



Annual Report on Levels of Homelessness in Sefton 2018/19

Introduction

Sefton's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-23 contains an action to,

*'Publish an annual report explaining the current levels of homelessness, to aid elected councillor and chief officer decision making, and
Carry out an in-depth analysis of data collected by the Homelessness Case Level Information Classification monitoring system (H-CLIC).'*

Producing an annual report will give Sefton a snapshot of all types of homelessness across the borough. Over time this will allow us to benchmark where we are compared to previous years and will also enable us to help plan services for future years.

At the time of preparing this report there isn't any nationally published (H-CLIC) data for the full 2018-19 year. Once this is available we will be able to compare the outcomes achieved in Sefton to those of other local authorities.

This is our first Annual report, and we hope it will provide a useful picture of homelessness in Sefton.

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017, placed new legal duties on English councils. The principle changes include:

- a statutory duty to provide homeless prevention services to all people who are threatened with homelessness irrespective of whether they are in priority or not.
- earlier intervention; 56 days from homelessness rather than 28 days previously.
- require each person to be provided with an individual assessment and a "personalised housing plan", irrespective of what legal duty we may owe them if they were to become homeless in the future.


Further, the report provides details of those services commissioned by the Council to provide homeless support services for single people. This report shows the demand for these services and the benefit of providing these to the 'Sefton purse'.

Contents Page

Homeless Key Data Dashboard	Page 3
Statutory Information Return (H-CLIC Data)	Page 4
Duty to Refer	Page 9
Use of Discretionary Housing Payments	Page 9
Domestic Abuse Target Hardening	Page 10
Commissioned Services (Mainstay Data)	Page 10
Rough Sleeper Count	Page 12
Use of Sit-Up Services	Page 13
Severe Weather Shelter	Page 14
Conclusions	Page 14
Looking to the future	Page 15
Case Study	Page 17


Homeless Key Data Dashboard

The below table gives a snapshot of key Sefton data from 2018/19, taken from the various data sources contained in the report, below. It uses headline data from the Housing Options service database (H-CLIC) and the Mainstay system.



Key Homeless Data

2018/19



5) Case Study


An elderly male was initially found rough sleeping in Southport after being evicted from a private rented tenancy for rent arrears.

After being referred through Light For Life he was advised to access sit up services, which he did for a couple of nights until he was accommodated at Bosco House from November 2016 until July 2018.

After a referral to Adult Social Services, Bosco worked with Housing Options and the gentleman subsequently received an offer for sheltered accommodation with a care package from Warren Care.


1) New Homeless Cases

The number of new households who have contacted the Housing Options Service seeking advice is 1,120. This has been on an upwards trend since the introduction of the HRA in April 2018. There were 590 assessments in 2018/19



3) Statutory Homelessness


The number of households accepted as statutory homeless is 24, an average of 2 households per month over the last 12 months. Just above 4% of homeless assessments are accepted as statutory homeless.



2) Prevention & Relief

There have been 477 households prevented or relieved from homelessness from April 2018 to March 2019.


Early Advice has only been captured since the introduction of HRA but has averaged just below 40 cases per month



4) Rough Sleeping

The number of rough sleepers in 2018 as part of its formal count was 11, an increase of 2 from the previous year.

It is hoped that various initiatives in 2019 will see a decrease on this number



6) Sit Up Services

133 people accessed our Sit Up services in Southport and Bootle, with the average stay being 10 nights

7) Homelessness Reasons

The key reasons for homelessness are due to the end of a private rented tenancy; Family no longer willing or able to accommodate, and, Domestic Abuse.

Homelessness Reasons	2018												2019			Total
	Blank	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
End of private rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy		9	14	18	14	12	11	15	10	5	5	10	14	137		
Family no longer willing or able to accommodate		12	9	5	7	12	9	9	9	6	4	9	8	99		
Domestic abuse		2	10	1	8	6	9	5	9	5	5	5	4	69		

8) Rehousing

312 In 2018/19 there were 312 households placed into accommodation

9) Floating Support

54% of people receiving floating support completed their support plan successfully in 2018/19.

10) Placements

In 2018/19 170 single people were placed into temporary accommodation, with 87% having a local connection to Sefton. On average during 2018/19 the occupancy rate of our commissioned temporary accommodation was 90.5%

11) Duty to Refers (183)

183 Since 1st October 2018, when public authorities were legally obliged to send Duty to Refers there have been 183 referrals made to Sefton's Housing Options Team, with the largest amount of referrals coming from Sefton's Social Services

