 44 years old.

Both age groups were only one percentage point higher than in 2021/22. However, the percentage of homeless applicants aged between 18 and 24 years reduced 5 percentage points from 22% in 2021/22 to 17% in 2022/23 which is reflective of the positive work being done in North Northamptonshire around youth homelessness since becoming a unitary Council, including the development of a 16/17 year old protocol and leaving care protocol alongside Northamptonshire Children's Trust. The age profile of applicant's accepted as homeless in North Northamptonshire is broadly similar to regional and national trends.



**Figure 10: Age profile of main applicants owed a prevention or relief duty in 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire, East Midlands, and England**



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

## Gender

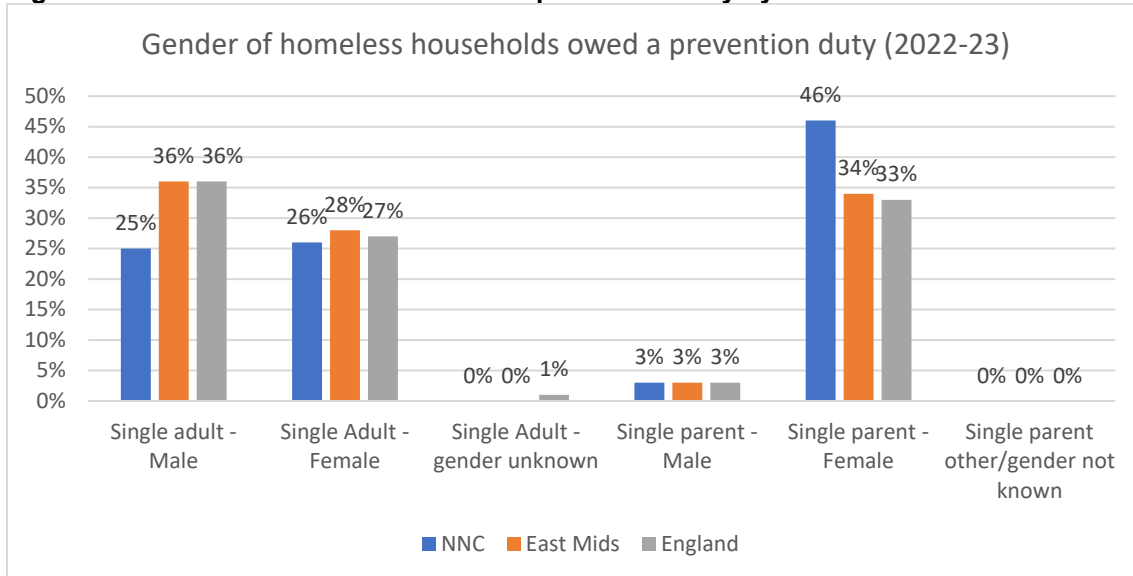
The gender of main applicants is recorded for applications received from single adults and single parents with dependent children.

In 2021/22, 61% of all single adults and single adults with dependents (single parents) who were owed a prevention duty were female and 39% were male. In 2022/23, this increased to 72% female. This is due to the fact that female single parents increased from 41% in 2021/22 to 46% of those owed a prevention duty in North Northamptonshire in 2022/23. The percentage of single male adults decreased considerably from 34% in 2021/22 to 25% in 2022/23 and the opposite occurred for single female adults who accounted for 19% of single female adults owed a prevention duty in 2021/22 and 26% in 2022/23.

The 46% of single female parents accepted as owed a prevention duty in North Northamptonshire is considerably higher than regional and national level where they account for 34% and 33% overall respectively showing that there is an increased homelessness need for single mothers in North Northamptonshire compared to other areas.

However, at a regional and national level, the percentage of single adult males who are owed a prevention duty is over ten percentage points higher than in North Northamptonshire.

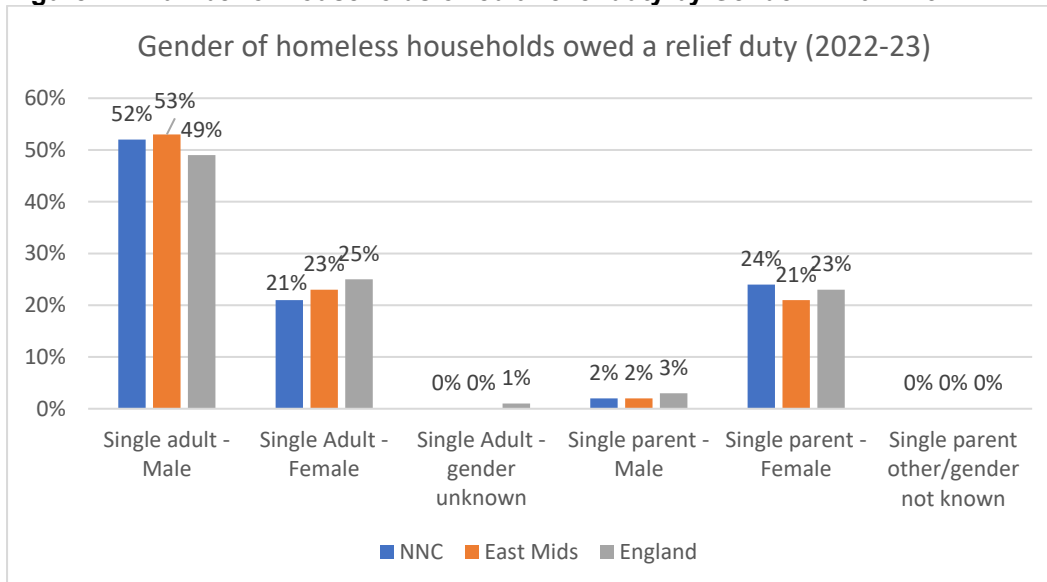
**Figure 11: Number of households owed a prevention duty by Gender in 2022/23**



Source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

Figure 12 provides the gender of single applicants who were accepted as being owed a relief duty in North Northamptonshire during 2022/23 and indicates a different picture in which 52% were single adult males, 21% were single adult females and 24% were female single parents. This breakdown has remained the same since 2021/22 and is also reflected regionally and nationally. The reduction in the number of parents owed a relief duty compared with the number owed a prevention duty will be due to this household type being classed as having a priority need and the figures reflect that there is a shortage of appropriate accommodation locally for single homeless people – meaning they have no other choice but to approach the Council for accommodation.

**Figure 12: Number of households owed a relief duty by Gender in 2022/23**



Data source: HCLIC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

### Ethnicity

To ensure our services are accessible to all members of our community it's important to monitor the ethnicity of households who apply to the Council as homeless.

The largest proportion of homeless applicants identify themselves as White (88.9%) which is reflective of the composition of the overall population in North Northamptonshire according to the 2021 Census data. This is a higher proportion than at a regional and national level where white applicants accounted for 77% and 67% respectively despite 86% of the population identifying themselves as white in the East Midlands and 81% in England. However, amongst those identifying themselves as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, the percentage of homeless applicants is nearly double the percentage in the overall North Northamptonshire population. In the East Midlands region, this was three times higher and in England it was 2.5 times higher. Applicants from within the Asian or Asian British ethnic group accounted for approximately two thirds less than the percentage of the total North Northamptonshire Population. This trend was reflected at a regional and National level.

**Table 4: Ethnicity of applicants 2022/23 compared to North Northamptonshire population according to the 2021 Census**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>North Northamptonshire population Census 2021 (%)</b>	<b>NNC Homeless applicants in 2022/23 * (%)</b>
<b>White</b>	90.3%	90.2%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	3.5%	1.1%
<b>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British</b>	3.1%	5.6%
<b>Mixed/Multiple ethnic group</b>	2.2%	1.6%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	0.8%	1.0%

\* 'Ethnicity not stated' category in original data excluded from calculation

Source: North Northamptonshire population – Office for National Statistics Ethnic group, national identity, language, and religion: Census 2021 in England and Wales

### National Identity

In 2022/23, 83.8% of homeless applicants in North Northamptonshire were UK Nationals which is a slightly less than in the overall North Northamptonshire population, but similar to regional figures and slightly higher than national figures showed. Applicants from Croatia and the A8 and A2 EEA states represented 8.6% of applicants in North Northamptonshire which was a lot higher than the 3.7% seen nationally and 5.3% recorded at a regional level. Overall, non-UK nationals made up 16.2 % of all homeless applicants which was slightly lower than the 18.8% seen nationally but an increase from 10.3% of homeless applicants who were non-UK nationals in North Northamptonshire in 2021/22.

**Table 5: National Identity of homeless applicants in 2021/22 and 2022/23 across NNC, East Midlands and England**

National Identity	North Northamptonshire population Census 2021 (%)	Homeless applicants in 2021/22 (%): NNC	Homeless applicants in 2021/22 (%): East Midlands	Homeless applicants in 2021/22 (%): England	Homeless applicants in 2022/23 (%): NNC	Homeless applicants in 2022/23 (%): East Midlands	Homeless applicants in 2022/23 (%): England
UK	88.3	86.7	86.8	84	83.8	83.9	81.2
Ireland	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3
A8, A2 & Croatia **		7.6	4.7	3.3	8.6	5.3	3.7
Other EEA	11.2	2	2.2	2.8	3.9	2.9	3.5
Non-EEA		3.2	5.8	7.2	3.4	7.2	9.3

\*\* European Economic Area (EEA) states to have joined since 2004: A8 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), A2 (Bulgaria and Romania) and Croatia

Source: Homeless applicants - DLUHC *Statutory Homelessness in England*; National Identity – Office for National Statistics *National identity, England and Wales*

## Support Needs

There are many different types of support needs which may make a person more vulnerable to becoming homeless and result in them needing additional support whilst they are accommodated. In 2022/23, North Northamptonshire Council assessed 1,386 households. Of these households 98.3% (1,362) were accepted as owed either a prevention or relief duty and 35.5% (483) of these households had at least one support need. This is slightly lower than the 37.7% recorded in 2021/22. The proportion of households in the local area with support needs is lower than the 53% (22/23) of those with at least one support need and owed a duty both regionally and nationally.

