

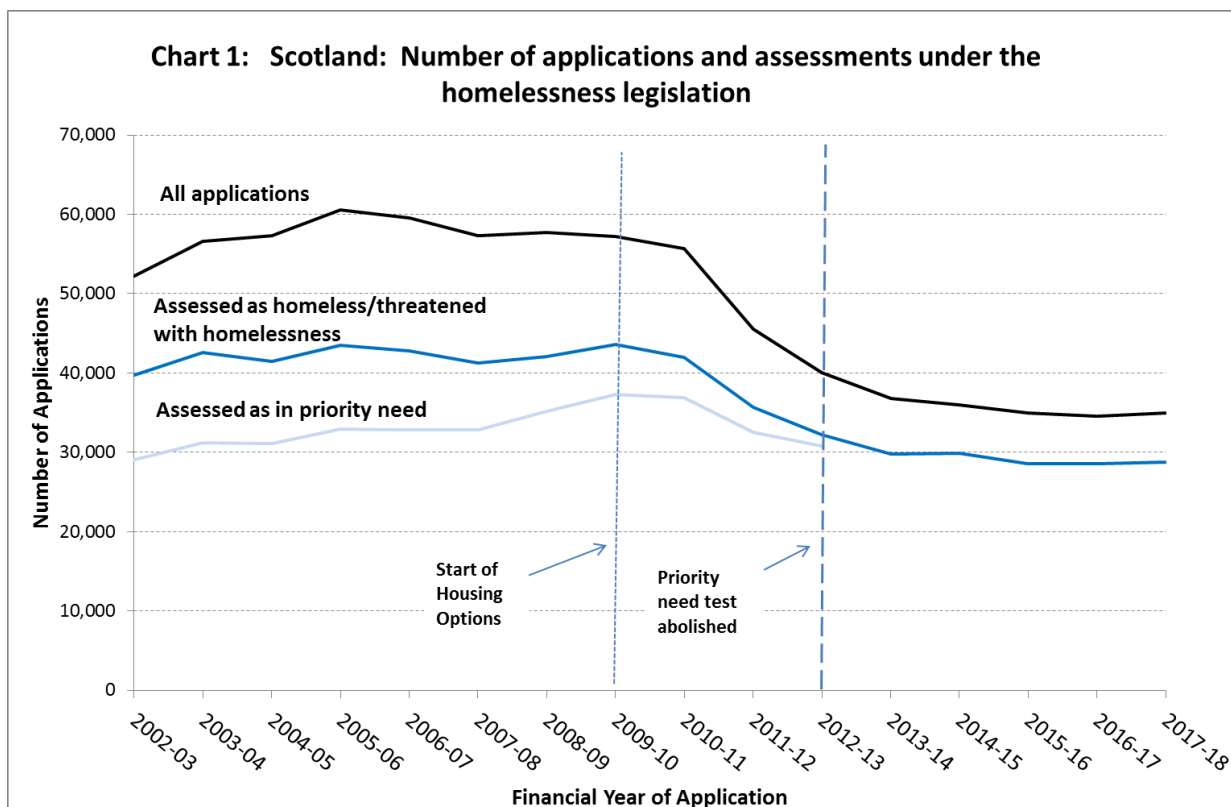
## PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

# HOMELESSNESS IN SCOTLAND: 2017-18

This bulletin provides information on local authority homelessness applications, assessments and outcomes in the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. It also provides information on households in temporary accommodation, along with the number of households in unsuitable temporary accommodation as defined in the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014.

It is based on data collected from local authorities through the HL1 case-level homeless applications data collection along with the HL2 aggregate temporary accommodation summary return and the HL3 case-level temporary accommodation return.

Excel workbooks containing tables and charts from this publication are available to download at <http://www.gov.scot/homelessstats>.



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## A Quick Guide to Homelessness Applications

There are **three stages**:

1. The Application stage where the household first presents to the council.
2. The Assessment stage where the Local Authority assesses:
  - a. whether the applicant is homeless;
  - b. if so, whether the applicant made themselves homeless intentionally; and
  - c. if they were unintentionally homeless, and if they have no local connection with the Local Authority to which they made the application, the Local Authority may test whether they have a local connection with another Local Authority area and refer the household to the other authority.
3. The Outcome stage. The type of accommodation the applicant is entitled to depends on the Local Authority's assessment decision.

Applicants are entitled to **temporary accommodation**:

- whilst they are awaiting an assessment decision;
- whilst waiting for settled accommodation to be found; or
- if they are intentionally homeless, then they are provided with temporary accommodation and advice and assistance to help them secure alternative accommodation.

More information on the duty to provide temporary accommodation can be found in the [Code of Guidance on Homelessness](#).

## Main Points

For the twelve month period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018:

### Applications

- There were 34,972 homelessness applications recorded in Scotland, 402 (1%) higher than the number of applications received in the same period in 2016/17. The annual increase in the latest year follows eight consecutive annual decreases seen in the preceding years, which saw applications fall from a peak of 57,672 in 2008/09 to 34,570 in 2016/17.
- The number of applications in 2017/18 has increased in 17 out of 32 local authorities in Scotland in the latest year.
- The fall in homelessness applications from 2008/09 to 2016/17 is likely to be due to the impact of housing options and homelessness prevention strategies adopted by most local authorities over the past few years rather than to changes in the underlying drivers of homelessness. However, the rate of reduction in homelessness applications has significantly slowed over most recent years up to 2016/17, with a 1% increase in the latest year. This suggests that, in its current form, the impact of housing options work is unlikely to lead to further large reductions in applications beyond those already seen.
- During 2017/18, 54% of homeless applicants in Scotland had made a Housing Options approach prior to (or on the same day) as the homelessness application. However this varied widely amongst local authorities, from no applications having a housing options approach being recorded in East Dunbartonshire during 2017/18, to almost 100% of applications having a housing option approach being recorded in Clackmannanshire and City of Edinburgh.
- The main reasons for applying as homeless have remained largely unchanged in the latest year. Dispute within the household / relationship breakdown is one of the main causes of homelessness applications (30% of all applications) or being asked to leave (25%).

### Assessments

- 82% of applicants (28,792 assessments out of a total of 34,950 assessments) were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in 2017/18. This proportion has increased steadily from 72% in 2004/5, but has since levelled off and remains largely unchanged since 2014/15.
- 27,241 cases were assessed as unintentionally homeless, and therefore entitled to settled accommodation (an increase of 95 cases on 2016/17).
- Relatively few assessments were found to be intentionally homeless or intentionally threatened with homelessness in 2017/18. These comprised 5% (or 1,551) of all homelessness applications assessed as homeless or

threatened with homelessness. This proportion has risen from 3% during 2009/10.

- Repeat homelessness has remained at a similar level to 2016/17 and was 6.4% for 2017/18.
- The proportion of homeless assessments where the applicant had at least one support need has increased from 34% in 2012/13 to 47% in 2017/18. This trend suggests that a larger proportion of applicant households have more complex needs being recorded than was previously the case.

## Outcomes

- For those households assessed as unintentionally homeless (with a right to settled accommodation), just over two-thirds (18,457 or 69%) secured a social rented tenancy or a private rented sector tenancy. This proportion has gradually increased each year since 2013/14, when 66% secured settled accommodation.
- An outcome of lost contact or unknown outcome was reported for 15% of cases closed which had been assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness during 2017/18. The overall proportion of lost contacts remained roughly the same between 2009/10 and 2016/17, varying between 17% and 20%.

## Temporary accommodation

As at 31 March 2018:-

- There were 10,933 households in temporary accommodation, an increase of 60 households (+ 1%) since last year.
- Of these households in temporary accommodation, 3,349 had children – an increase of 118 households (+4%) compared with one year earlier.
- The number of children in temporary accommodation increased by 557 children (+9%), to 6,615, compared with the same date one year ago.

During 2017/18:-

- A total of 20,320 unique households entered temporary accommodation and 20,450 exited temporary accommodation.
- The majority of households entering and exiting temporary accommodation were single person households (68% entering and 69% exiting), while around a quarter (26% entering and 25% exiting) contained children.
- Households in temporary accommodation spent an average of 171 days (just under six months) in temporary accommodation placements in 2017/18. Note that this figure relates to total time spent across all temporary accommodation placements, i.e. where households have lived in more than one placement it relates to total time spent across all accommodation. Households with children tend to be in temporary accommodation for longer (204 days) compared to households without children (161 days).

- Off the 20,450 households which exited temporary accommodation during 2017/18, the majority (68%) had a total duration of 5 weeks to 12 months, this includes 4,344 households (21%) which were in temporary accommodation for 5 to 12 weeks, 4,770 households (23%) which were in temporary accommodation for 3 to 6 months and 4,784 households (23%) with a duration of 7 to 12 months. A total of 2,582 households (13%) were in temporary accommodation for a year or longer, whilst 4,006 households (20%) were in for a 4 weeks or less.
- When looking at average time within each placement, housing association placements (212 days) local authority placements (141 days) and private sector lease placements (177 days) are more likely to have involved longer periods of time on average than other types of temporary accommodation. In comparison, hostel placements (64 days) and bed and breakfast placements (36 days) have tended to be shorter on average.