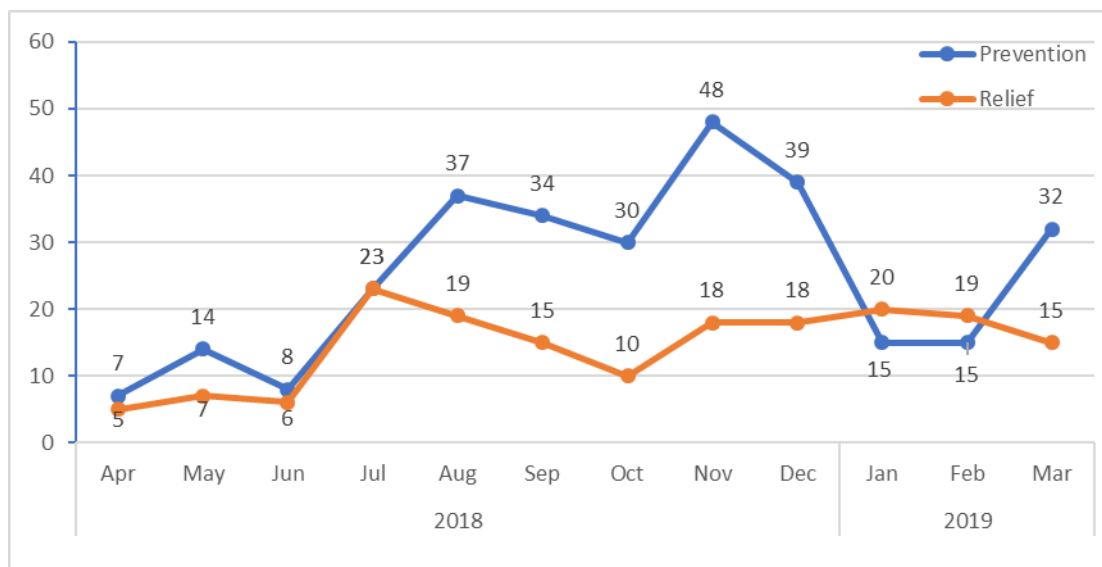
Statutory Homeless data collected through the Council’s Housing Options service, and supplied to Government (H-CLIC)

New Homeless Cases presenting to Sefton Housing Options service



The total number of new households who have contacted the Housing Options Service for advice is 1,120, and has been on a generally upwards trend since the introduction of the HRA in April 2018. From these contacts there were 590 homelessness assessments carried out over 2018-19. There were 21% more contacts in 2018-19 financial year than in 2017-18.

Sefton’s homelessness prevention and relief cases



There have been 477 households prevented or relieved from homelessness in the past 12 months. Early Advice data has only been captured since the introduction of HRA but has averaged 40 cases per month.

Outcomes After Prevention & Relief Duty

Prevention Activity

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Total number of households where prevention duty ended^{1,2}	29	94	117	62	302

Reason for households' prevention duty ending:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Secured accommodation for 6+ months	24	58	68	38	188
Homeless (including intentionally homeless)	2	7	4	4	17
Contact lost	0	2	6	1	9
Withdrew application / applicant deceased	0	0	3	2	5
56 days elapsed and no further action	0	11	28	16	55
No longer eligible	2	12	2	0	16
Refused suitable accommodation offer	0	3	4	1	8
Refused to cooperate	1	1	2	0	4
Not known	0	0	0	0	0

Existing or alternative accommodation secured for households at duty end:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Moved to alternative accommodation	22	42	51	31	146
Stayed in existing accommodation	2	16	17	7	42
Total	24	58	68	38	188

Type of accommodation secured for households at end of prevention duty:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Social rented sector	13	31	43	13	100
Private rented sector	8	22	22	18	70
Staying with family	0	2	1	6	9
Staying with friends	2	0	0	0	2
Owner-occupier	0	1	1	0	2
Other	0	2	1	1	4
Not known	1	0	0	0	1
Total	24	58	68	38	188

Main activity that resulted in accommodation secured for households:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Accommodation secured by local authority or organisation delivering housing options service	11	28	42	16	97
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, with financial payment	0	2	1	2	5
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, without financial payment	6	9	6	6	27
Negotiation / mediation / advocacy work to prevent eviction / repossession	1	5	4	3	13
Financial payments to reduce rent service charge or mortgage arrears ³	0	1	0	0	1
Supported housing provided	4	2	4	1	11
Negotiation / mediation work to secure return to family or friend	0	1	0	1	2
Other ⁴	0	2	4	1	7
No activity – advice and information provided	2	8	7	8	25
Total	24	58	68	38	188

Relief Activity

Total number of households where relief duty ended ^{1,2}	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan- Mar	Total
	18	57	46	54	
Reason for households' relief duty ending:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan- Mar	
Secured accommodation for 6+ months ³	11	36	35	37	119
56 days elapsed	0	3	4	8	15
Contact lost	3	13	3	4	23
Withdrew application / applicant deceased	4	2	1	3	10
Local connection referral accepted by other LA	0	1	0	0	1
Refused final accommodation	0	1	0	1	2
No longer eligible	0	0	0	0	0
Intentionally homeless from accommodation provided	0	1	2	0	3
Notice served due to refusal to cooperate	0	0	1	0	1
Not known	0	0	0	1	1

Type of accommodation secured for households at end of relief duty:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Oct-Dec	Total
	Social rented sector	7	30	29	
Private rented sector	3	3	5	4	15
Staying with family	0	1	0	1	2
Staying with friends	0	0	0	0	0
Owner-occupier	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	2	1	0	4
Not known	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11	36	35	37	119

Main activity that resulted in accommodation secured for households:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan- Mar	Total
	Accommodation secured by local authority or organisation delivering housing options service	9	25	25	
Supported housing provided	2	7	5	4	18
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, with financial payment	0	0	0	0	0
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, without financial payment	0	1	1	0	2
Other activity through which accommodation secured ⁴	0	2	3	2	7
No activity	0	1	1	0	2
Total	11	36	35	37	119

Statutory Homeless (Main Duty) Cases

The number of cases qualifying for Main Duty Assistance

	2018									2019			Total
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Statutory Homelessness	0	3	4	1	1	1	0	3	2	3	4	2	24

Total number of main duty decisions ¹	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
	7	3	5	9	
Outcome of main duty decision for eligible households:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Homeless + priority need + unintentionally homeless (acceptance)	6	0	0	2	8
Homeless + priority need + intentionally homeless	1	1	2	2	6
Homeless + no priority need	0	2	3	5	10
Not homeless	0	0	0	0	0