The three main support needs expressed by homeless applicants in North Northamptonshire are due to a history of mental health problems, physical ill health and disability, and those experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse. These support needs accounted for 39% of all support needs of homeless households in the locality during 2022/23.

**Table 6: Main support needs of Homeless applicants in North Northamptonshire during 2022/23**

Support need	NNC cases 22/23	NNC 2021/22	NNC 2022/23	East Midlands 2021/22	East Midlands 2022/23	England 2021/22	England 2022/23
History of mental health problems	230	17.6%	16.9%	26.5%	27.2%	26.2%	26.6%
Physical ill health and disability	203	13.7%	14.9%	16.5%	19%	16.8%	18.2%
At risk of/ has experienced domestic abuse	91	6.2%	6.7%	11.8%	10.6%	11.7%	11.9%

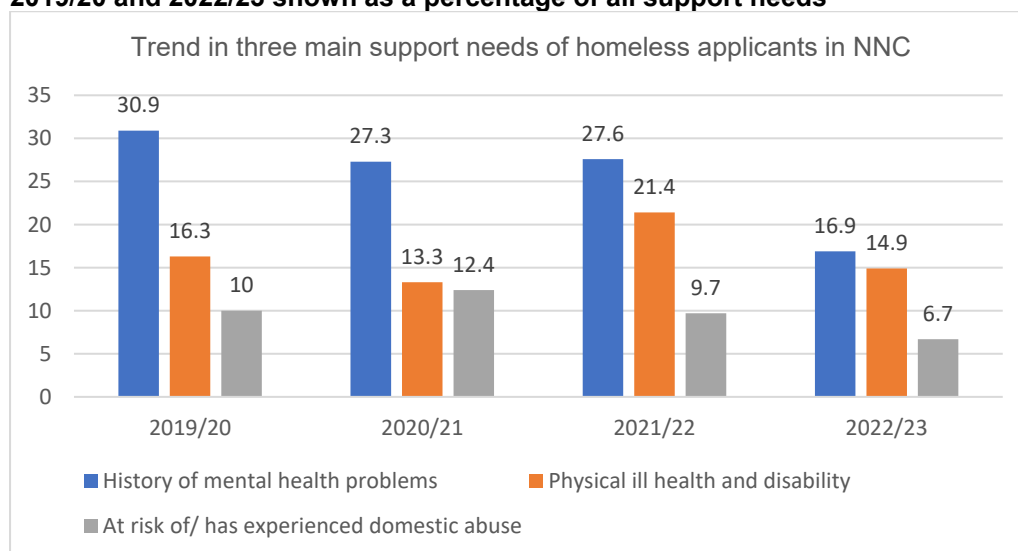
Source: DLUHC *Statutory Homelessness in England*

Figure 13 provides the breakdown of the three main support needs of homeless applicants in North Northans between 2019/20 and 2022/23.

The percentage of overall support needs accounted for by physical ill health and disability has fluctuated slightly between 2019/20 and 2022/23. There was a small decrease from 16.3% in 2019/20 to 13.3% in 2020/21. Since then, the number of applicants with this support need has gradually increased to 14.9% in 2022/23. This indicates a potential need for more adapted properties and ongoing support for those households affected by physical ill health and disability.

As is evident in Figure 13, in North Northamptonshire, support needs due to a history of mental health problems have reduced from 30.9% in 2019/20 to 16.9% in 2022/23 and now account for a lower percentage of total support needs than those recorded regionally and nationally. However, there is still the need to ensure that the needs of these vulnerable groups are being appropriately met by services and suitable accommodation provision. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on local authorities in England to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children by placing them in refuges or other safe accommodation. Support required for those experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse increased from 10% of all support needs in 2019/20 to 12.4% in 2020/21 but has since reduced to 6.2% in 2022/23, which brought North Northamptonshire below regional and national levels. During 2022/23 this support need accounted for 6.7% of all support needs. The reason behind this pattern may be related to the Covid-19 pandemic but it may also be attributed to the strategic work being done in collaboration with both West Northamptonshire Council and local partners which was initiated in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. A new partnership board has been created and a new strategy has already been produced which takes into account the housing and related support needs of this vulnerable cohort. This pattern was not seen at a regional or national level, where this type of support need has seen a small but steady rise year on year over the same 4-year period.

**Figure 13: Trend in the three main support needs of homeless applicants in NNC between 2019/20 and 2022/23 shown as a percentage of all support needs**



Source: *DLUHC Statutory Homelessness in England*

## Reasons for Homelessness

Analysing the reasons for homelessness among households accepted as homeless allows us to identify important trends. The two most frequent reasons for households being

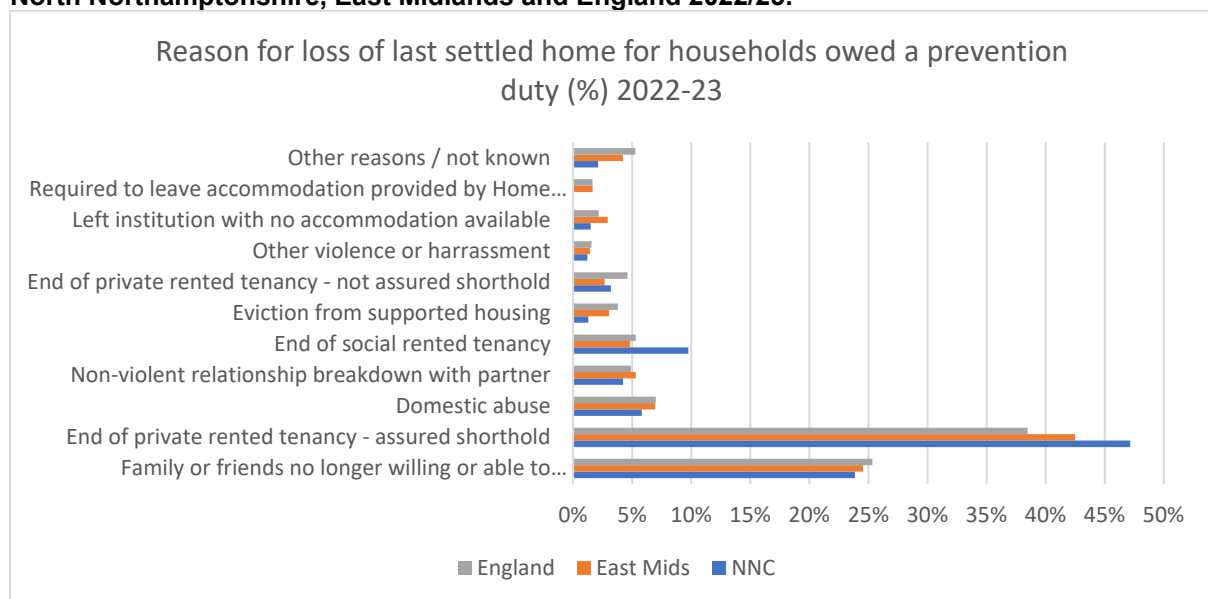
accepted as homelessness in North Northamptonshire during both 2021/22 and 2022/23 were:

- a private rented tenancy coming to an end.
- family or friends being no longer willing or able to accommodate.

These reasons accounted for almost 71% of households owed a prevention duty and 48% of those owed a relief duty. However, it is important to note that out of all households owed a relief duty, the end of a private tenancy accounted for 16% and was secondary to family or friends being unwilling or unable to accommodate (32%). In contrast, the number of households owed a prevention duty due to the ending of a private tenancy was almost three times higher at 47%. This is slightly higher than figures recorded regionally but notably higher than at a national level, where this reason accounted for 38% of all of those who were accepted as being owed a prevention duty. In North Northamptonshire, friends and family being no longer willing or able to accommodate represented a lower proportion at 24% of all households in prevention. This was in line with regional and national data.

In 2021/22 North Northamptonshire saw a notable increase in the number of households who became homeless due to the ending of a private rental tenancy compared to the previous year and these numbers have remained at the same level throughout 2022/23. This is likely due to the withdrawal of the Coronavirus Act which was put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic which prevented Landlords from evicting tenants, as well as being linked to the cost of living crisis. It shows the need for the Council and partners to work more effectively with the private rented sector to prevent homelessness locally.