#### Breaches of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation Order) (Scotland)

- There were 20 breaches of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 as at 31 March 2018.<sup>1</sup>
- Between 1 April 2017 and 31st March 2018 (based on temporary accommodation placement cases closed during this period), there were 400 placements involving a breach of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. Most of these were in Edinburgh (280 breaches), but there were nine other local authorities in which breaches of the Order were recorded.

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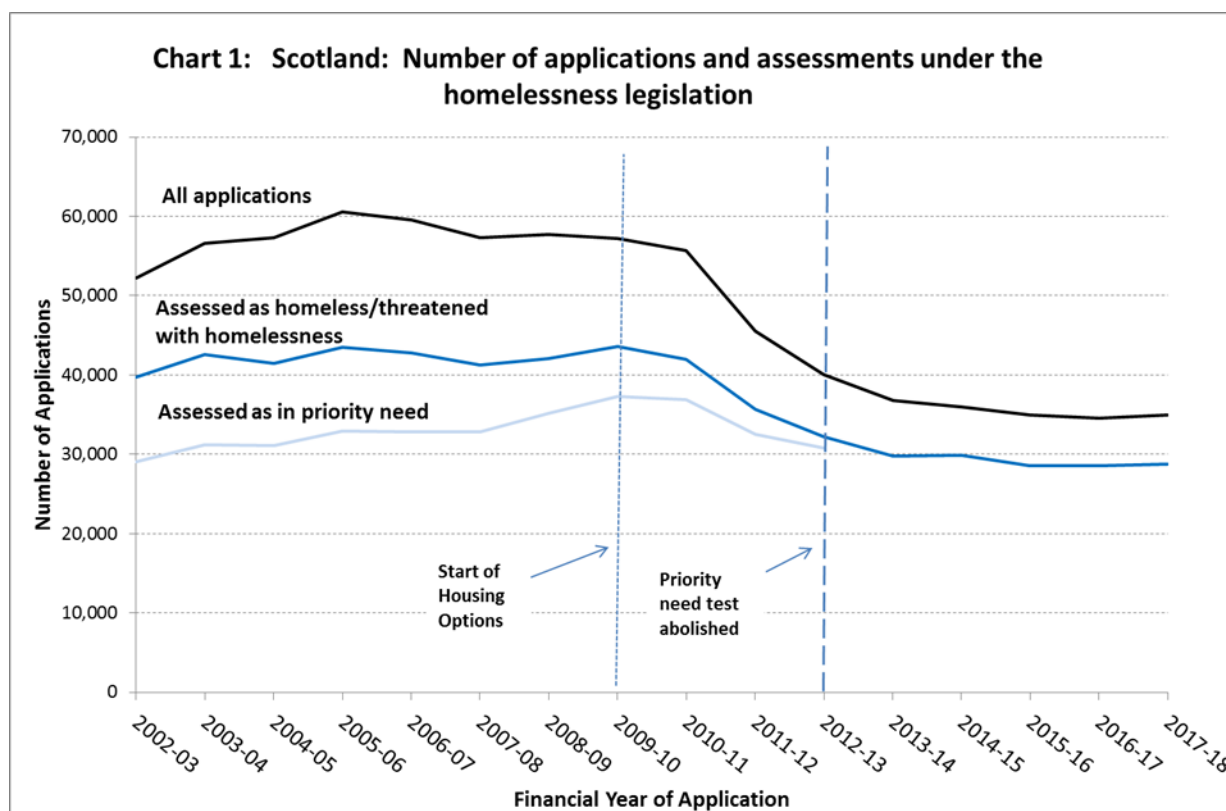
<sup>1</sup> This is the first time that the number of breaches have been published according to the changes made by the Homelessness Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation Order) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 (implemented from 2nd October 2017). See [Summary of current legislation](#) for more details.

## Applications

(Tables 1 to 10)<sup>2</sup>

### Changes over time

Changes in applications and assessments can be driven by changes in legislation, policy and practice. The increase in homelessness between 2002/03 and 2006/07 was in part a consequence of Scottish homelessness legislation<sup>3</sup> which extended councils' duties to non-priority homeless households. The priority need test was abolished on 31st December 2012<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile, the number of homelessness applications has decreased in more recent years from 2008/09 to 2016/17, which is likely to have been due to the impact of the introduction of Housing Options services in Scottish local authorities, with a focus on prevention<sup>5</sup>.



<sup>2</sup> Tables and charts are published separately and are available to download at: <http://www.gov.scot/homelessstats>

<sup>3</sup> The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 extended councils' duties to non-priority homeless and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 set the longer term objective of phasing out the distinction between priority and non-priority homeless. See [Summary of Homelessness Legislation](#) for more details.

<sup>4</sup> In November 2012, the Scottish Parliament approved the Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need Test) (Scotland) Order 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Housing Options (PREVENT1) Statistics in Scotland: 2017/18 is published alongside this publication and is available at the same location online.

## Recent trend

Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, Local Authorities received a total of 34,972 homelessness applications. This is an increase of 402 (1%) applications compared to the previous year and breaks the trend in falling numbers of homelessness application since 2008/09. The number of applications has increased in 17 out of 32 Local Authorities in the latest year (Table 1).

## Housing Options work

The underlying drivers of homelessness have remained largely the same over the past few years. However, the introduction of **Housing Options** work is likely to have resulted in an overall decrease in the number of homelessness applications since 2009.

## Impact on Applications and Assessments

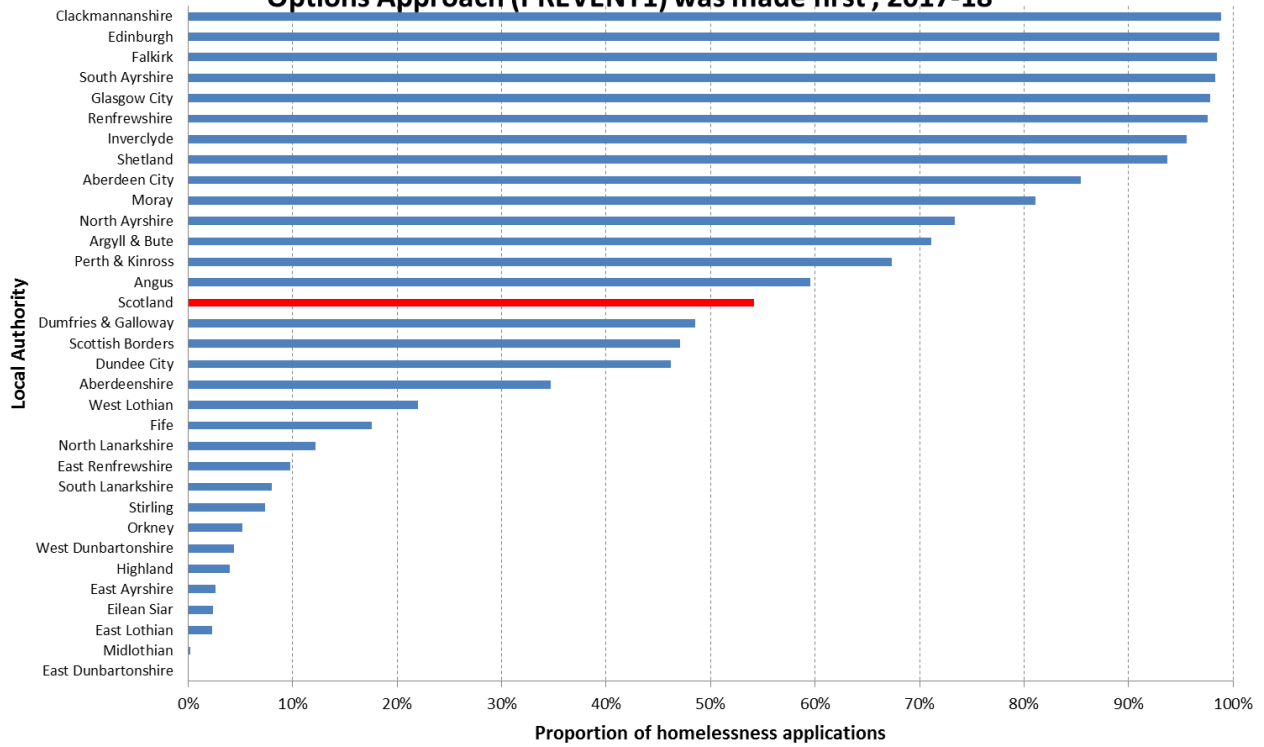
There is no evidence to indicate that any one group is being impacted more by housing options work than any other. However, what is evident is that there is marked variation among Local Authorities in the frequency and delivery of this work. Scottish Government policy has been for Local Authorities to define for themselves what Housing Options is. Further statistics on Housing Options are collected through the PREVENT1 return and are available at <http://www.gov.scot/homelessstats>.

The proportion of homelessness applications that have been through the Housing Options route first in 2017/18 varies considerably by local authority. This reflects the locally defined nature of Housing Options.

At the Scotland level, 18,938 out of the 34,972 homeless applications (54%) received during 2017/18 had made a Housing Options approach prior to (or on the same day as) making a homelessness application. This varied widely amongst local authorities, from none in East Dunbartonshire, to 99% in Edinburgh and Clackmannanshire (Chart 2). For comparison in 2016/17, 59% of homelessness applications had made a Housing Options approach prior to (or on the same day as) making a homelessness application.