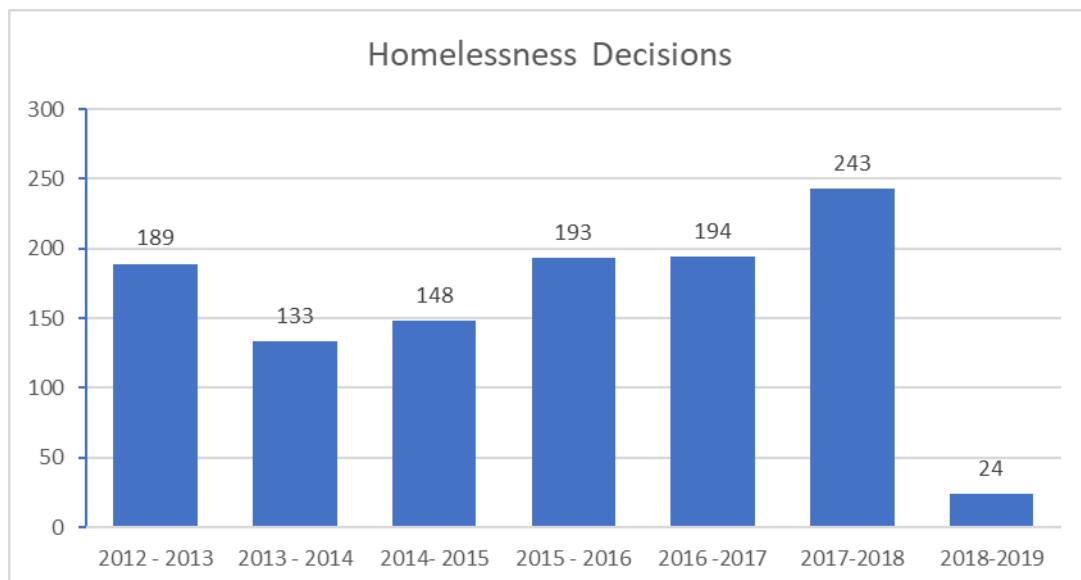
Priority need of households owed a main duty (acceptances) ³ :	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Household includes dependent children	4	0	0	1	5
Household includes a pregnant woman	0	0	0	0	0
Old age	0	0	0	0	0
Physical disability / ill health	0	0	0	1	1
Mental health problems	0	0	0	2	2
Young applicant ⁴	0	0	0	1	1
Domestic abuse	2	0	0	0	2
Other ⁵	0	0	0	0	0
Homeless because of emergency ⁶	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	0	0	5	11

	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Total number of households where main duty ended	11	-	-	1	12

Outcome of households no longer owed a main duty:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Total
Housing Act 1996 Pt6 social housing offer - accepted	4	0	0	1	5
Housing Act 1996 Pt6 social housing offer - refused	0	0	0	0	0
Private rented sector offer ⁷ - accepted	0	0	0	0	0
Private rented sector offer ³ - refused	0	0	0	0	0
Refused suitable TA offer, withdrew or lost contact	0	0	0	0	0
Ceased to be eligible	0	0	0	0	0
Became intentionally homeless from TA	2	0	0	0	2
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation	5	0	0	0	5

[Comparison to P1E statutory homeless data from previous years](#)

The below table shows the number of Statutory Homeless decisions made by the Sefton Housing Options Team in 2018/19 compared to previous years, prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.



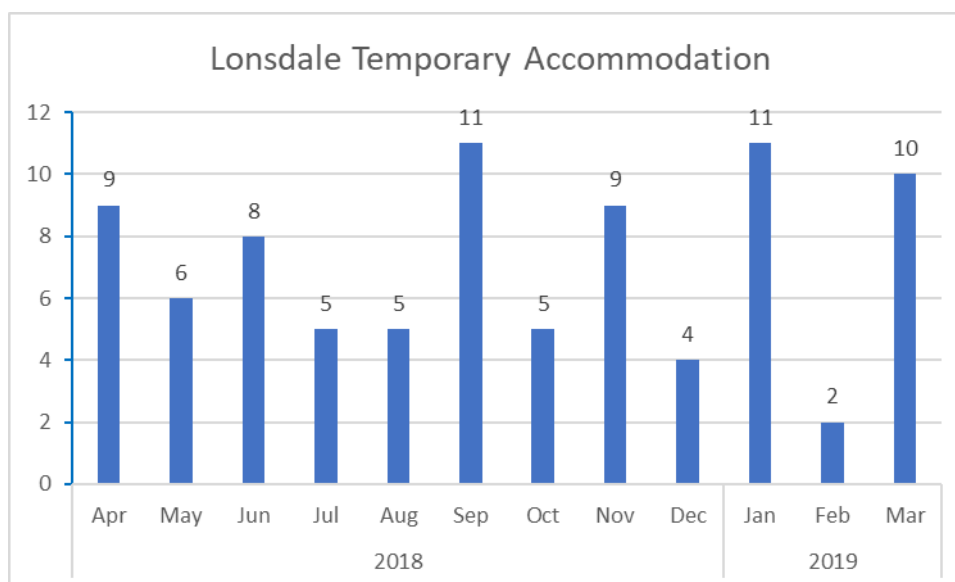
Looking at previous years P1E data, there has been a substantial reduction in the number of these cases. In 2017-18 alone there were 243 statutory homeless cases. The reduction in 2018-19 is principally attributable to cases being resolved at the earlier Prevention and Relief stages.