**Figure 14: Reason for loss of last settled home for households owed a prevention duty in North Northamptonshire, East Midlands and England 2022/23.**

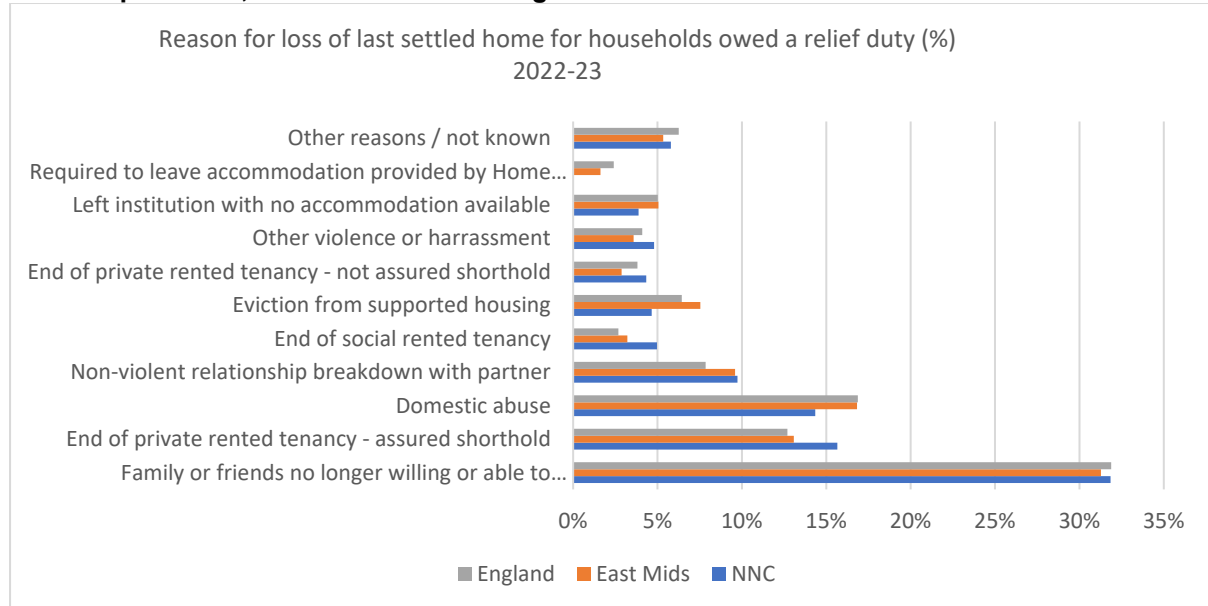


Source: DLUHC Statutory Homelessness in England

Among households who were owed a prevention duty, the ending of a social tenancy accounted for 10% of households and was the third most frequent reason for homelessness in the locality. Within the context of those owed a relief duty however, this reason only accounted for 5%, both values higher than the previous year. These figures are both in line with regional data for each category but are slightly higher than those recorded nationally. Domestic abuse and the breakdown of a non-violent relationship were recorded as the third and fourth most recorded reasons for homelessness amongst households owed a relief duty in 2022/23. Within this category, domestic abuse made up 14% of total households compared to 6% of those owed a prevention duty. This is most likely because those fleeing from domestic abuse often do so at crisis point when they are forced to leave

their previous accommodation. In comparison to regional and national figures, North Northamptonshire has a lower percentage of homelessness due to domestic abuse in both categories (relief and prevention).

**Figure 15: Reason for loss of last settled home for households owed a relief duty in North Northamptonshire, East Midlands and England 2022/23**



Source: DLUHC Statutory Homelessness in England

## Temporary accommodation (TA)

As is the case at a regional and national level, in North Northamptonshire the supply of affordable accommodation is insufficient to meet demand. If an applicant is found to be homeless (owed a duty), eligible for help and of priority need, the local authority is legally required to provide temporary accommodation under section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 until they have discharged their duty which, for most households, is at the point where a suitable settled housing solution becomes available.

Throughout 2022/23 there was a gradual increase in the number of households who were placed into temporary accommodation each month in North Northamptonshire. In September 2022 this increased to over 200 households and remained consistently above this for the remainder of the financial year. From March 2023 onwards, this has increased to over 230 households and remains above this number to date reflecting a high number of households not currently in settled accommodation due to lack of suitable accommodation to resolve their housing need.

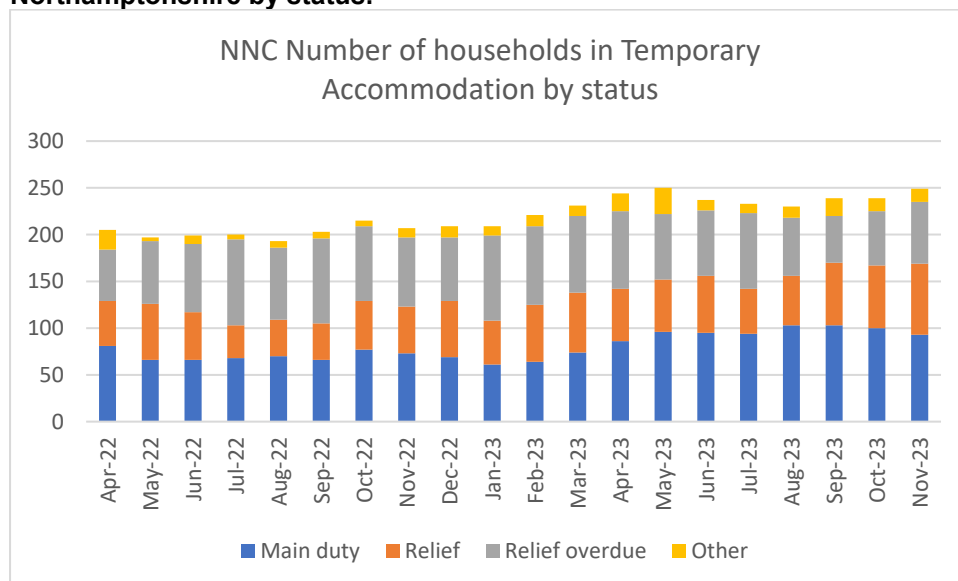
Figure 16 shows the number of households in temporary accommodation, broken down by status; whether they are owed a main duty, relief duty, and if they are overdue a relief duty or other (unknown).

Between April 2022 and February 2023, the proportion of all households who were in Temporary Accommodation and were accepted as being owed a main duty decreased from 39.5% to 29%. However, between March 2023 and August 2023 this increased and 43.1% of all households in TA were owed a main duty. The increase in main duty accepted cases occupying temporary accommodation since March 2023 is the result of two main factors. Firstly, our housing options team have been focusing on more timely decision making and reducing the number of cases that are overdue a main decision. Secondly, the availability of



settled housing solutions are insufficient to ensure a timely move on from Temporary Accommodation.

**Figure 16: Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation during 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire by status.**



Source: North Northamptonshire Housing Options PMS

As per figure 16, and as at the end of June 2023 (the most recently published H-CLIC government data), North Northamptonshire Council had 241 households in Temporary Accommodation. Whilst the use of Temporary Accommodation remains a concern for the Council due to the financial and social costs, comparatively with neighbouring and similar unitary authorities, the use of temporary accommodation is relatively low.

Figure 16 shows that there are consistently more households waiting for a relief duty decision that is overdue, as opposed to those where a relief duty has been accepted. This highlights a need for an adequately resourced Housing Options team to reach more timely decisions on homeless cases if relief efforts have failed. This trend has flipped since September 2023 as the Housing Options team have focused on making decisions in a timelier manner.

The type of temporary accommodation provided varies and includes the following types of accommodation:

- owned by the council, existing council housing properties
- owned by the council, acquired for the sole purpose of providing temporary accommodation
- owned by Registered Providers
- Leased from private sector landlords
- Self-contained accommodation owned by private providers and paid for at a nightly rate
- Bed and breakfast rooms

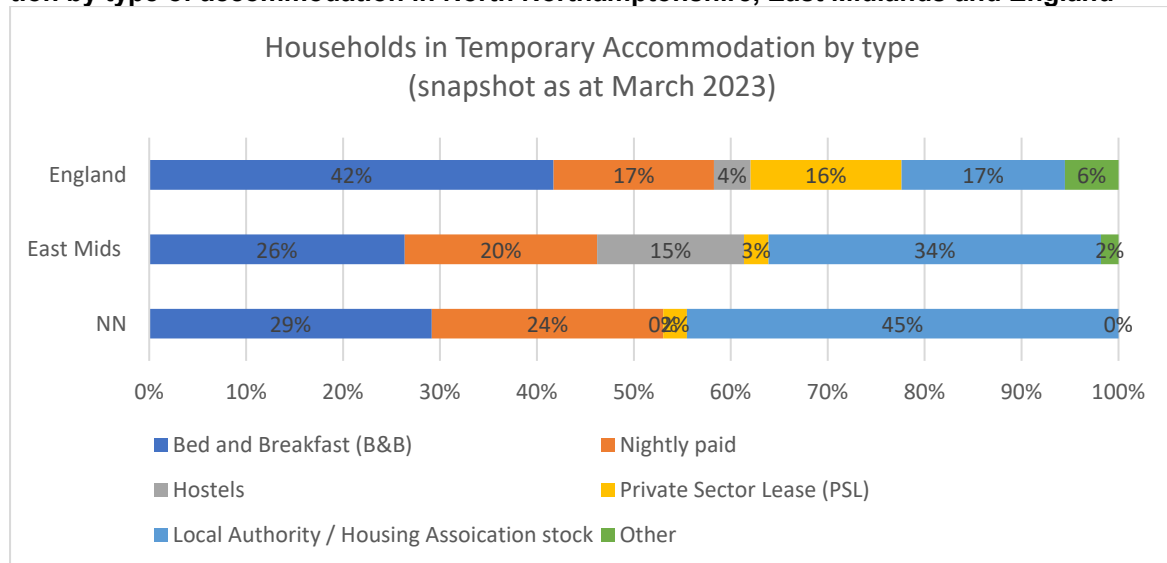
A snapshot from March 2023 in Figure 17 showed that approximately 45% of the households in temporary accommodation were residing in properties owned by North Northamptonshire Council and although a successful effort has been made to reduce the use of nightly paid temporary accommodation through a Dynamic Purchasing System agreement (including a new HMO TA model), around 53% of households are in self-contained nightly paid or bed and breakfast accommodation. This represents a reduction in the use of nightly paid accommodation in comparison to the beginning of 2022/23, and more recent data from



August 2023 reports that the proportion of households in these types of accommodation had reduced to 45%. Despite this decrease, a need for a greater North Northamptonshire Council owned temporary accommodation provision is highlighted.