**Chart 2: Proportion of homelessness (HL1) applications where a Housing Options Approach (PREVENT1) was made first , 2017-18**

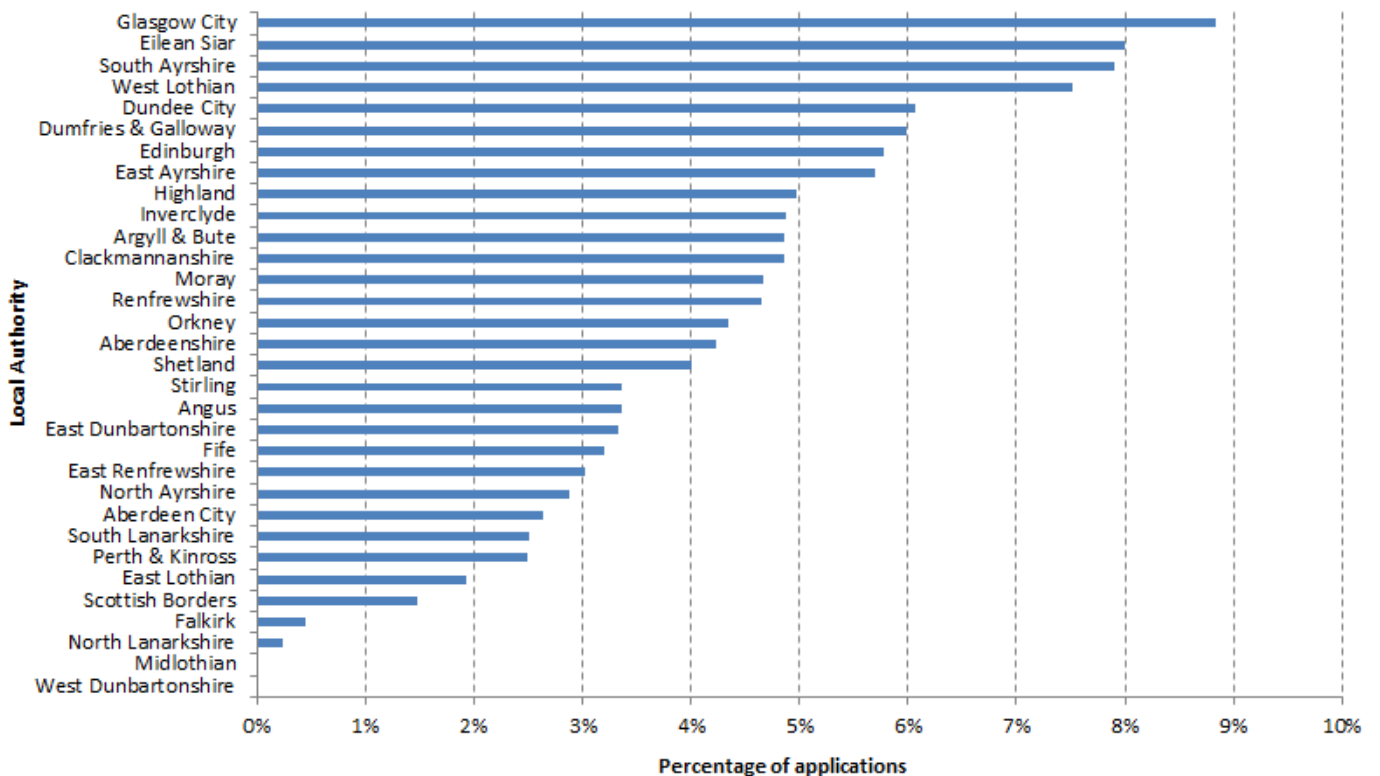


## Rough sleeping (Tables 2a and 2b)

The proportion of applications where a household member reported sleeping rough at least once during the last 3 months prior to application has reduced since 2002/03, from 13% of all applications in 2002/03, to 7% in 2014/15, after which the figure has since increased slightly to 8% in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

In 2017/18, 4% of applicants (1,537 in total or 128 per month on average) slept rough the night before applying for assistance (Table 2, Chart 3). Glasgow City and Eilean Siar had the highest proportions (9% and 8% respectively). West Dunbartonshire and Midlothian had the smallest proportions of homeless applicants sleeping rough the night before.

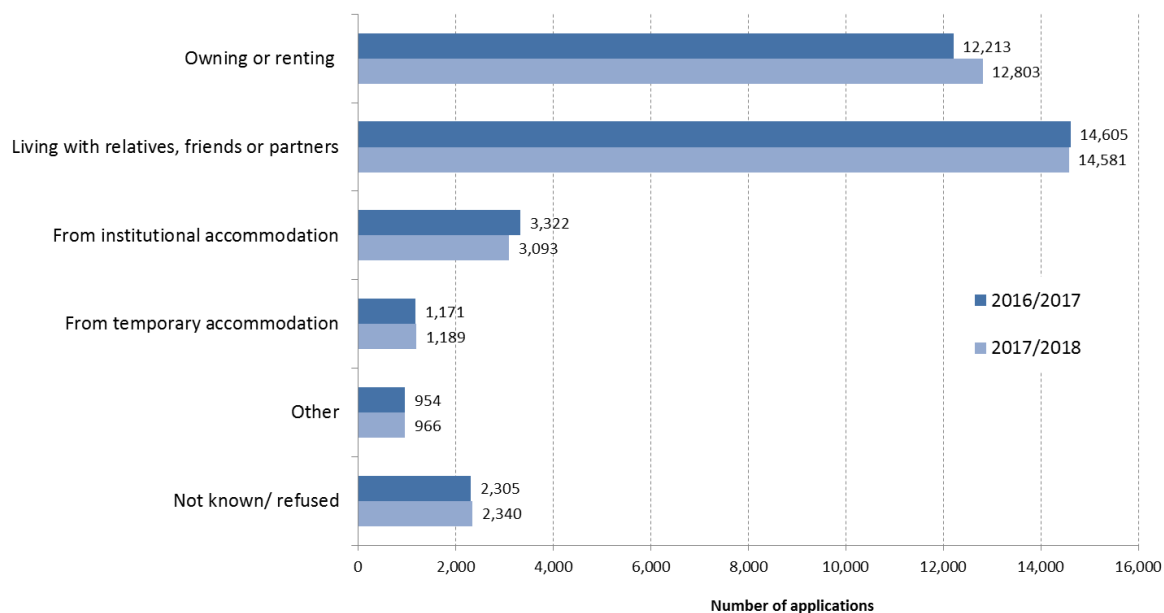
**Chart 3: Percentage of homelessness applicants in 2017/18 who slept rough the night before applying**



## Prior circumstances of applicants

Of the 34,972 homelessness applications in 2017/18, 14,581 (42%) had been living with friends, relatives and partners, while 12,803 (37%) had been living in their own accommodation (i.e. which they either rented or owned) (Table 3, Chart 4).<sup>6</sup>

Chart 4: Prior housing circumstances of applicants 2016-17 and 2017-18



There were 1,191 applications from households that owned their own property, an increase of 101 applications (8%) compared to 2016/17 (Table 3).

There were 6,451 applications from households living in the private rented sector, an increase of 79 applications (1%) compared to 2016/17 (Table 3). Whilst the proportion of applications from the private rented sector in Scotland increased from 13% in 2007/8 to 18% in 2013/14, this proportion has since remained the same up to 2017/18.

In contrast, the situation in England is different. Households assessed as homeless who were living in the private rented sector accounted for 27% of all English homelessness assessments during October to December 2017. The ending of an assured shorthold tenancy in England has been the most frequently occurring reason for the loss of last settled home since 2012.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> To note, the Temporary Accommodation category in Chart 4 includes applicants that were residing in a Hostel, Bed and Breakfast, Caravan/Mobile Home, or were long-term roofless or 'sofa surfing'.

<sup>7</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692938/Statutory Homelessness and Prevention and Relief Statistical Release Oct to Dec 2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692938/Statutory_Homelessness_and_Prevention_and_Relief_Statistical_Release_Oct_to_Dec_2017.pdf)

## **Characteristics of applicants**

Over the past decade, the characteristics of applicants have not changed much, fluctuating at most by only a few percentage points. The majority of applicants tend to be single, younger males, of White Scottish ethnicity.

Of the 34,972 applications for assistance in 2017/18:

### **Age and gender (Table 6)**

Almost a third of applications were from those aged 25 to 34 years (32% for both male and female). The proportion of total applicants for those aged 34 and under for males was 55%, and 61% for females. This has slightly decreased over time by a few percentage points (from 63% males and 69% for females in 2002/03 for example).

### **Household type (Table 7)**

Two-thirds of all applications (66%) were from single person households, of whom 46% were men and 21% were women. Around 28% of applications were from households with children. There were 21% of applications from single parent households, most of which were from females (80% of single parent applications)

The proportion of single parents has decreased from 24% between 2004/05 and 2011/12, to 21% in more recent years.

### **Ethnicity (Table 8)**

88% of applicants were of White ethnicity (77% were of White Scottish ethnicity). The proportion of those identifying themselves as in Other ethnic group has increased over time, from about 1% in 2002/03 to about 4% in 2017/18.