Homelessness Reasons 2018-19

Homelessness Reasons	2018												2019			Total
	Blank	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
End of private rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy		9	14	18	14	12	11	15	10	5	5	10	14	137		
Family no longer willing or able to accommodate		12	9	5	7	12	9	9	9	6	4	9	8	99		
Other	2	5	7	6	6	7	5	10	10	3	5	10	8	84		
Domestic abuse		2	10	1	8	6	9	5	9	5	5	5	4	69		
Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	1	4	4	2	4	7	4	3	2		1	9	6	47		
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)		2	4	1	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	6	38		
End of social rented tenancy	1	3	3	1	2	2	2	5	7	2		4	1	33		
Left institution with no accommodation available		1	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	2			3	19		
Eviction from supported housing		1		1	2		2	1	1	3	1	1	2	15		
Fire or flood / other emergency		5		1				2	3	2		1		14		
Property disrepair			1	2	1	1		3		1	1	2	1	13		
Mortgage repossession		1	1	1		2	1		1		2	1	1	11		
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asyl	1	1				3			1	1		1		8		
End of private rented tenancy – not assured shorthold tenancy								1		1		1		3		
Total	5	46	54	40	50	59	48	60	57	34	27	56	54	590		

The prime reasons for homelessness are due to the end of a private rented tenancy; Family no longer willing or able to accommodate, and Domestic Abuse.

Use of the Council's own Temporary Accommodation (Lonsdale Hostel) over the year

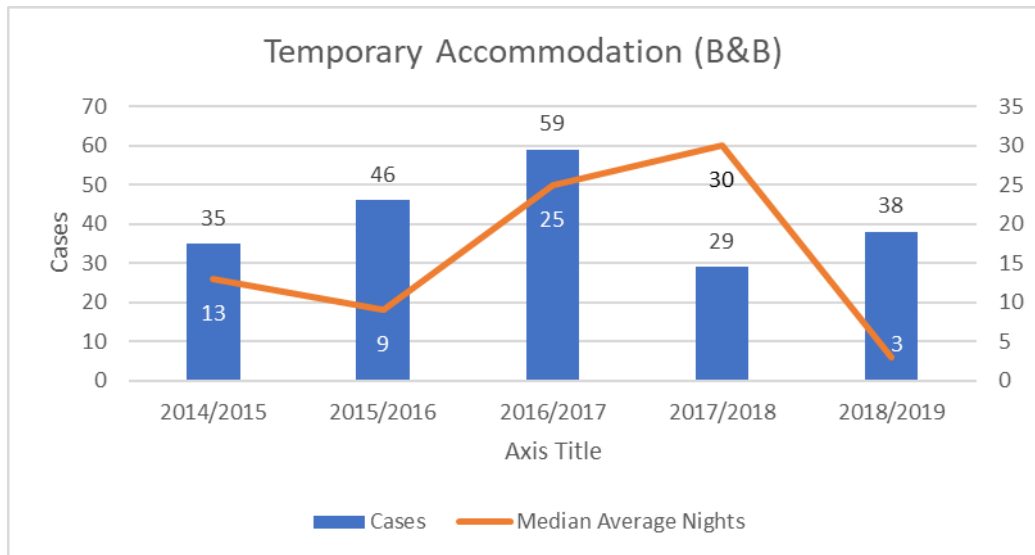


The number of households accessing Lonsdale Hostel in 2018/19 was 85, compared to 76 households in 2017/18.

Use of B&B accommodation

The chart below shows the number of clients who have been placed into temporary B&B accommodation. Both in 2018-19, and compared to previous years.

	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Cases	35	46	59	29	38
Median Average Nights	13	9	25	30	3

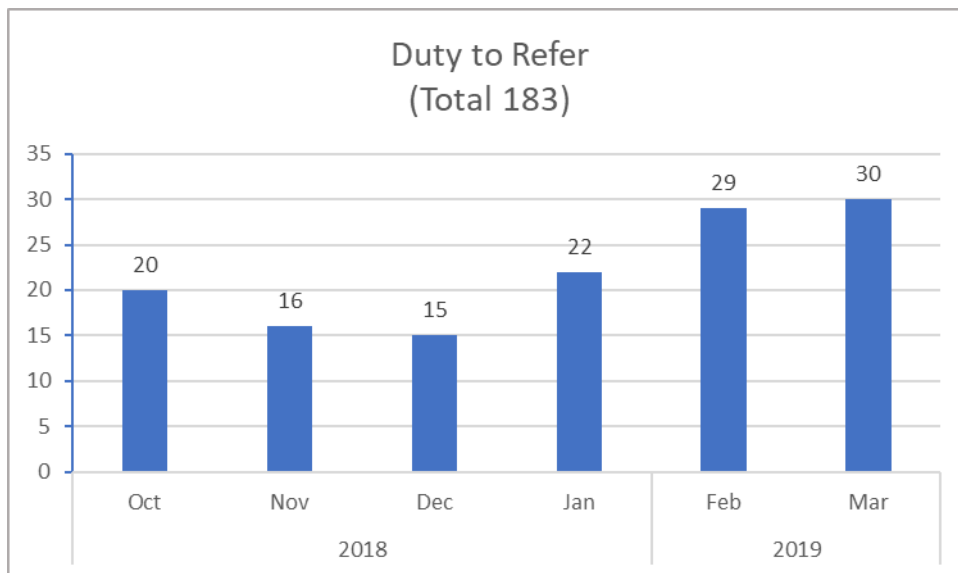


Duty To Refer

An introduction as part of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the new Duty to Refer is where a “specified public authority” considers that someone they are working with is or may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, they must refer that person’s details to a local housing authority but only if the person agrees to the notification being made.