Compared with regional and national data in Figure 17, the use of local authority and housing association stock as temporary accommodation is much higher in North Northamptonshire. The use of bed & breakfasts is higher in North Northamptonshire than at a regional level and much lower than for England as a whole. However, North Northamptonshire has a higher usage of nightly paid accommodation than both regionally and nationally. This implies a significant financial cost to the council.

**Figure 17: Snapshot from March 2023 of the number of households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation in North Northamptonshire, East Midlands and England**



Source: North Northamptonshire Housing Options PMS

During 2022/23, on average, 10% of those in temporary accommodation had been living there for more than a year. This highlights a need to move households on more quickly into settled accommodation.

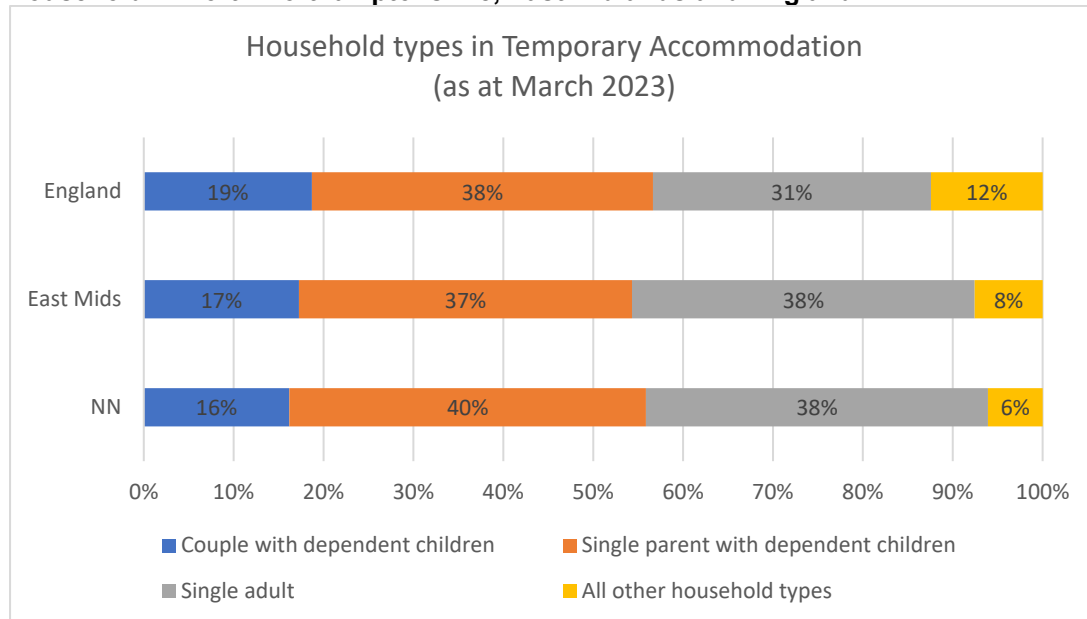
The experience of being placed in temporary accommodation away from local support networks can have a negative impact on individual and household wellbeing. This is recognised and focus has been given to reduce the number of households in this situation. Of all households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2022, 36 households were being accommodated outside the North Northamptonshire area. This has been successfully reduced throughout 2022/23 to 8 households in March 2023. This represents a 78% reduction over the twelve-month period and in August 2023 only one household was being accommodated out of area. This was maintained in September and in October and November 2023 there were no households living in TA out of Area.

According to a snapshot in March 2023 as shown in Figure 18, the majority of households in temporary accommodation were either single parents with dependent children (40%) or single adults (38%). These two groups accounted for 78% of all households in temporary accommodation. Regional and national average data shows a slightly higher proportion of single parents in temporary accommodation, and a lower proportion of single adults than nationally.

The figures evidence that there is a high proportion of single people in TA evidencing an inadequate supply of suitable settled accommodation with housing related support for this household type. Single homelessness is a significant challenge for North Northamptonshire. Local authorities have a legal duty to ensure that households with family commitments spend no longer than 6 weeks in B&B accommodation. North Northamptonshire Council

have been continuously successful in complying with this duty and there have been no families in B&B accommodation longer than 6 weeks since March 2022.

**Figure 18: A snapshot from March 2023 of households in temporary accommodation by type of household in North Northamptonshire, East Midlands and England.**



Source: North Northamptonshire Housing Options PMS

## Rough Sleeping

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) monitors data on levels of rough sleeping from all local authorities based on rough sleeping counts and estimates provided monthly.

For the purposes of count and estimates, rough sleepers are defined as:

- people sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments)
- people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or ‘bashes’ which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).

Rough sleeping counts and estimates are single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough in a local authority area on that chosen night. In North Northamptonshire the Council’s Rough Sleeping Team conduct regular nighttime outreach each week to ensure rough sleepers are engaged with in a timely manner and respond to all reports of rough sleeping received via Street Link and direct to the Council.

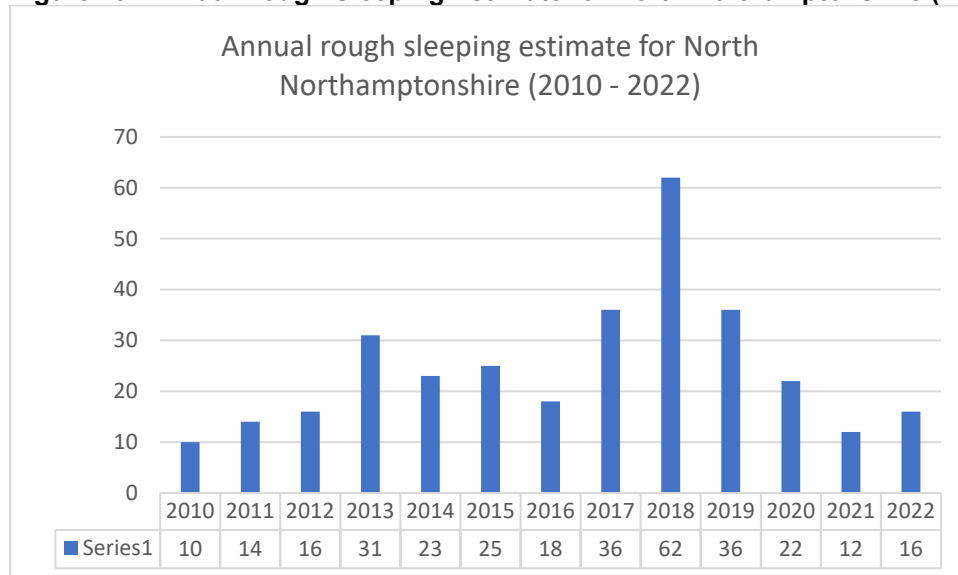
### Annual Rough Sleeping Estimate and Trend

The annual rough sleeping snapshot required to be undertaken by Government to compare rough sleeping figures nationally, takes place in autumn on a single night between 1 October and 30 November. In North Northamptonshire this has been done by conducting a spotlight count on the chosen night followed by an estimate meeting based on intelligence gathered by the North Northamptonshire Rough Sleeping Team and local partners.

According to data collected in these annual counts, rough sleeping in North Northamptonshire has reduced significantly since a peak in 2018 when an estimate of 62 rough sleepers was recorded across the area. Since then, the annual number of rough

sleepers has fallen consistently, reaching a low of 12 in 2021 which was an 80% reduction. This reduction in rough sleeping could be attributed to the beginning of the Rough Sleeping Initiative funding which was introduced by Government in 2018 and allowed the Council to fund staff, support and accommodation dedicated to support rough sleeping. In 2022 however, there was a slight increase with 16 rough sleepers recorded during the annual estimate. This can be due to various reasons including the impact of the current cost of living crisis and also the increasing support needs being seen which often leads to failed accommodation placements.