### **Other (Table 4, Table 5)**

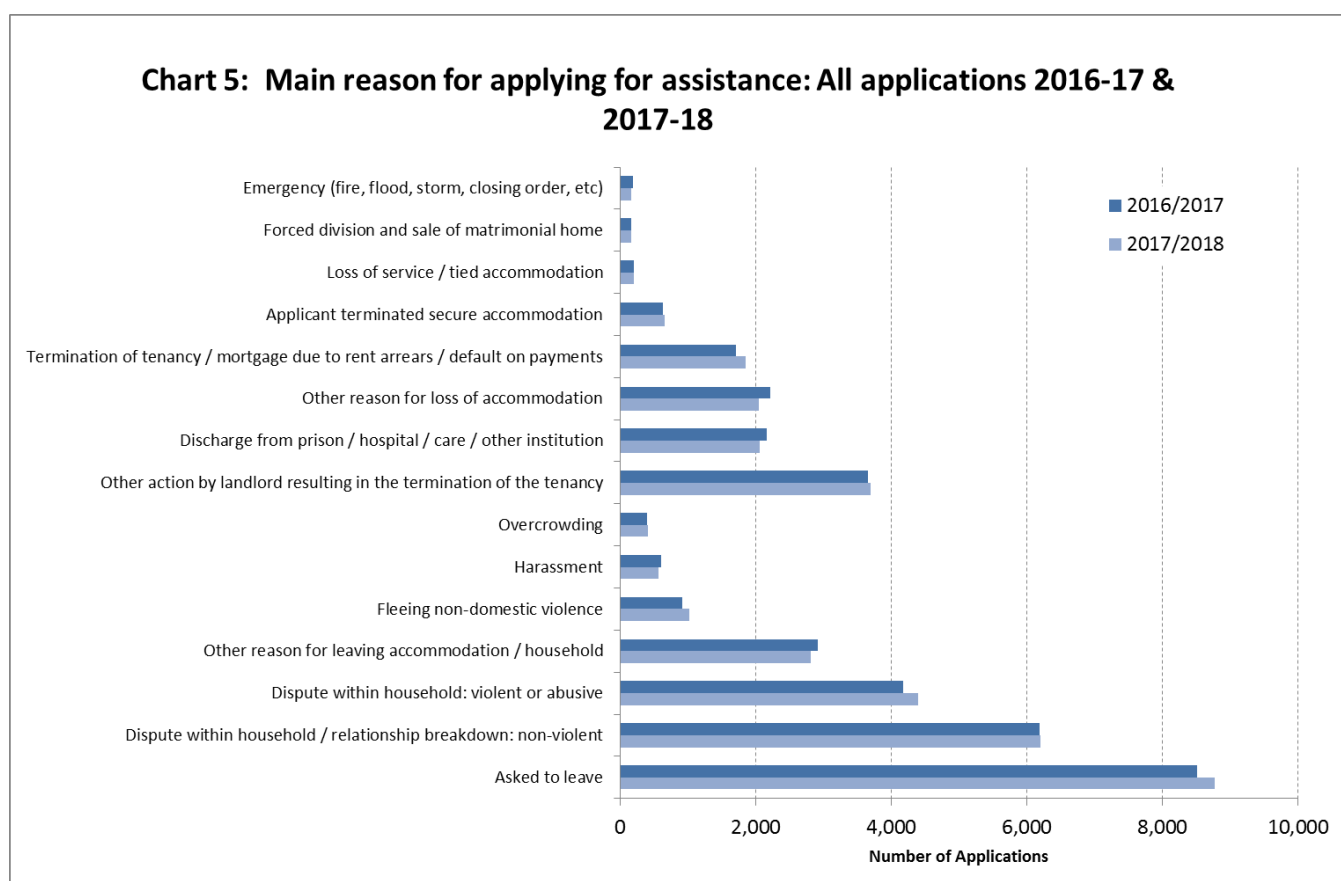
About 3% were previously a member of the Armed Services (Table 4). Around 6% were formerly looked after by a Local Authority in Scotland (Table 5). Proportions of applications from these groups have largely remained the same in the past decade, although the actual numbers have reduced overall in line with overall reductions in applications.

## Reasons for homelessness

(Table 9a and 9b)

The main reasons cited for having to leave prior accommodation have remained largely unchanged since 2007/08. Being asked to leave is one of the main causes of homelessness applications (25%). Dispute within the household (and relationship breakdown) is another key driver of homelessness. In 2017/18, 13% and 18% of homelessness applications come from those who have been through a violent or non-violent domestic household dispute respectively.

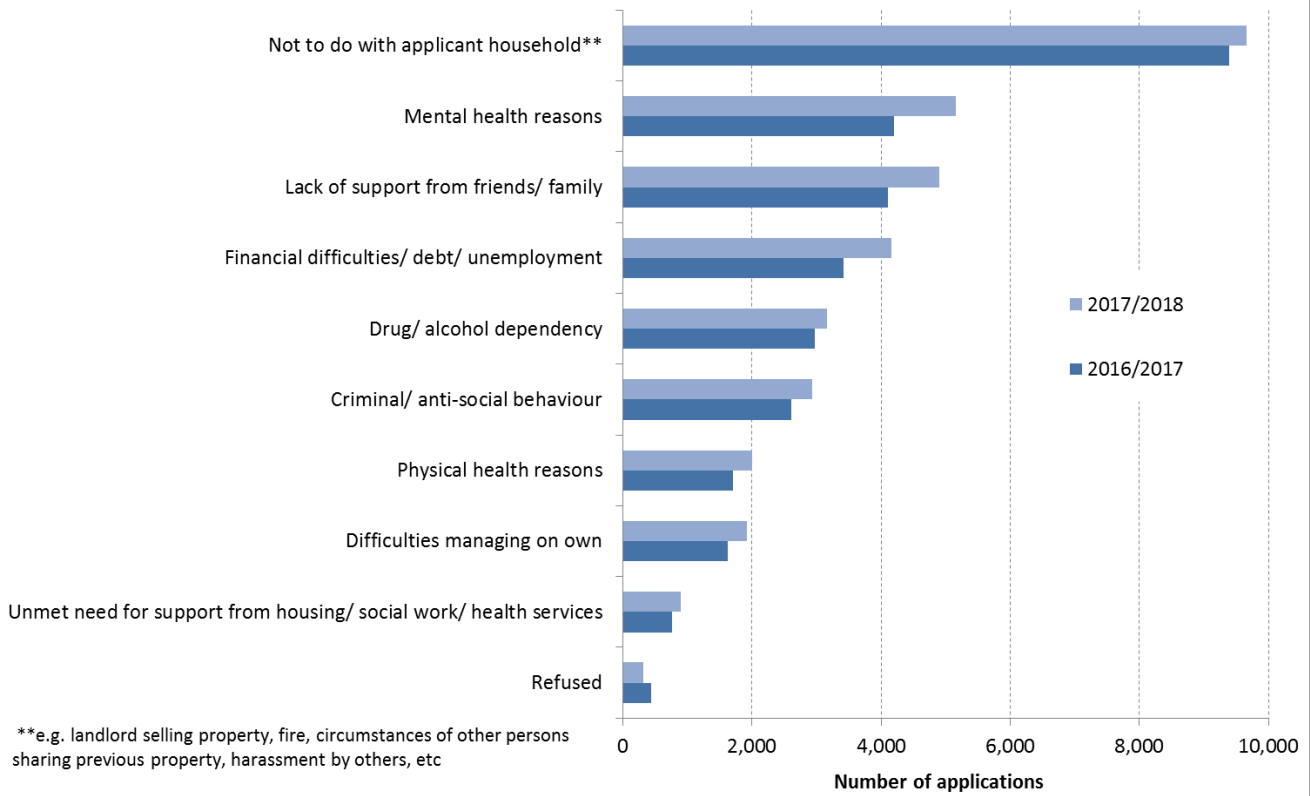
Some applicants (5% of all homelessness applications in 2017/18) reported that their accommodation was no longer available due to such things as rent arrears or mortgage defaults. Meanwhile, 6% of applications are from those leaving prison/ hospital/ care or some other institution.



As the causes of homelessness can be complex and not the result of a single incident or event, 65% of applications cited additional reasons (22,646 out of 34,972 applications during 2017/18) (See Chart 6 and Table 10). Comparing with 2016/17, there has been a 5 percentage point increase of those citing additional reasons.

43% of those completing the question cited that their reason for homelessness was 'not to do with the applicant household'. This includes reasons such as the landlord selling the property, fire, circumstances of other persons sharing the property or harassment by others. Other cited factors to note include 'mental health reasons' (23%, up from 20% during 2016/17) and 'financial difficulties, debt or unemployment' (18%, up from 16% during 2016/17).