The Duty to Refer effectively commenced from 1st October 2018 onwards. The number of referrals in 2018/19 was 183, with Sefton’s Social Service department making the largest number of referrals.

	2018				2019		Total
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Duty to Refer	20	16	15	22	29	30	183



Use of Discretionary Housing Payments

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) can be awarded to both customer’s in receipt of legacy Housing Benefit or receiving help with housing costs through Universal Credit. Payment of DHPs helps meet shortfalls between benefit

entitlement and rent costs, so helps ensure tenants do not fall into rent arrears, and so helps avoid risks of eviction and homelessness.

Breakdown of decisions in 2018/19

DHP Type	£ Award	Number of awards
ongoing legacy HB	£394,638.73	1,326
one off legacy HB	£30,258.08	63
ongoing UC	£298,389.75	1,070
one off UC	£43,451.56	65

Between 75% to 80% of DHP decisions are made to cover the shortfall caused by the “bedroom tax”.

The Department of Works & Pension (DWP) - DHP funding for 2019/20 is £659,531.00 which is a reduction of £103,979.00 on the previous year.

Domestic Abuse Target Hardening

In 2018/19 the Council’s Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) service supported 29 victims of Domestic Abuse with target hardening to their existing property costing £11,415 with all victims reporting that their home was more secure as a result and that they felt safer.

Given the average annual local authority expenditure per Homelessness application (average one-off and on-going costs associated with statutory homelessness) is £2,724* then the total estimated saving by carrying out this target hardening work to the 29 victims’ properties is £78,996.

**Figure from New Economy Manchester Unit Cost Database*

Ongoing work is being done to ensure joint priorities and further data sharing as stated within Sefton’s Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and new Domestic Abuse Strategy.

Sefton’s Commissioned Temporary Accommodation for single people (Mainstay Data)

The Council entered into a range of contracts effective from 1st July 2015 to provide Housing Related Support (HRS) Services linked to the prevention, resolution and relief of homelessness in the Borough. The contracts are scheduled to last for 5 years, with the option to extend by another 2 years (taking us up to 2021/22).

Current Contracts

The contracts awarded are as follows

- Accommodation- generic homeless people (including a Sit-Up service)
- Accommodation- substance misuse
- Accommodation- offenders
- Accommodation- single women with complex needs
- Floating Support- generic low level
- Floating Support- offenders in the community
- Floating Support- medium level multiple needs (from April 2016 only)
- Rough Sleepers- outreach team

- Rough Sleepers- community service
- Housing Advice- homeless prevention (Southport and Formby area only)

All service providers use the Mainstay IT system to record client assessments, help match clients to suitable services, and track the support provided to clients. (This system is used by homelessness services across the Liverpool City Region.)

During the last year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019:

- There were 610 client assessments undertaken (177 by Council's Housing Options and 433 by commissioned service providers)
- There were 333 service users provided with a service
- There were 163 service users provided with temporary supported accommodation and 170 service users provided with floating support

Contract monitoring

Each service user is assessed based on a set of "needs" and the assessment will determine what service and what level of service they require. The services have been designed to provide support to meet the identified needs of the service users.

Each contract has a range of expected Outcomes; the Outcomes are based on an established range of identified needs, but the anticipated level of the Outcome achievement is different within contracts. Each contract also has a range of priority outcomes which form the prime contract monitoring data. For instance, a service for Offenders would have "reduction of offending" as a priority outcome.

At the end of each quarter the providers are issued with a pro-forma for completion that sets out their achievements in relation to the Outcomes at the time of completion.

The potential need and/or outcome in each Outcome area is:

- Not identified (the service user has no identified need in the Outcome area)
- Not Met (the service user has an identified need in the Outcome area but it has not been met and is not working towards achievement)
- Met (the service user has an identified need in the Outcome area and this has been met)
- Working Towards meeting the need (the service user has an identified need in the Outcome area and is being supported to meet that need)

The underlying principle of the contracts is to prevent and relieve homelessness in the borough; but there is also a much wider benefit to the community. Providing stability and support to many service users has a positive impact (and therefore a saving to the public purse)

The table below shows the achieved number of outcomes by the headings- No Need, Met, Not Met and Working Towards. The financial information linked to each Outcome is derived from data compiled from New Economy Manchester Unit Cost Database.

10 Point Support Plan Goal Type	Total No. Of Individuals Scored:	Total: Positive Distance Travelled	Total: Remains Static	Total: Negative Distance Travelled	£ Fiscal value	£ Savings to Sefton
Drug and alcohol misuse	97	38	41	18	5742	218,196
Emotional and Mental health	97	63	20	14	2197	138,411
Managing Money	97	61	24	12	1134	69,174
Managing Tenancy/Accommodation	97	56	20	21	5752	322,112
Meaningful use of time	97	60	19	18	546	32,760
Motivation/taking responsibility	97	62	19	16	0	0
Offending	97	39	43	15	663	25,857
Physical health	97	52	26	19	1632	84,864
Self care living skills	97	63	21	13	0	0
Social networks/relationships	97	59	22	16	0	0
Total Goals Scored	970	553	255	162		891,374

[Waiting lists for Sefton's homeless commissioned services](#)

Lot No	Lot	Capacity	Waiting list at 30.6.2018	Yr4 Qtr 1	Yr4 Qtr 2	Yr4 Qtr 3
1	Lot 1 Sefton Supported Housing Group Temp Accom	70	116	127	127	182
2	Lot 2 Humankind Substance Misuse	10	8	12	12	22
3	Lot 3 Excel Single Women	4	12	10	6	4
4	Lot 4 NWPC Offenders (also Excel)	8	24	39	12	7
5	Lot 5 Humankind floating support north	30	0	2	1	3
6	Lot 6 Whitechapel Floating Support South	30	3	9	0	1
7	Lot 7 Humankind floating Support Offenders	45	0	1	0	0

Our records show a 34.35% increase from the total number of people on the waiting list in April 2019 compared to the waiting list a year earlier. This indicates a growing demand for homeless services in Sefton in general, although some individual services are showing a small decrease in demand from the start of 2018/19.