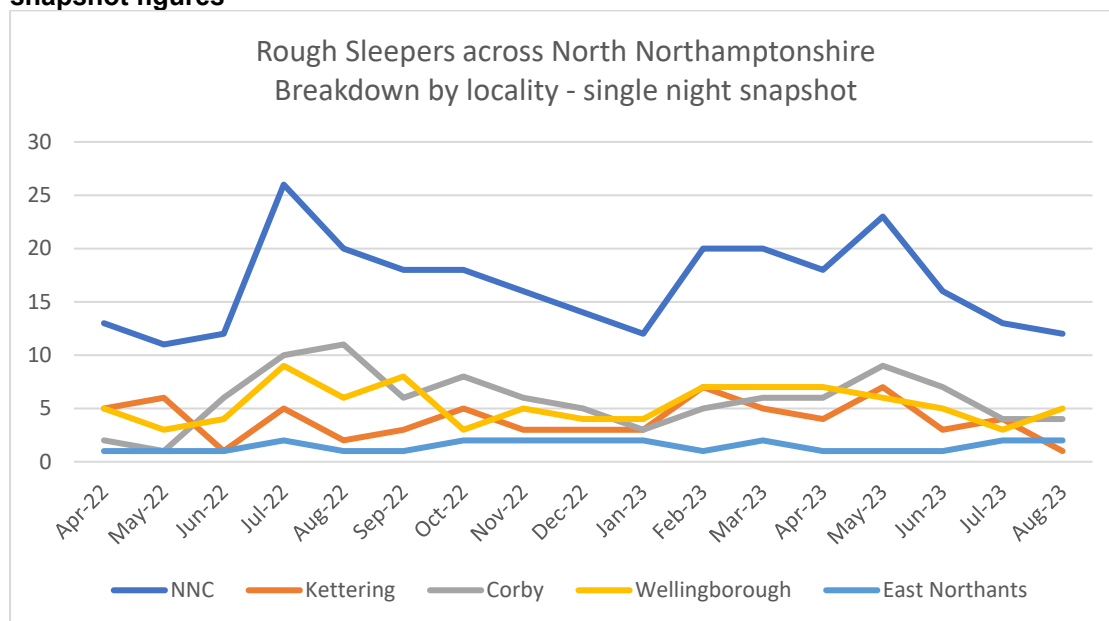
**Figure 19: Annual Rough Sleeping Estimate for North Northamptonshire (2010 to 2022)**



Source: DLUHC Annual Rough Sleeping Estimate

The number of rough sleepers fluctuates across the main localities (Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough) in the North Northamptonshire area as shown in Figure 19 however numbers tend to be consistently lower in the East Northamptonshire locality due to it being a more rural area.

**Figure 20: Rough Sleepers across North Northamptonshire by locality 2022/23– single night snapshot figures**



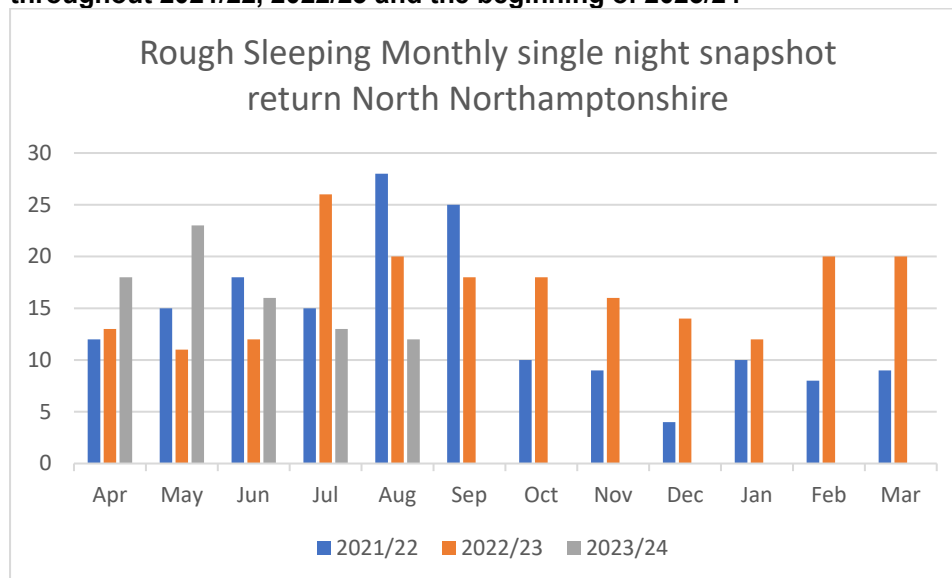
Source: NNC Rough Sleeping performance management system

## Monthly Single Night Snapshot

In addition to the annual snapshot data reported each autumn to DLUHC, North Northamptonshire Council carries out and reports monthly single night snapshot data to DLUHC to help monitor the scale of rough sleeping across the year and also the impact of support initiatives delivered in conjunction with local partner organisations funded via the Rough Sleeping Initiative.

Figure 21 shows the monthly rough sleeping single night snapshot returns to DLUHC for North Northamptonshire since 2021/22 up to the latest data available for August 2023. 2022/23 data showed an increase in the number of rough sleepers seen on the single night in comparison to 2021/22 figures and so far in 2023/24 the same number of rough sleepers have been seen in the first 5 months for the same period in 2022/23 which is a total of 82 rough sleepers. However there has been a decrease month on month in rough sleeping numbers since May 2023. This may be a result of the Rough Sleeping Team now being at full capacity with two additional rough sleeper workers joining the team and helping to resolve cases in a timely manner.

**Figure 21: Monthly Rough Sleeping single night snapshot data in North Northamptonshire throughout 2021/22, 2022/23 and the beginning of 2023/24**

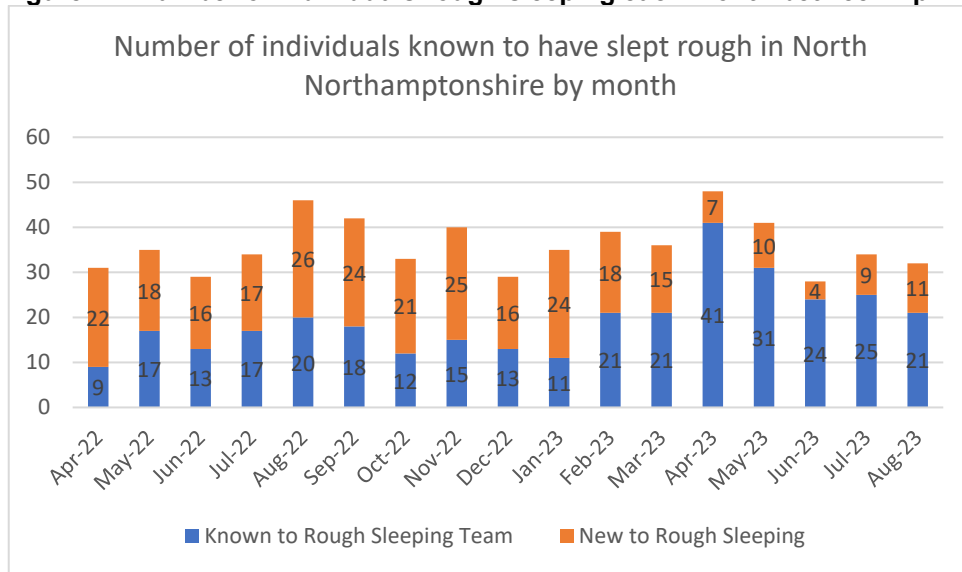


*Source: NNC Rough Sleeping Performance Monitoring*

Overall, the number of individuals known to have slept rough during each month continues to fluctuate but has decreased since the start of the new financial year 2023/24. Figure 22 below shows the total number of individuals known to have slept rough for at least one night during each month of 2022/23 and into the start of 2023/24 with a breakdown of new rough sleepers and those that were already known to the Rough Sleeping Team.

From April 2023 onwards, there has been a notable decrease in the proportion of new rough sleepers in North Northamptonshire. This is due to DLUHC changing the definition of a new rough sleeper and individuals will only be classed as new if they have not been in contact for 5 years. Therefore, the number of new rough sleepers appears lower in comparison to previously reported data for 22/23 because this was measured on whether they were new for that month. In July 2023 based on the revised DLUHC definition 26% of rough sleepers were classed as new compared with 50% in July 2022, however a small increase in new rough sleepers was noted in August 2023.

**Figure 22: Number of Individuals rough sleeping each month between April 22 and August 23.**



Source: NNC Rough Sleeping Performance Monitoring

### Profile of Rough Sleepers

In North Northamptonshire during 2022/23 the profile of rough sleepers was as follows:

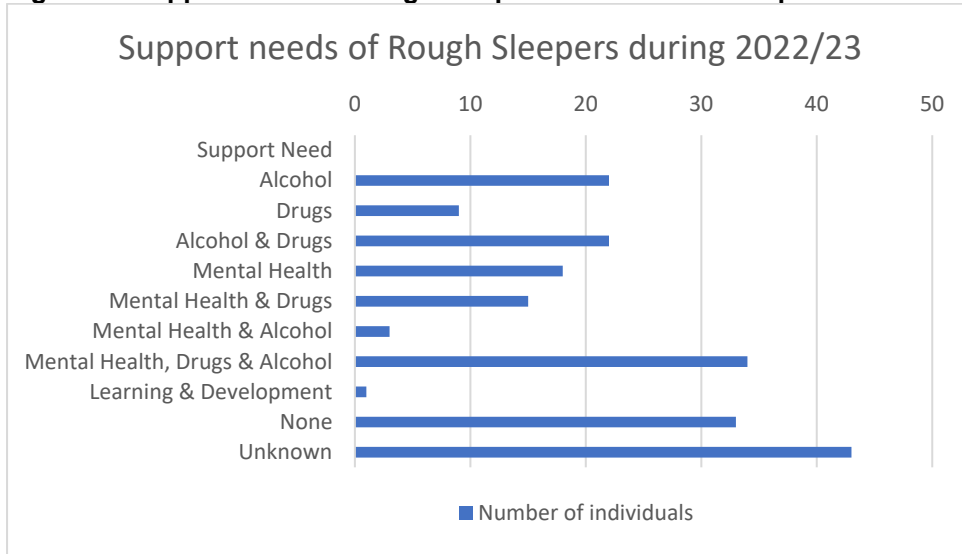
- 83% of rough sleepers were male.
- Over half of all rough sleepers were aged between 30 and 49 years and all were over 18 years.
- 77% were UK nationals, with 23% from countries within the EEA.
- Reasons for rough sleeping are varied but the top three in order are being evicted, drug or alcohol misuse and mental health problems.