**Chart 6: Reason(s) for failing to maintain accommodation: Scotland**



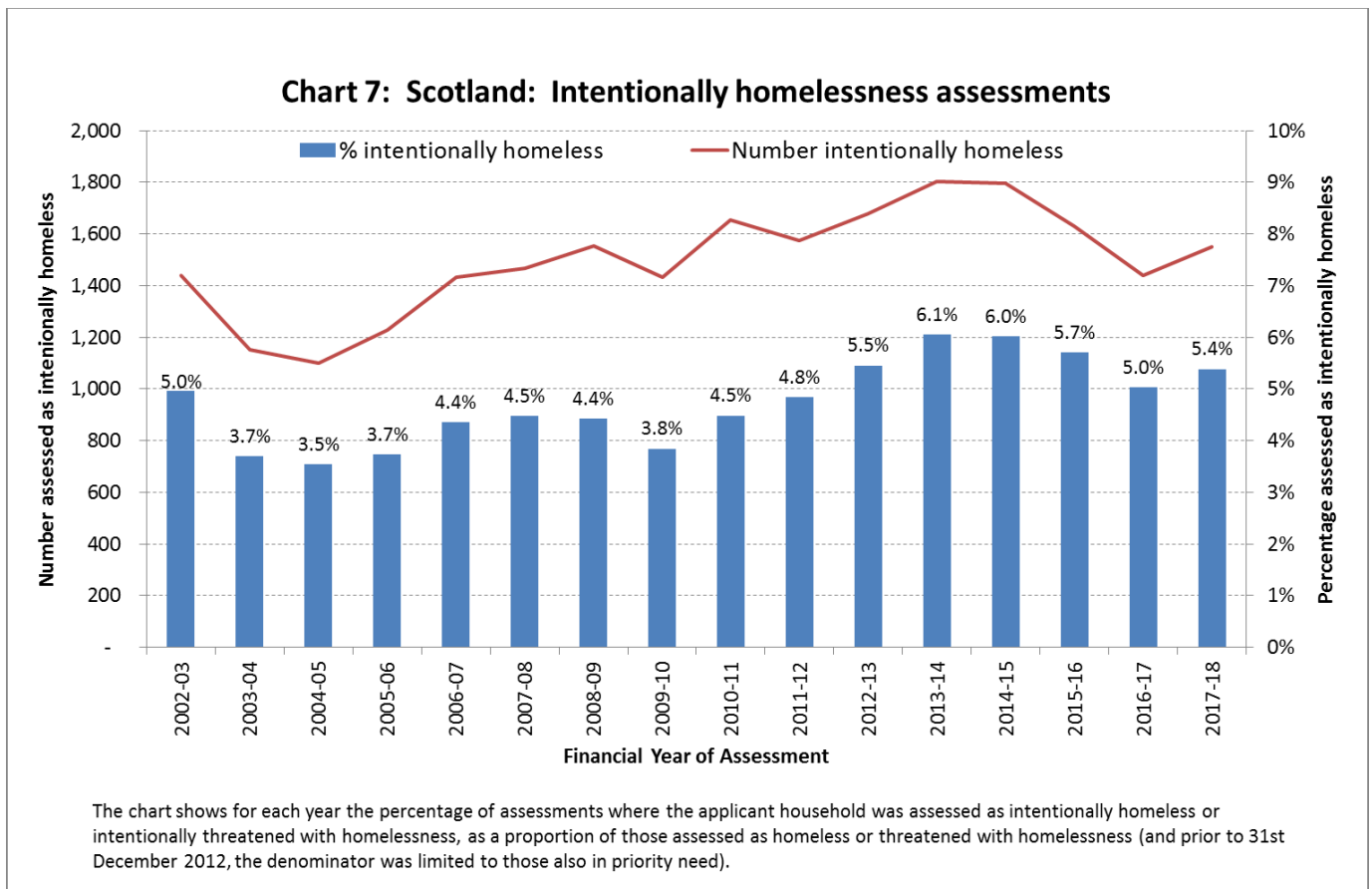
## Assessments

(Tables 11 to 16)

During 2017/18, 82% of applicants (28,792 assessments out of a total of 34,950) were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness (Table 12). This is a slight increase (208 assessments, 1%) when comparing with last year. The proportion of applicants assessed as homeless/threatened with homelessness has gradually increased from 72% in 2004/05 and has remained above 80% since 2012/13.

There were 27,241 **unintentionally** homeless assessments during 2017/18, an increase of 95 assessments on 2016/17. These households are entitled to settled accommodation.<sup>8</sup>

Chart 7 below shows that relatively few assessments are found to be intentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness, comprising 5.4% (or 1,551) of all homeless or threatened with homelessness assessments. However, this proportion has risen (from a low point of 3.5% in 2004/05).



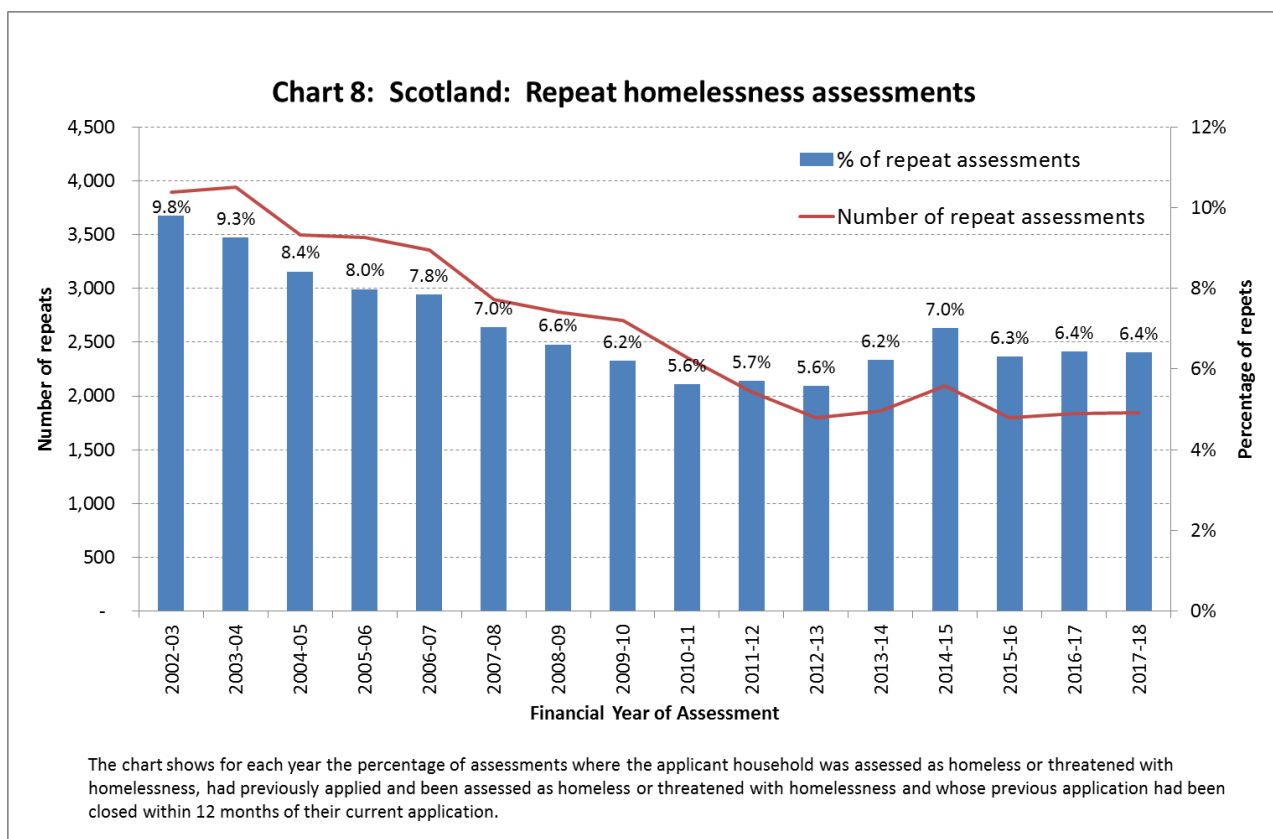
<sup>8</sup> From 31st December 2012, the priority need test for homeless households was abolished. As a result, all unintentionally homeless households are entitled to settled accommodation. This includes RSL, LA or assured tenancies in the private rented sector.

Prior to the *abolition of the priority need test*, only those assessed as homeless (or threatened with homelessness) *and* in priority need would have proceeded to the intentionality test. However, following abolition, all those assessed as homeless (or threatened with homelessness) are tested for intentionality. As a result, more homeless applicants may be found to be intentionally homeless.

### Repeat homelessness

The percentage of homeless assessments identified as repeat cases (i.e. where a previous application from the household had been closed less than 12 months before the current assessment<sup>9</sup>) fell from 9.8% in 2002/03 (3,892 assessments) to a low of 5.6% in both 2010/11 and 2012/13. It has since risen to 6.4% (1,843 assessments) in 2017/18 (See Chart 8 and Table 14).

The rate of repeat homelessness varies by Local Authority area, from around 13% in Inverclyde to less than 1% in Shetland and Orkney (Table 14).



<sup>9</sup> To be classed as a repeat homelessness assessment the applicant household must (1) be assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in both applications; (2) the previous case must have been closed within 12 months of the current assessment and; (3) the adults and family circumstances also need to be the same in both applications.