[Rough Sleeper Count](#)

Each Local Authority is obliged to advise the Government as to the extent of Rough Sleeping in the borough on an annual basis. The Council can do so by way of a formal Count; by way of an estimate, or, an estimate based on a spotlight count.

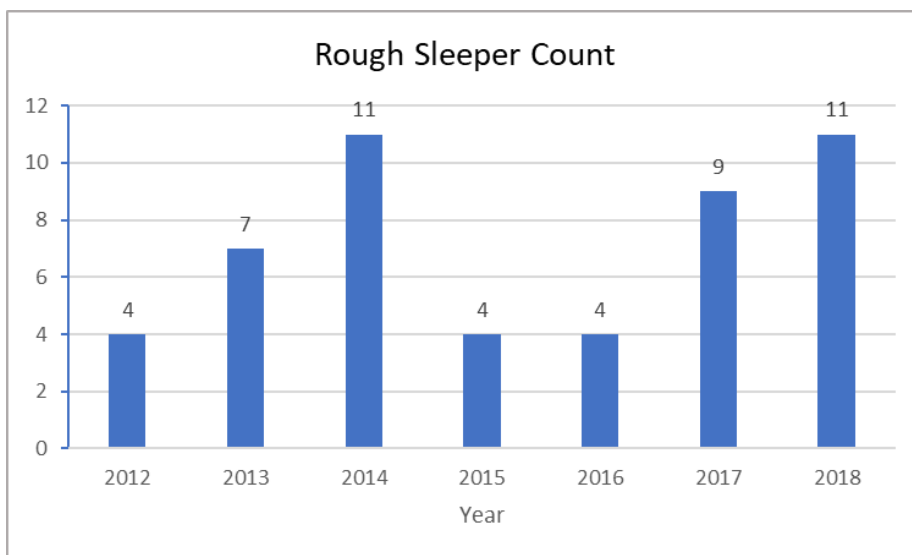
The estimate is based on a single, typical night between 1 October and 30 November, and as we have done in previous years the Councils within the Liverpool City region co-ordinated our Counts on the same night. As it is undertaken on one night it can only demonstrate a snapshot of the extent of Rough Sleeping, which can change on a daily basis in reality. The 'typical night' chosen for the estimate was the evening of the 22nd November to the morning of the 23rd November.

Sefton's Rough Sleeper Count (people found to be rough sleeping) in November 2018 was eleven (11) and was done by doing an Estimate Count based on a snapshot count, which is a physical count on the chosen typical night followed up with a multi-partnership data sharing meeting at which partners bring their evidence of people who are known to have slept rough on the chosen typical night.

In comparison to previous years, the below table shows the previous numbers of Rough Sleeping in Sefton on the chosen typical night for the past seven years.

The reported figures for the last few years are as follows:

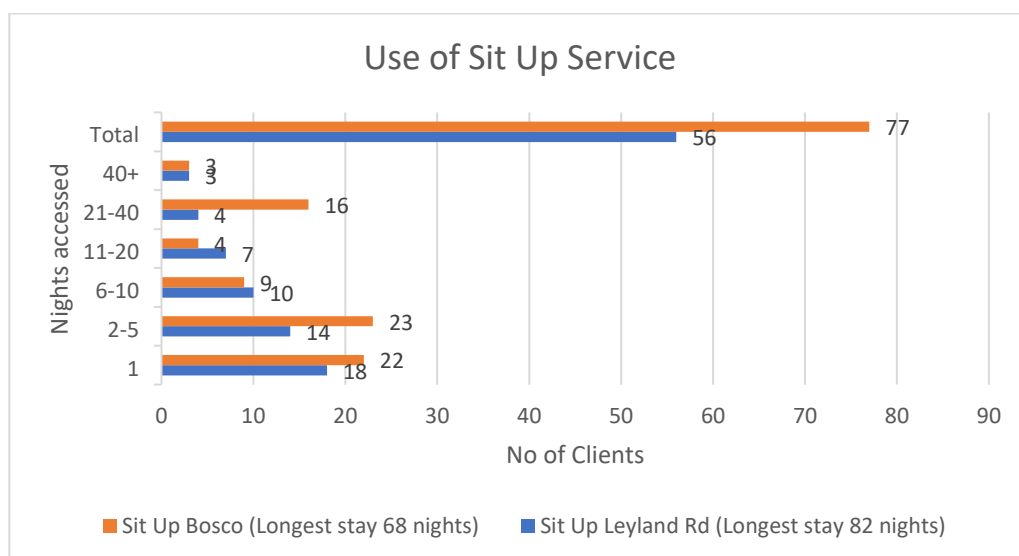
- 2012-(4)
- 2013-(7)
- 2014-(11)
- 2015- (4)
- 2016- (4)
- 2017- (9)
- 2018- (11)



Use of Sit-Up Services

Within the accommodation contract for “generic homeless people” is the requirement to provide a Sit-Up service. This service provides an emergency overnight shelter to provide an alternative to Rough Sleeping. We currently provide up to 15 spaces each night spread over 3 sites (2 sites in the Bootle area and 1 site in Southport). The provision of the Sit-Up service helps the Council to reduce the numbers sleeping rough and to offer a No First Night Out to our service users.