### Support Needs

Rough Sleepers often have complex and varied support needs and are one of the most vulnerable groups in the community. The Council works with local agencies and partners to ensure rough sleepers receive appropriate support to meet their needs including the Police, voluntary sector organisations, faith groups, mental health agencies, substance misuse agencies and probation.

During 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire, 69.7% of rough sleepers were found to have at least one support need. 59% of all support needs involved drug or alcohol misuse and 39.3% required support due to their mental health.

**Figure 23 Support needs of rough sleepers in North Northamptonshire during 2022/23**



Source: NNC Rough Sleeping Performance Monitoring

### SWEP – Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

SWEP or Severe Weather Emergency Protocol is a process that is put in place during the year to ensure that people sleeping rough are not at risk of harm or in the worst cases dying, due to severe weather conditions. This can be severe cold or heat depending on the time of year.

During 2022/23 SWEP was triggered at least once a month from December through to March. During this time, the Council offers accommodation to everyone who is known to be sleeping rough. Between December 2022 and March 2023 between 18 and 37 rough sleepers were accommodated due to SWEP.

## Keyways – social housing lettings system

Keyways is the Council’s Housing Register and is the main way to search for social/affordable housing to rent from North Northamptonshire Council and registered housing providers across North Northamptonshire. Apart from some minor exceptions, only households with an evidenced housing need qualify to access the Keyways housing register. The demand for social and affordable housing has increased hugely and continues to rise. In 2021/22 there were a total of 3,035 households who became active on Keyways. As of September 2023, there was a total of 5,611 which is an increase of 2,576 active households and highlights a huge increase in demand for social/affordable housing locally from households with a housing need.

During 2022/23 a total of 1,170 properties (Table 9) were let via the Keyways system highlighting the significant shortfall of available properties to meet evidenced need and demand.

**Table 9: Keyways lettings in 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire by band**

Keyways Band	Total
A	428
B	571
C	147
D	12
E	12
Total	1170

Source: NN Keyways annual performance summary

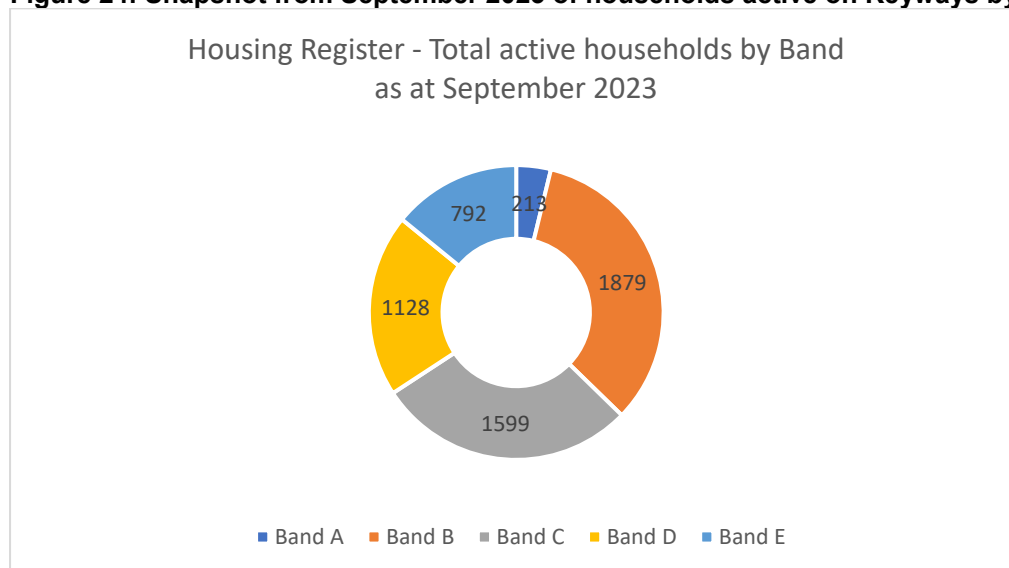
Figures reported on the Local Authority Housing Statistics Return (LAHS) in 2021/22 show that there were 147 dwellings let to existing social housing tenants transferring into Local Authorities own stock from a social housing dwelling, compared with 119 in 2022/23. The LAHS return also shows that in 2021/22 there were 330 dwellings let to new tenants to social housing who have moved into NNC own stock, compared with 294 in 2022/23. There is a recognised need to further explore the reasons for the reduction in available social housing properties through Keyways.

Underpinning the Keyways system is the Council’s Housing Allocation Scheme which sets out how housing applicants are prioritised for and able to register an interest in advertised vacant properties available in North Northamptonshire. Applicants are placed into one of five priority bands (Band A through to Band E) based on their housing need. Full details of the criteria applicable to each of the bands are made publicly available within the published North Northamptonshire Keyways Allocation Scheme on the Council’s website. Band A includes those households with an emergency need, which includes those who are statutorily homeless. Band E includes households with no housing need but who are seeking sheltered, supported, or assisted living accommodation or have a local connection to a Section 106 or village exception site.

Figure 24 provides a snapshot of households active by band in September 2023 and indicates that the majority of active households are in bands B and C. The band with the least number of households is band A, with only 218 out of a total of 5,611.

However, throughout the year, households in band A accounted for 428 of the total 1,170 households who were successful in securing a property through Keyways. This equates to 36.6% of lettings via Keyways in 2022/23.

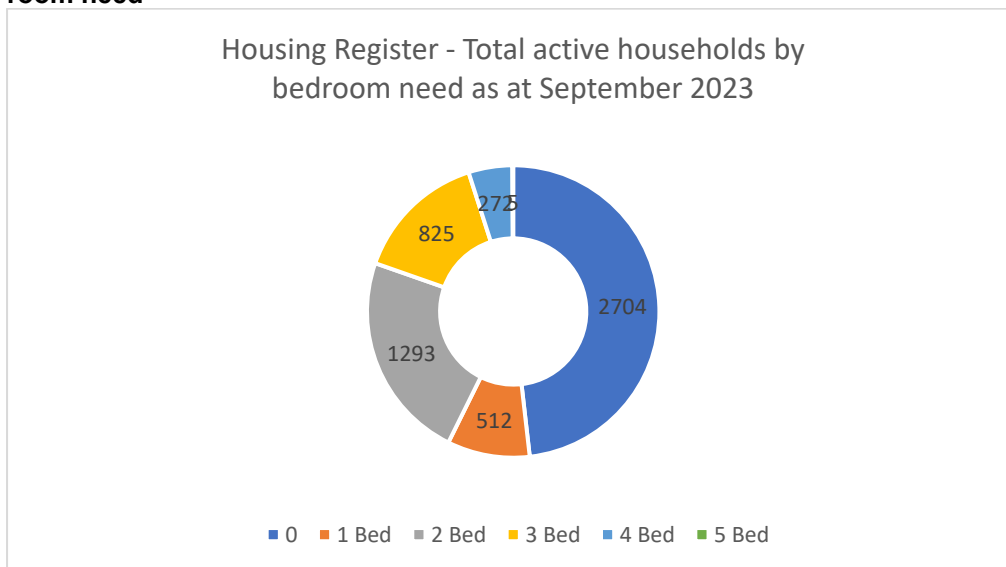
**Figure 24: Snapshot from September 2023 of households active on Keyways by band.**



Source: NN Keyways annual performance summary as of 4 September 2023

A snapshot from September 2023 of households active on Keyways by bedroom type (Figure 25) indicates that 2,704 households were single applicants (eligible for a bedsit or a one bed property) and 512 were couples eligible for a one bed property. Single applicants and couples are also eligible to bid for 2 bedroom flats without gardens however they receive a reduced preference for this type of accommodation. Table 10 shows that only 21 bedsits were let during the whole of 2022/23 along with 431 one bed properties and 449 two bed properties. These property types when combined make up the majority of the 1170 properties let during 2022/23, however there is despite this, there is still a shortfall between the demand for properties suitable for single households. There is also a requirement for more three and four bed properties in North Northamptonshire.

**Figure 25: Snapshot from September 2023 of households active on Keyways by minimum bedroom need**



Source: NN Keyways annual performance summary as of 4 September 2023

**Table 10: North Northamptonshire Keyways lettings in September 2023 by bedroom**

Bedrooms	Total
Bedsit	21
1 Bed	431
2 Bed	449
3 Bed	199
4 Bed	18
5 Bed	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1170</b>

Source: NN Keyways annual performance summary as of 4 September 2023

Apart from the challenges of providing suitable properties in terms of bedroom needs of a household, a property must also be suitable in terms of support needs. When considering all active households on the Keyways register, in both 2021/22 and 2022/23, 23% required ground-floor accommodation or a stairlift. The requirement for level bathing reduced in 2022/23 to 20% from 22% of households in 2021/22. The demand for properties suitable for wheelchair access reduced from 4.5% in 2021/22 to 4% in 2022/23 due to more effective partnership working and complex case meetings between Housing and Occupational Therapy.