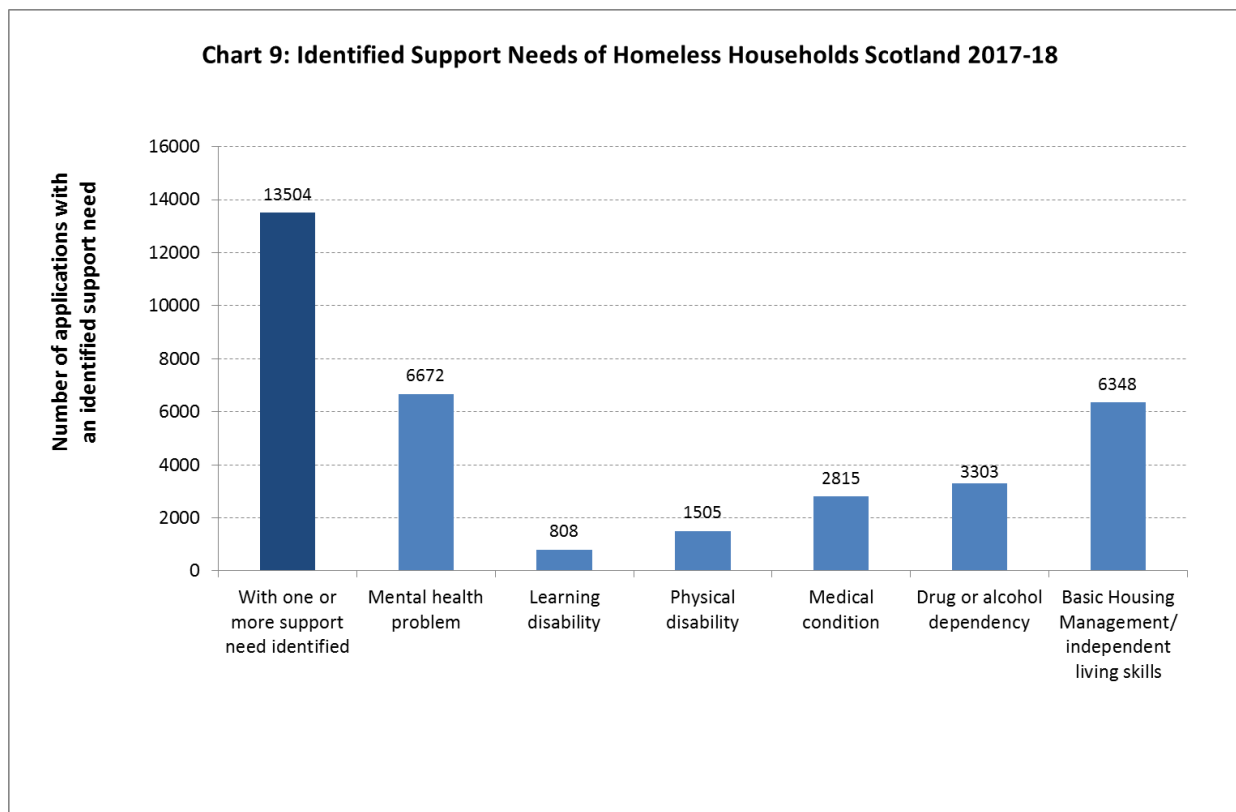


## Support needs of homeless households

Of the 28,792 households assessed as homeless in 2017/18, 13,504 (47%) cited having one or more support needs. This proportion has increased by 3 percentage points since 2016/17 and 13 percentage points since 2013/14 (Table 15).

During 2017/18, around a half of applicants with support needs cited a mental health problem as a support need (49% of those with support needs or 6,672 times indicated). 47% specified support needs for basic housing management/independent living reasons (indicated 6,348 times) and 24% cited drug or alcohol dependency (indicated 3,303 times) (See Chart 9).

When considering that repeat homelessness applications have risen since 2012/13, the increase in support needs identified in applications may indicate a more complex situation.



## **Temporary Accommodation**

### *Background*

Homeless applicants may be placed in temporary accommodation while the Local Authority assesses their application or while awaiting the offer of a permanent let.

Since 2002, local authorities have provided the Scottish Government with the total number of households in each type of temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter. This snapshot information (the HL2 return)<sup>10</sup> enables us to explore trends in temporary accommodation since 2002 (Tables 17 to 23).

In addition to the HL2 return, local authorities have more recently provided placement level information on households in temporary accommodation to the Scottish Government (the HL3 return). This has enabled new analysis of households in temporary accommodation within the most recent financial year (2017/18)<sup>11</sup>, and information from this is presented for the first time within this section in Tables 24 to 30 and Charts 10 to 20. Additional information about the HL3 data received from all 32 local authorities can be found in the [data quality section](#).

### **Temporary Accommodation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (snapshot information)** (Tables 17 to 23)

This section provides information on households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2018, from the snapshot information collected via the HL2 return.

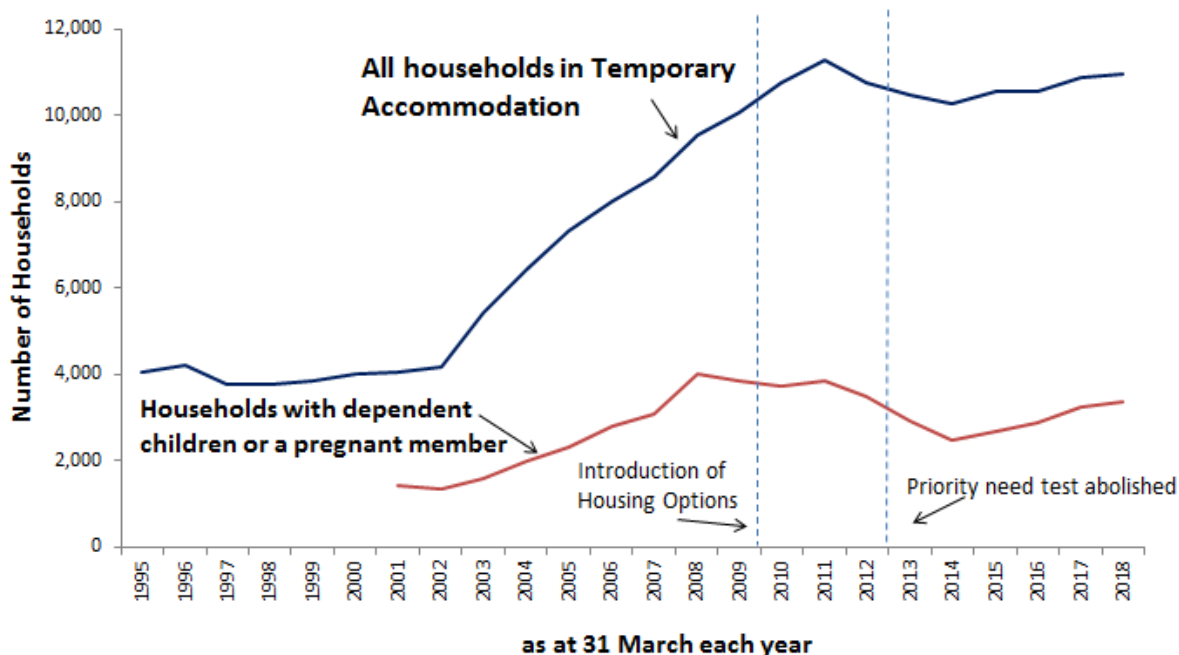
There has been an overall rise of numbers in temporary accommodation since 2002 (See Table 17 and Chart 10). In 2002 (on 31<sup>st</sup> March), there were 4,153 households in temporary accommodation. This number gradually increased between 2002 and 2011 – 11,254 households were in temporary accommodation on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. This increase was linked to local authorities preparing for the abolition of priority need in December 2012, as required by the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003. Since 2010, this figure has remained relatively stable, incorporating a slight dip to 2014 followed by a subsequent rise to 2018. There were 10,933 households in temporary accommodation at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

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<sup>10</sup> For more information on the HL2 return, [see here](#)

<sup>11</sup> The Scottish Government have worked with local authorities to quality assure HL3 data since mandatory submission in 2016. For more information on HL3 data quality, see [the 'data quality' section](#).

**Chart 10: Households in Temporary Accommodation at 31st March each year**



The increase in the overall number of households in temporary accommodation from 2002 is likely to have been initially driven by homelessness legislation, which placed new duties on councils to provide temporary accommodation, advice and assistance for priority and non-priority homeless households. Before 2002, the majority of priority homeless were households with children. Following this new duty there was a notable increase in the number of single people applying for homelessness assistance. These single people were also eligible for temporary accommodation.

From 2010 the number of homelessness applications has been falling, likely in part due to a consequence of the development of homelessness prevention activities by councils through adopting a 'housing options' approach to meeting housing need. This change in practice may also have contributed to the overall drop in numbers in temporary accommodation between 2011 and 2014, although the number of households in temporary accommodation has since increased between 2014 and 2018.

On 31 March 2018, the latest snapshot figures show that:

- There were 10,933 households in temporary accommodation, an increase of 60 households (0.6%) compared to the previous year. This figure remains lower than that recorded in 2011, when there were 11,254 households in temporary accommodation (Table 17).
- Of these households in temporary accommodation, 3,349 had children or a pregnant member – an increase of 118 households (4%) compared to the same date one year ago, and the fourth consecutive annual increase (Table 18 and Chart 10).

- The number of children in temporary accommodation increased by 557 children (9%) to 6,615 compared to the same date one year ago, and the fourth consecutive annual increase (Table 19).