133 clients accessed the sit up service over the last year, and the average length of stay was 10 nights.



Given the average annual local authority expenditure per individual rough sleeping is £8,605* then the 133 clients accessing Sit-Up rather than rough sleeping has saved the Sefton purse an estimated £1,144,465.

**Figure from New Economy Manchester Unit Cost Database*

Severe Weather Shelter

Sefton were successful in being awarded £10,000 Rough Sleeper Initiative 2018/19 Severe Weather Shelter Funding, towards the costs of providing this winter's Cold Weather Night Shelter service, for which Light for Life were commissioned to deliver. The level of Government allocated funding was based on the levels of rough sleeping in 2017.

Sefton were successful in securing an additional £2,500 amount of Severe Weather Shelter Funding, which was used to fund a health based outreach service, provided by the commissioned drug and alcohol treatment service Ambition Sefton. Feedback from Ambition Sefton on this collaboration was extremely encouraging and supported the re-engagement of individuals to interventions that the service has been providing.

Sefton have subsequently received funding from MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2019/20 to continue to deliver this health based service alongside our homelessness services.

CONCLUSIONS

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is one of the biggest changes to the rights of homeless people in England for 15 years. It effectively bolts two new duties to the original statutory rehousing duty:

- Duty to prevent homelessness
- Duty to relieve homelessness

The Act extends entitlements to help, places a focus on the prevention of homelessness and has the potential to provide more client-focussed, personalised statutory homelessness services.

The above data shows the number of clients provided with prevention and relief services, and the outcomes of those cases.

Further, the data showing the number of Homeless decisions made by the Sefton Housing Options Team in 2018/19 compared to previous years, prior to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which shows a marked reduction in those receiving a full duty decision. Another indicator that the Act is having an impact in Sefton, and homeless households are being assisted before they reach this stage.

Some key points to highlight:

- Of the 509 homeless cases, 302 (59%) were resolved at the Prevention stage, 175 (35%) at the relief stage, with only 24 (5%) at the Main Duty stage.
- Of the 509 cases, 312 (61%) were assisted to secure accommodation
- 312 clients were assisted to secure accommodation, 203 (65%) in social housing and 85 (27%) in the private rented sector, 24 (8%) in other.
- 163 service users were provided with temporary supported accommodation and 170 service users provided with floating support services via the Council's commissioned homeless services
- The number of rough sleepers increased in 2018, in response the Council secured £12,500 additional Govt funding to provide a winter severe weather shelter for rough sleepers. (A further £267,000 Govt funding has been secured for 2019-20 for 2 further rough sleeper homelessness initiatives – see below).

There has however continued to be an increase in the use of B&B accommodation by Sefton's Housing Options Team. Whilst there was a reduction in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17, the subsequent increase shows that this will need to be tracked. It would be expected that as more preventative work is carried out with those threatened with

homelessness (eg via the Trailblazer initiative – see below) that there will be less households presenting at crisis point to Sefton.

Looking To The Future

Housing Strategy Action Plan

The Homelessness Act 2002, requires every Local Authority to carry out a homelessness review in its Borough every 5 years, to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy based on this review and to consult with other statutory and voluntary organisations. The scope of the review includes a comprehensive review of current and projected levels of homelessness in the Borough and a review of current homelessness services.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Sefton is comprised of three documents:

- The formal [Homelessness Review](#) identified the evidence of needs, and engagement with stakeholders, service providers and service users, in order to collect evidence and opinion of what works well now, what doesn't work well, and what gaps in services there may be.
- This evidential review was then analysed and interpreted to produce the [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 - 2023](#).
- [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan](#). This plan will guide future delivery of the strategy and allow progress to be monitored. This document has been developed largely in response to the many recommendations made in the Homelessness Strategy.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan is updated regularly and reviewed every quarter at the Homeless Service Provider Forum, which includes Local Authority Housing and Housing Options Team, commissioned homeless services providers, participants with Lived Experience, Public Health and various other guest organisations such as CRISIS and Liverpool City Region' Housing First Team.

Case File Audits

One of the recommendations within Sefton's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is that Sefton must carry out case file audit of homelessness cases to learn what more could be done to prevent homelessness and ensure adherence to public law. These case file reviews will check the rationality, legality and adherence to public law procedural requirements. In November 2018, NPSS were commissioned to deliver case file reviews on Housing Options cases, and deliver training packages to staff to help ensure compliance with HRA in January 2019. We plan to be repeat this exercise every six months.

Homeless Prevention Trailblazers

The 2 year Trailblazer funding was allocated to Sefton via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority operating on a city region-wide basis to provide a variety of initiatives with a local tailored flavour, all aiming to deliver improved homeless prevention services and outcomes.

The Sefton Trailblazer funding will see the introduction of three Early Intervention and Prevention Officers based within it's Housing Options Team, who will improve the range of pre-prevention and prevention activities; develop and improve current prevention initiatives and look to further develop rehousing relationships in the private rented sector (PRS).

There will be a focus on engagement with the PRS. This approach appears justified given that the largest cause of homelessness is the ending of private rented sector tenancies in Sefton (24% of all cases). We will seek to prevent households having to leave their tenancies. It is also worth noting that of all Prevention and Relief cases helped to secure rehousing 28% were assisted into private rented tenancies. We will seek to continue to improve access to and the sustainability of tenancies within the private rented sector in particular.