# Predicting future levels of homelessness

A brief analysis of the housing market, income levels, unemployment levels and affordable housing development in North Northamptonshire as well as the economic situation in the country gives us an indication that homelessness levels may continue to rise in North Northamptonshire.

## National economic climate

It would be difficult to make predictions about future homelessness without considering the national economic climate and cost of living crisis in the country as a whole. According to the Office of National statistics ([Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics](#)), the situation in the UK is as follows:

- At present the inflation rate in the UK is 6.7% which means that prices of goods have risen significantly.
- Interest rates are at their highest since 2008, reaching 5.25% which means that monthly mortgage repayments have increased heavily for many households on a variable rate mortgage and mortgages are no longer affordable.
- Just over 40% of adults are finding it difficult to pay their rent or mortgage, this has increased from 30% in the same period of the previous year.
- Across the country, private rental prices have increased by 5.7% which is the largest change since January 2016.
- Average monthly mortgage repayments have risen from £718 in Dec 2021 to £880 in September 2023.

## The Housing Market in North Northamptonshire – availability and affordability

### Tenure structure and House Prices

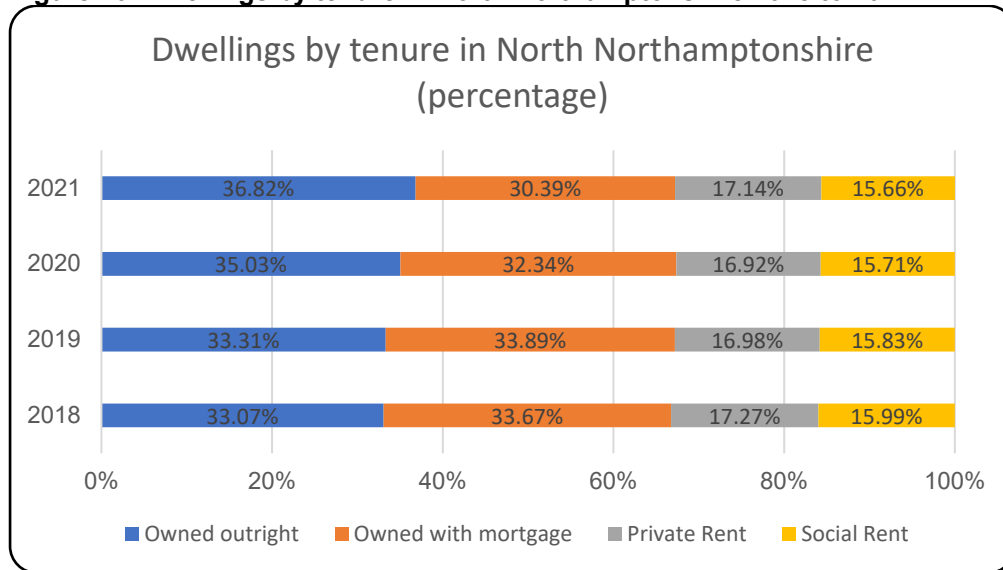
The majority of homes in North Northamptonshire, (84.3%) are privately owned with a slightly higher percentage being owned outright than those owned with a mortgage as shown in Figure 26. Approximately 17% of privately owned properties are rented out. Just under 16% of total dwellings in North Northamptonshire are owned by either the council or registered providers indicating the limited number of properties available for social rent. This split of tenure has remained stable since 2018.

**Table 11: Ownership of Dwellings within the North Northamptonshire area as of 31st March 2021 (percentage)**

Area	Local Authority (incl. owned by other LAs)	Private Registered Providers	Other Public Sector	Private Sector
North Northamptonshire	5.38%	10.27%	0.01%	84.34%
England	6.36%	10.45%	0.14%	83.06%

Source: *DLUHC dwelling stock statistical dataset*

**Figure 26: Dwellings by tenure in North Northamptonshire 2018 to 2021**

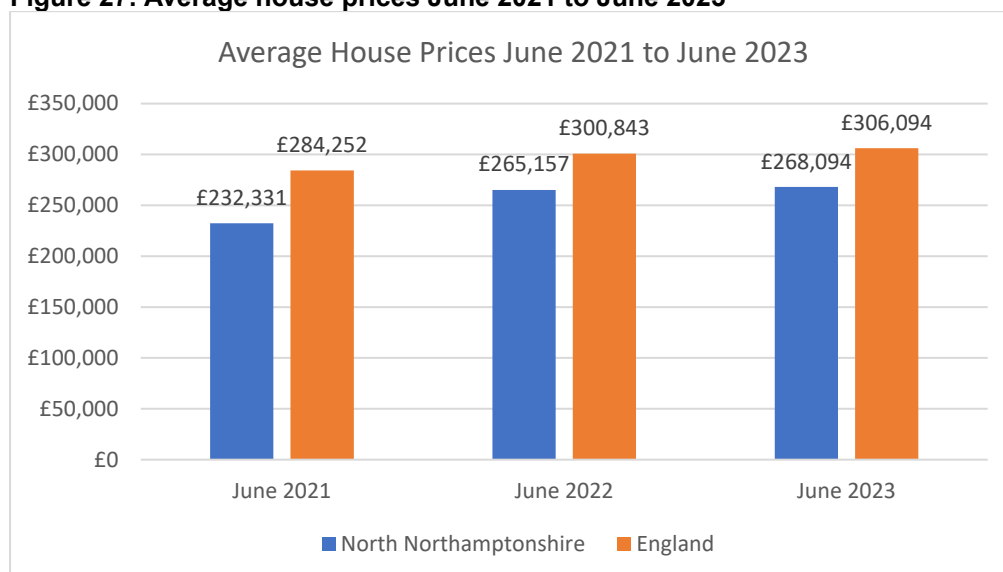


Source: DLUHC dwelling stock statistical dataset

As shown in Figure 27, average house prices in North Northamptonshire increased by over £30,000 between June 2021 and June 2022 coinciding with the beginning of the cost-of-living crisis and rise in inflation but still remain lower when compared to national averages. Prices have continued to rise into 2023 however the difference in average price between June 2022 and June 2023 is around £3,000. Median salary has also risen from £29,597 in 2021 to £31,351 in 2022 (2023 data unavailable) in North Northamptonshire however the ratio of median house price to median gross annual income in North Northamptonshire is 7.8 which means that the average price of a property in the locality is 7.8 times more than the average annual salary.

According to the North Northamptonshire Council’s Health and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), there has been a reduction in property sales volume from 813 in June 2021 to 216 in June 2023 which may be due to the rise in house prices but may also be attributed to the rise in interest rates making purchasing a property with a mortgage more unattainable.

**Figure 27: Average house prices June 2021 to June 2023**



Source: HM Land Registry/Office for National Statistics, *UK House Price Index*

## Income levels

Income is a crucial determinant in whether or not households are able to access the private sector housing market – through both rental and home ownership options.

**Table 12: Median gross annual household income**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>North Northamptonshire</b>	£28,003	£29,609	£29,597	£31,351
<b>East Midlands Region</b>	£28,556	£29,417	£29,212	£30,900
<b>England</b>	£30,692	£31,780	£31,490	£33,208

Source: Office for National Statistics – ratio of house price to household earnings

## Affordable Housing Development

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for North Northamptonshire which covers the years 2019 to 2031, states that, in order to meet housing need, 35,000 additional homes are required in North Northamptonshire between 2011 and 2031. By 2019, targets for total additionality were almost met however the proportion of affordable homes required was not. The SHMA found that, in order to meet housing need, 44% of the additional units would need to be affordable housing. In 2021/22 there were 1550 net housing completions in Northamptonshire, 232 of which were affordable which falls hugely short of the aforementioned 44%.

According to the North Northamptonshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), the numbers of new build or acquired homes owned by the Council has reduced during the last three years. In contrast, new build affordable homes owned by Private Registered Housing Providers have increased year on year over the three-year period from 2019 to 2021. In addition, a further 22 affordable housing properties were acquired during 2020/21 using local authority recycled Right to Buy receipts.

According to the 2023 North Northamptonshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) 50.8% of households are likely to have insufficient income to afford lower quartile market housing rent. The HENA also estimates that there is a need for 964 social or affordable properties available for rent per annum in order to meet the current need for suitable housing in North Northamptonshire. This is supported by the number of households currently on the housing register.

It is also important to consider that during 2021/22 North Northamptonshire Council received 108 right to buy applications and completed on 51 right to buy sales in total. Between April 2023 and November 2023, 35 right to buy sales have been completed which works against the aim to increase the supply of affordable properties.

## Private Rented Sector

The cost of renting privately has been increasing year on year. In contrast, the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) which is a housing benefit scheme for people living in privately rented accommodation has not increased since 2021 despite the rise in inflation and interest rates. This has resulted in a shortfall each month for households in receipt of housing benefit which uses the LHA rate as the measure for calculating the benefit due. The shortfall against median rental figures for 2021/22 is between £50 and almost £250 per month depending on the nature (shared or self-contained) and bedroom capacity of the accommodation. This then puts further financial pressure on households in the rental sector and increases their risk of eviction and resulting homelessness due to rent arrears.

Table 14 indicates the median monthly rent for each property type in North Northamptonshire compared with table 15 which provides the monthly LHA rates.