## Local Authority variation

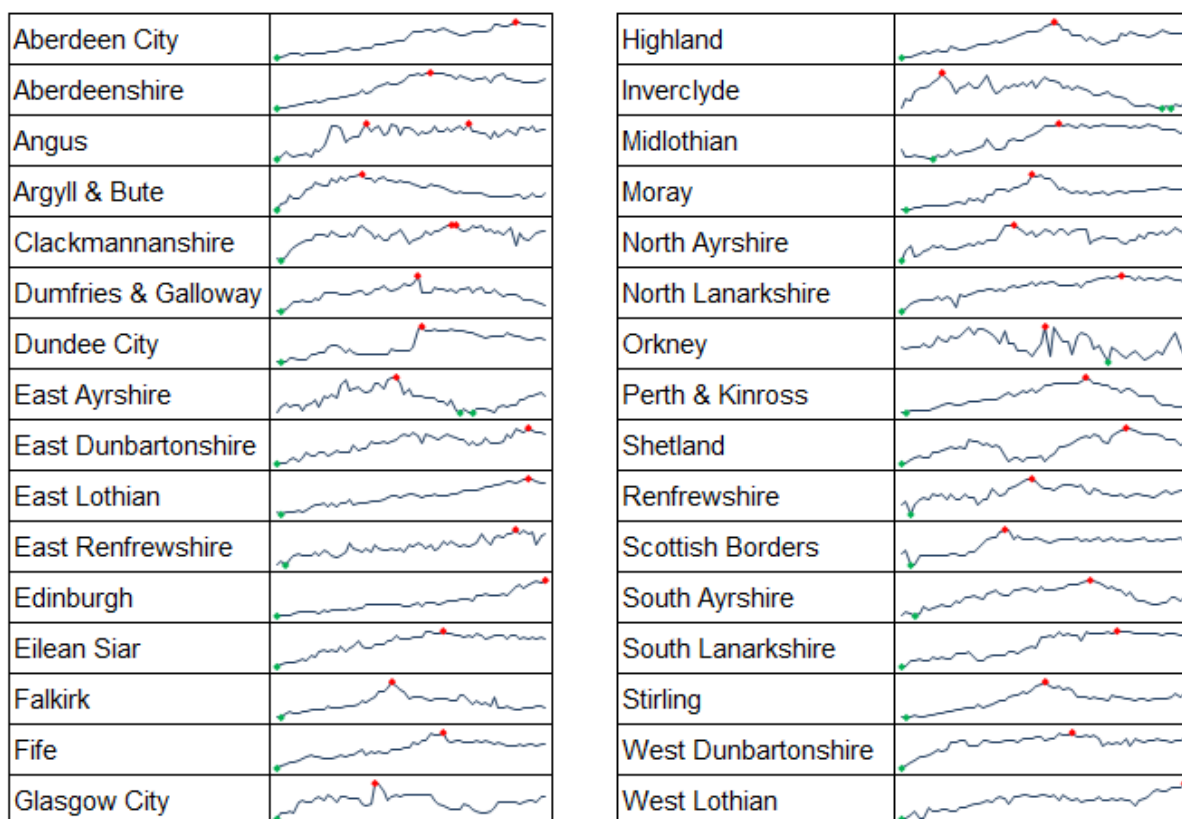
Chart 11 below shows the general shape of the variation amongst households in temporary accommodation in local authorities from June 2002 to March 2018. The overall rise in the Scotland level figure over the years reflects this rise amongst many local authorities.

However, although the majority of local authorities have seen an increase between 2002 and 2018, it should be noted that some have seen a decrease in numbers in temporary accommodation in recent years. Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway, Inverclyde and Perth and Kinross for example, have seen numbers decline since part way through this time period.

Comparing 31st March 2018 with 31st March 2017, more local authorities (15) saw a percentage decrease in the number of households in temporary accommodation, than those which saw a percentage increase (13 local authorities) and those whose temporary accommodation remained the same (4 local authority) (see Table 19).

### Chart 11: Temporary Accommodation by local authority

*From 30 June 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018*



## **Types of temporary accommodation used**

The majority of households in temporary accommodation at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 were in Local Authority or Housing Association accommodation (59%), with a further 16% in hostels and 11% in bed and breakfast (Table 20).

Households with children or pregnant women are mainly provided with Local Authority or Housing Association accommodation (80%), with a small proportion (1%) being placed in bed and breakfast accommodation (Table 21). On 31 March 2018, there were 39 households with children or pregnant women in bed and breakfast accommodation. This figure has increased (from 33 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017) since the same date one year ago.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were 20 breaches (mostly in Edinburgh) of the [Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Order 2014](#) (Table 23).

This is an increase compared to the same date one year ago<sup>12</sup> when there were less than 4 breaches of the Order, which may be a reflection of the Homelessness Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation Order) (Scotland) [Amendment Order 2017](#), implemented from 2nd October 2017. The 2017 Amendment Order specifies a reduction in the number of days that local authorities can use unsuitable accommodation such as bed and breakfasts for families with children or pregnant women from 14 to 7 days, except in exceptional circumstances. Further information on the number of breaches across all placements throughout 2017/18 is provided later in this section.

## **Placement level analysis of Temporary Accommodation usage in 2017/18**

This section provides a range of new analysis and information on households in temporary accommodation throughout the year 2017/18, based on the placement level data collected in the HL3 return.

### **Numbers of households (Tables 24 to 27)**

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, a total of 20,320 unique households entered temporary accommodation within this year (Table 24). Over two-thirds of these households (68%) were single person households, whilst around a quarter (26%) contained children (Table 25).

During the same time period, 20,450 households exited temporary accommodation, a figure 1% higher than the number of households entering temporary accommodation. 69% of the households exiting temporary accommodation were single person households, and 25% contained children (Table 25), similar percentages compared to households entering temporary accommodation.

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<sup>12</sup> Breaches as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 are not directly comparable to that at the same date in previous years since they are defined by different time periods specified by the Amendment Order 2017. It is not possible to back-date with the renewed 'over 7 day' definition due to the nature of the HL2 recording and return from local authorities.

Table 26 presents information on the number of households entering and exiting temporary accommodation during 2017/18 by type of accommodation.<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting that there were over 3,000 more households exiting social sector accommodation (local authority ordinary dwelling and housing association accommodation) compared to entering this type of accommodation. Conversely, there were over 2,000 fewer households exiting bed and breakfast accommodation compared to entering this type of household during the time period. However some of these differences are likely due to how some households have been moving between different placements whilst in temporary accommodation, for example some households may have been placed in hostel or bed and breakfast type of accommodation when they first entered temporary accommodation, after which they may subsequently have been placed in social sector or other types of temporary accommodation before exiting temporary accommodation completely.

Table 27 provides information on the numbers and percentages of households entering and exiting temporary accommodation by both household type and accommodation type. This shows that there are some differences in placements by household type. For example 90% of households entering temporary accommodation in hostels are single people, whilst 54% of households entering temporary accommodation in housing association dwellings contain children.

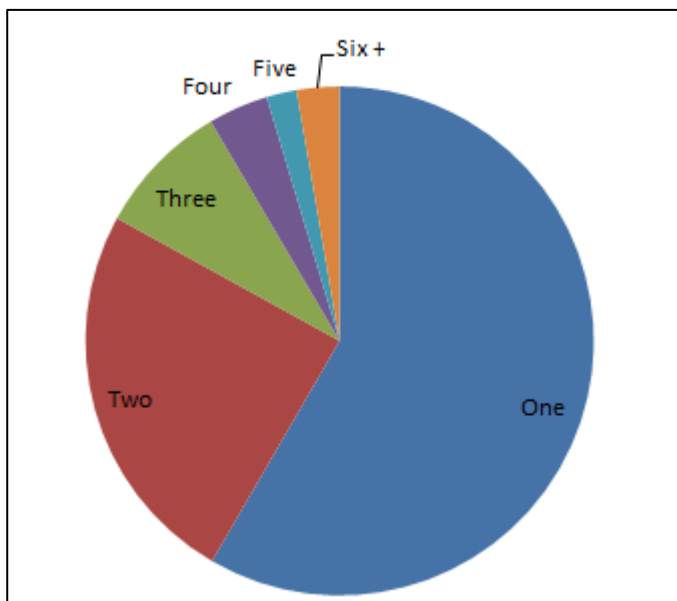
It should be noted that the information presented on household type is derived from the information on household type as at the time of the original homelessness application, and therefore may not reflect the actual composition of the household whilst in temporary accommodation.

Chart 12A shows that the majority (59%) of households that exited temporary accommodation during 2017/18 had one placement in temporary accommodation. A quarter (25%) of households had two placements in temporary accommodation and 17% had three or more placements. This reflects that most households using temporary accommodation are placed once, but that there are some who move through multiple temporary accommodation placements.

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<sup>13</sup> The use of particular types of temporary accommodation varies between local authorities, as shown by the local authority level figures provided in Table 26.

**Chart 12A: Number of temporary accommodation placements per household**  
*Based on a count of unique households exiting temporary accommodation during 2017/18*



**Total duration in temporary accommodation – at a household level (a measure of duration across all placements that a household has been in)**  
*Household level analysis (Table 28)*

These figures look at total duration in temporary accommodation across all placements, i.e. where a household has had more than one placement then the average time figure relates to the total time spent across all placements.