This activity will link to the Council's private sector Housing Standards service activities, in particular it's Housing Licensing schemes, which seek to improve the management and conditions in the PRS. Given we are placing (vulnerable) homeless households into the PRS it is important they access good quality tenancies.

The staff will collaborate with other services such as Jobcentres, Hospitals and Prisons to identify those at risk of homelessness within those services and target prevention interventions, as well as helping obtain assistance with debt, benefits and providing mediation.

[Sefton's successful MHCLG Funding Bids](#)

- Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2019/20 (£125,000) - Introduction of 8 additional Complex Needs beds for rough sleepers within existing hostels, together with enhanced support services
- Rapid Rehousing Pathway Funding 2019/20 (£142,000) – initiatives to increase access to housing for those people within temporary and emergency hostel accommodation or accessing Sit-Up services

[Housing First](#)

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR CA) are leading the development and implementation of a Liverpool City Region Housing First Initiative.

This is a Housing and Support service model for homeless people with multiple and complex needs, that existing services are unable to effectively support. Unlike a traditional homeless service approach, clients will be assisted to move directly into their own home and receive adequate support for as long as they require. Housing is considered to be the priority need and is a stable base that enables recovery for the homeless clients.

Sefton have developed a close working relationships with LCR CA to help deliver the Housing First pilot within Sefton. The service will begin to be rolled out from June 2019 across the city region on a 'test and learn' basis, with full roll out of the service expected toward the end of the year.

Case Study – X (Bosco Lodge)

X is 31 years of age and presented for a Mainstay assessment alongside his auntie in September 2017. He was assessed and referred to the sit-up service and referrals were made to Bosco House, Bosco Lodge and Leyland Road. It was established during the assessment that there were signs mental health issues and previous physical health problems. However, X has not been to any appointments regarding his physical and mental health for several years and was not engaged with any services or did not have a GP. Immediately prior to X assessment, he was living with his auntie at her overcrowded house, she also had health problems and was struggling to meet X needs and accommodate him.

X spent 3 weeks of the sit-up service at Bosco House before a place become available to him at Bosco Lodge. Shortly after moving into Bosco Lodge X sat down with his Key-Worker to discuss his needs and to agree on a support plan. It was apparent early on that X severely lacked concentration and was difficult to understand, he also displayed sign of psychosis daily for example talking to himself. X informed his Key-Worker that he had throat cancer at the age of 16 which was in remission. However, he had not had any check-ups for several years due to his unsettled life.

X was very difficult to engage as it was hard to understand him due to his hoarse voice and his lack of attention. His key-worker managed to register him with a GP in order to initiate investigations into his mental and physical health. X's GP stated that X was very complex and difficult to understand, however he was referred to Aintree Hospital for a brain scan due to severe headaches and a scan on his throat as a precaution. He was supported by his Key-Worker for his scans, however when there he had a panic attack and was unable to attend.

As a result, his GP prescribed X diazepam for when he went to his medical appointments. X was given the all clear for cancer in his throat but was given a new appointment for a check-up for the following year. The brain scan did not show any abnormality of his brain.

With regards to X mental health, he had no diagnosis. Prior to moving into Bosco Lodge X had been admitted to Clock View on three separate occasions, however no further investigations gave any conclusions with regards a diagnosis. X's GP stated that X has 'gone undetected'. X started to have some delusional thoughts and we become concerned about his mental health. As a result, his Key-Worker contacted Clock View and requested an emergency appointment. X was supported by his Key-Worker to an assessment and he was prescribed medication to stabilise his thoughts and was referred to Early Interventions Team and later was allocated to an Early Interventions Worker for 3 years. X's mental health showed signs of improvement after being prescribed medication. We also referred X to counselling from Crisis, however this proved problematic as he could not maintain attention for the duration of the sessions. When X moved into Bosco House he was not engaged in any leisure, learning or training activities. During his time at Bosco Lodge to complete a five-week cooking course, joined and participated in the Bosco Walking Group, one to one maths and English with Crisis, attended a health and wellbeing course, Renting Ready pre-tenancy course, furniture restoration and art sessions. His confidence clearly grew as he attended all the above and he really seemed to enjoy this.

With regards to X moving on into his own tenancy we knew this would be very challenging. Following his completion of the Renting Ready course, X felt ready to move on.

We supported him to register with PPP and made a referral to CHART due to his complex support needs. We contacted Sefton Adult Services and made a referral for his needs to be assessed with regards living independently.

All services involved met at Bosco Lodge to discuss a move-on plan for X which was initiated by his Key-Worker at Bosco Lodge. Social Services agreed to provide 7 hours per week support to X once he moved into his own accommodation and contacted Expect Care to provide this.

X then worked with his Key-Worker on identifying a property via PPP and prepared a move-on. A referral was made for ELAS, Helping Hand and to One Vision for a paint pack. CHART also supplied X with a cooker and Crisis provided X with a double bed and bedding and Wave Length for a TV. As a result of his Key-Worker's referrals and networking X was now in a good position to move on; He has the essentials, mental health services in place and support from Expect Care. His Key-Worker supported X to set-up gas, electricity, water and TV license accounts and used budgeting sessions to financially prepare for this. X then made the move into a One Vision property in Sefton and had everything in place to give him the best possible chance of succeeding.

As a direct result of support from Bosco Lodge X addressed his mental health issues and is now fully engaging with mental health services, received support from social services, enjoyed and benefit from numerous leisure and learning activities and now lives in his own accommodation. We were congratulated for our success with X by an email from CHART stating how good a job we did with and how hard we worked in order to meet his needs. A very challenging but successful case.