**Table 13: Median monthly rental prices in North Northamptonshire by property type in 2022/23**

Council	Room	Bedsit	One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four or more bed
NNC	£455	£564	£587.50	£733.75	£855	£1180.75

Source:

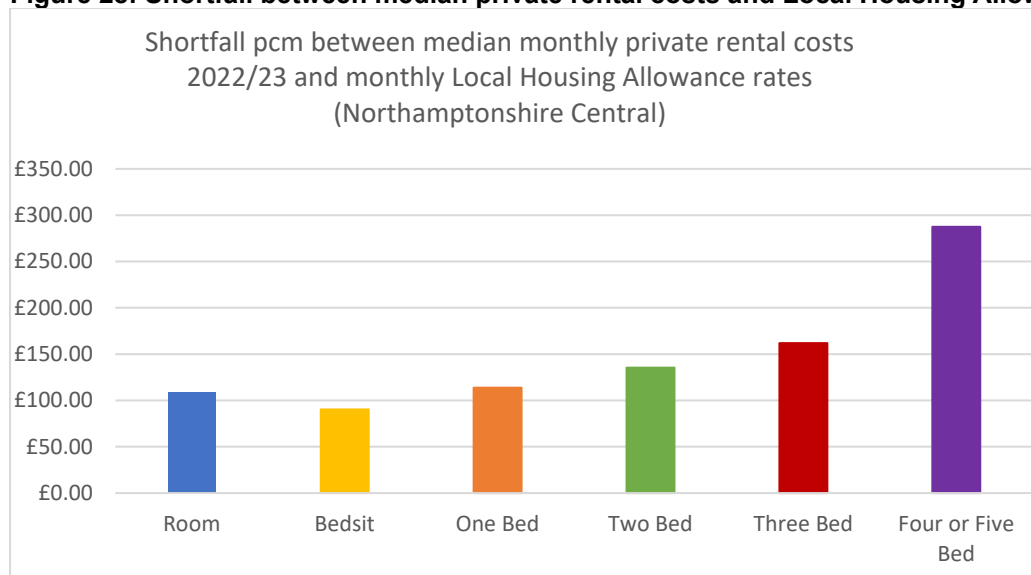
[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland/april2022tomarch2023#local-authority-analysis](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland/april2022tomarch2023#local-authority-analysis)

**Table 14: Monthly LHA rates in North Northamptonshire by property type in 2022/23**

Room	Bedsit	One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four or more bed
£346	£473.72	£473.72	£598.34	£693.12	£892.54

Data source: Local Housing Allowance Rates for the North Northamptonshire (Formerly East Northamptonshire) Local Authority : DirectGov - LHA Rates ([voa.gov.uk](http://voa.gov.uk))

**Figure 28: Shortfall between median private rental costs and Local Housing Allowance rates**



Source: Office for National Statistics – [private rental market statistics](#)

## Mortgage and Landlord Possession Claims

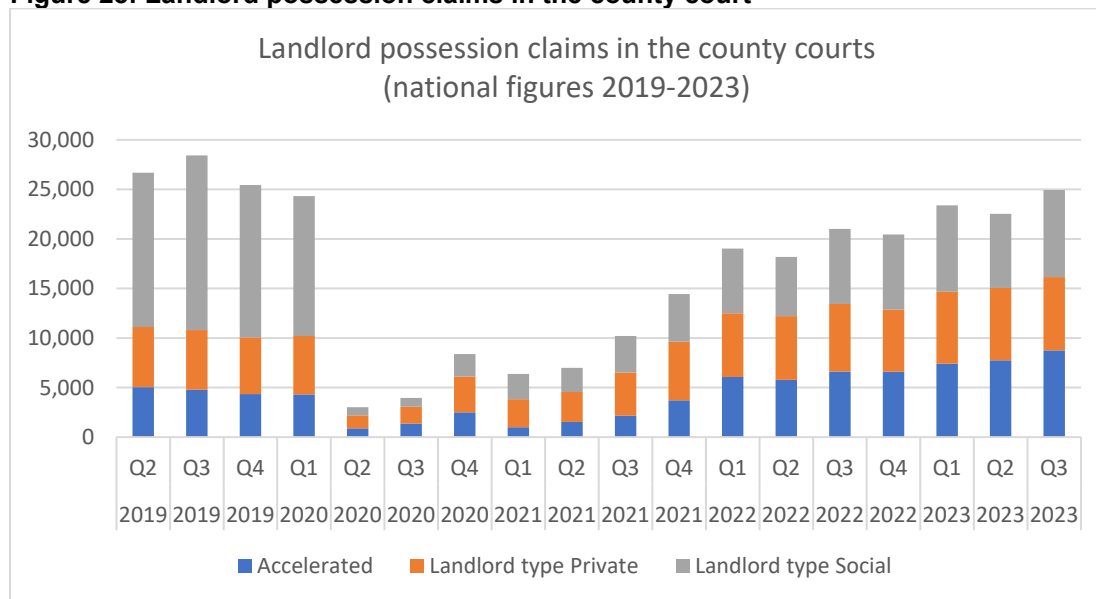
Figure 28 shows an increasing amount of landlord possessions nationally since 2021 which is another factor to consider within the private rented sector. The introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020 resulted in a temporary suspension of mortgage repossession claims with the court service suspending ongoing housing possession action between 27 March 2020 and 27 September 2020 and a stay in evictions which lasted until May 2021. Those with exceptional circumstances such as anti-social behaviour or fraud, were subsequently allowed when an amendment to the Act was made. Landlords were unable to commence possession proceedings until 20 September 2020 unless they had given their tenants six months' notice and in addition, bailiffs were not permitted to carry out repossessions during periods of national lockdowns or local lockdowns in England (Tiers 2 and 3 areas).

Whilst the purpose of these restrictions was to ensure those who found themselves in financial difficulty due to the consequences of lockdowns were not also made homeless, it did result in an increase nationally in mortgage and landlord possession activity once the restrictions were lifted. Although those mortgage and landlord possession claim actions taken in 2021 collectively increased significantly, they reached approximately 70% of the pre-pandemic annual levels.

Within those figures, the claims made by social landlords remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels with approximately 50% fewer social landlord possession claims in quarter 3 of 2023 compared with quarter 3 of 2019.

In contrast, claims made by private landlords and by either private or social landlords through the accelerated procedure, where the lease is nearing its end, have exceeded those made pre-pandemic.

**Figure 28: Landlord possession claims in the county court**



Source: Gov.uk Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics

### Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

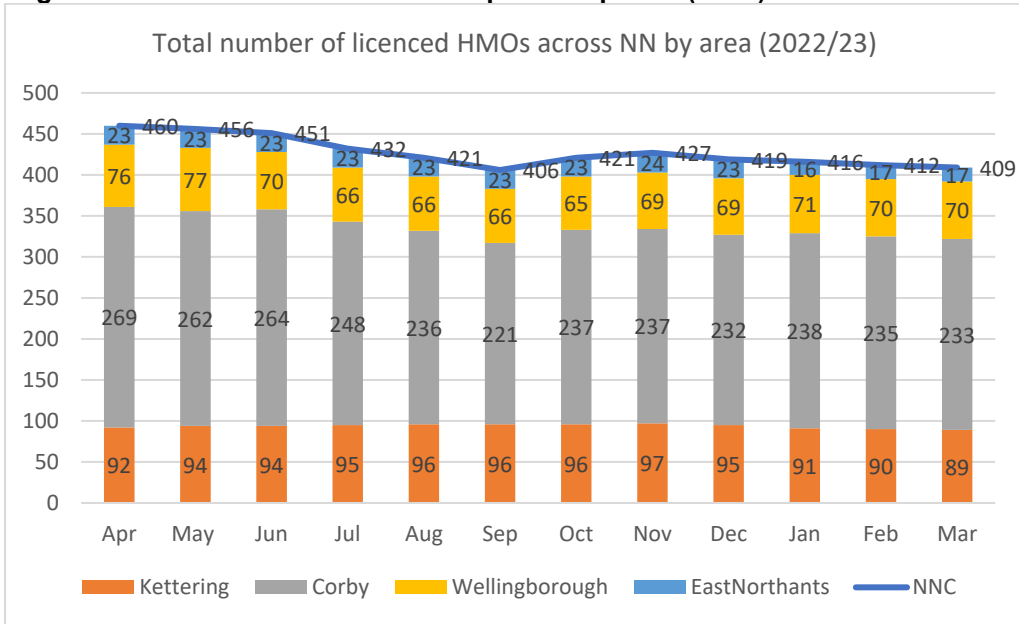
HMOs are an important housing option for single person households and couples with limited incomes, who wish to access the private rental market.

In North Northamptonshire, the number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) remained fairly stable with an average of 430 properties over the course of 2021/22. In April 2022 there was a rise of 7% in the number of HMOs, increasing the total to 460 however numbers have since reduced each month down to 419 by December 2022.

As of October 2023, the number of HMOs was at 428.

There is an uneven distribution of HMOs across the main localities within North Northamptonshire. Of the 428 properties recorded in October 2023, 241 (56.3%) of these are in Corby, 97 (22.6%) are in Kettering, 66 (15.4%) are in Wellingborough and 24 (5.6%) are in the East Northamptonshire area.

**Figure 29: Number of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)**



Source: NNC Private Sector Housing performance management system