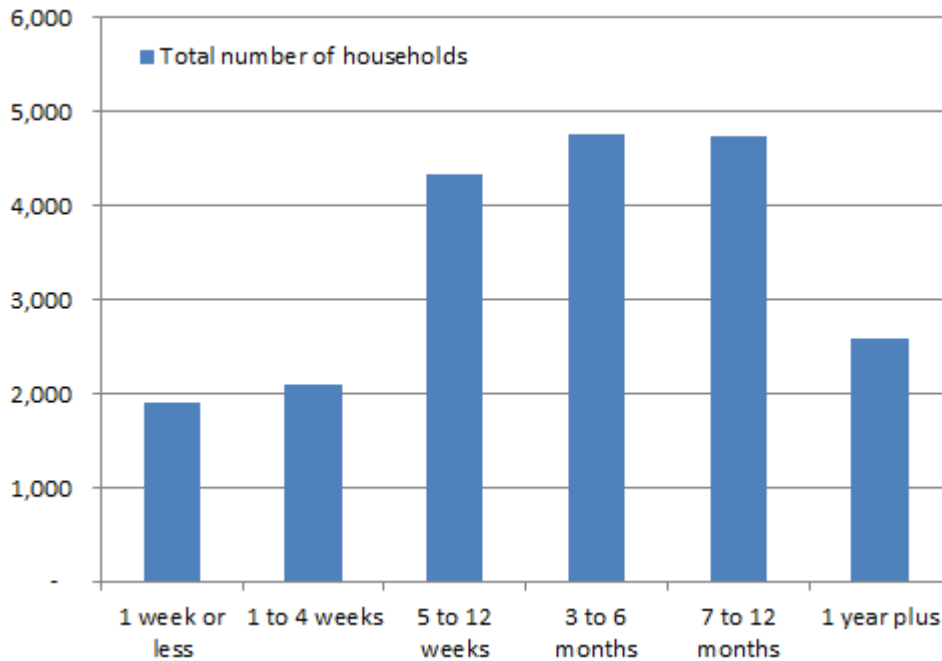
Across all local authorities during 2017/18, average lengths of time of around 150 to 200 days per authority are common for temporary accommodation durations in 2017/18.

At the Scotland level, households with children tend to be in temporary accommodation for longer (204 days for households with children compared to 161 days for households without children) . This is particularly pronounced in some local authorities (for example, in East Dunbartonshire, the average number of days is 376 for households with children and 242 for households without children). Although it is worth noting that the number of families is considerably smaller than the number of only adult households.

Chart 12B shows that of the 20,450 households which exited temporary accommodation during 2017/18, the majority (68%) had a total duration of 5 weeks to 12 months, this includes 4,344 households (21%) which were in temporary accommodation for 5 to 12 weeks, 4,770 households (23%) which were in temporary accommodation for 3 to 6 months and 4,784 households (23%) with a duration of 7 to 12 months. A total of 2,582 households (13%) were in temporary accommodation for a year or longer, whilst 4,006 households (20%) were in for a 4 weeks or less.

### Chart 12B: Number of households by total duration in temporary accommodation

Based on a count of unique households exiting temporary accommodation during 2017/18



### Duration in temporary accommodation (within each placement)

Placement level analysis (Charts 13 to 20)

Chart 13A shows that of the 37,071 placements which were closed during 2017/18, the majority had a duration of 12 weeks or less, this includes those that lasted one week or less (22%); those that lasted 1 to 4 weeks (19%) and those that lasted 5 to 12 weeks (24%). 4% of placements had a duration of a year or longer.



**Chart 13A: Number of days in temporary accommodation**  
*All placements exiting during 2017/18*

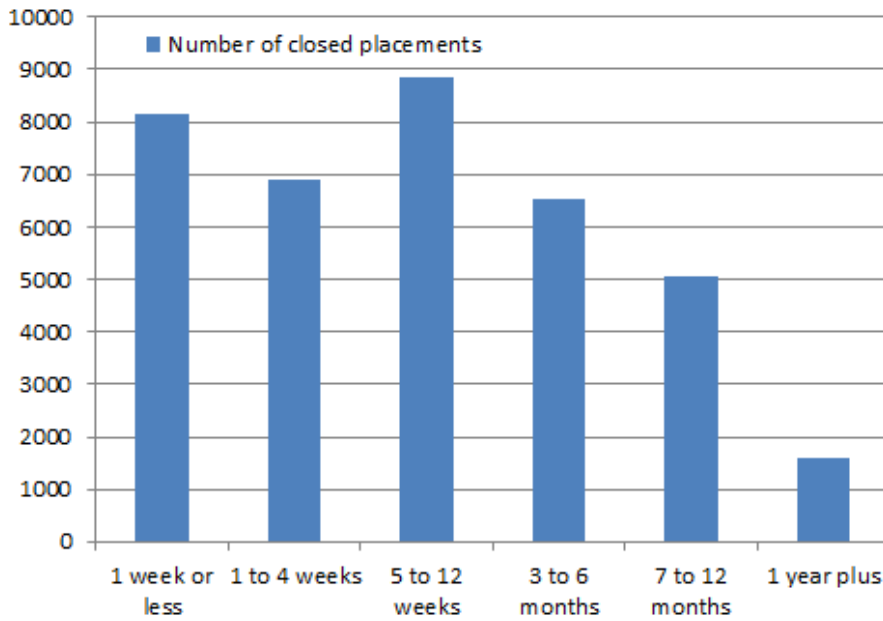


Chart 13B summarises the total number of days that households have spent in temporary accommodation (closed placements only) in each local authority. Glasgow and Edinburgh have more than double the number of household days compared to any other local authority.

**Chart 13B: Total number of days in temporary accommodation**  
*All placements exiting during 2017/18*

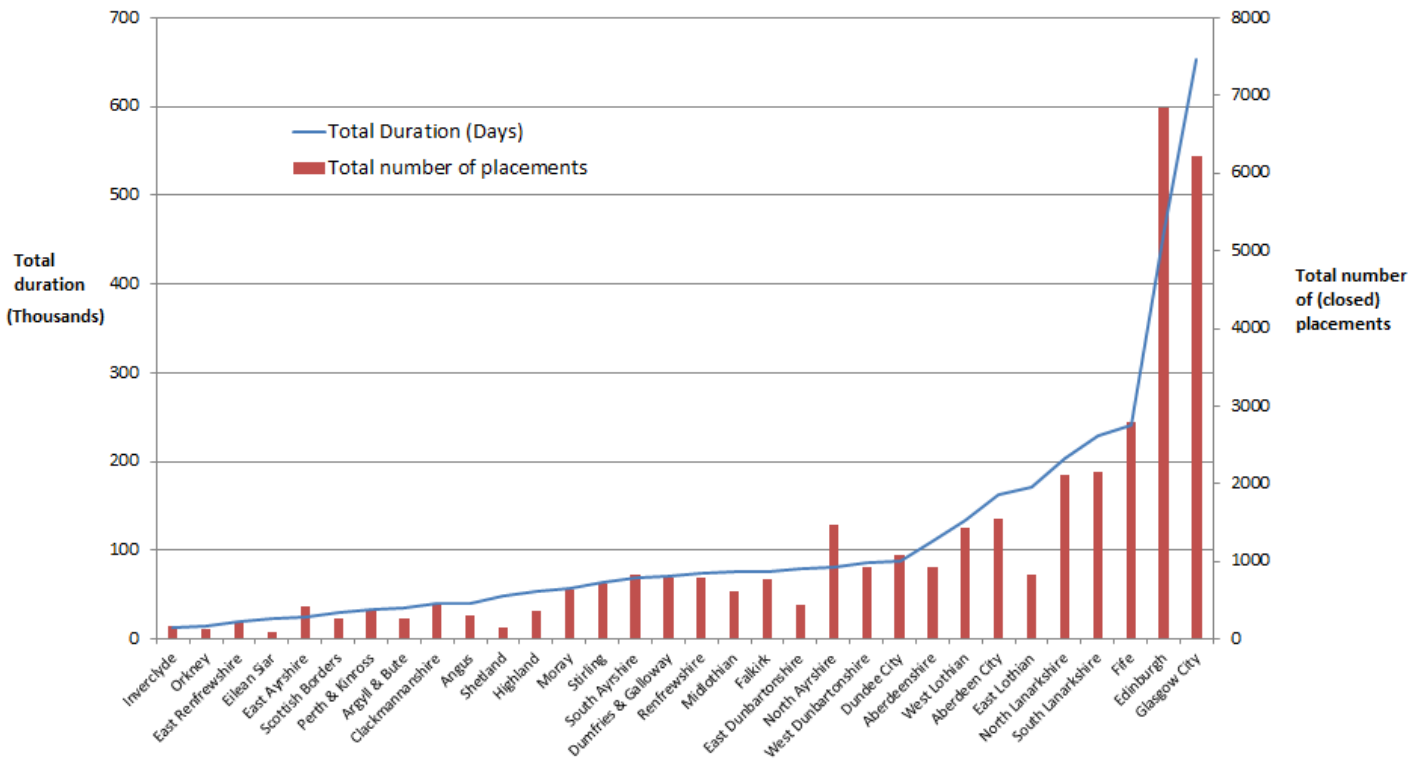
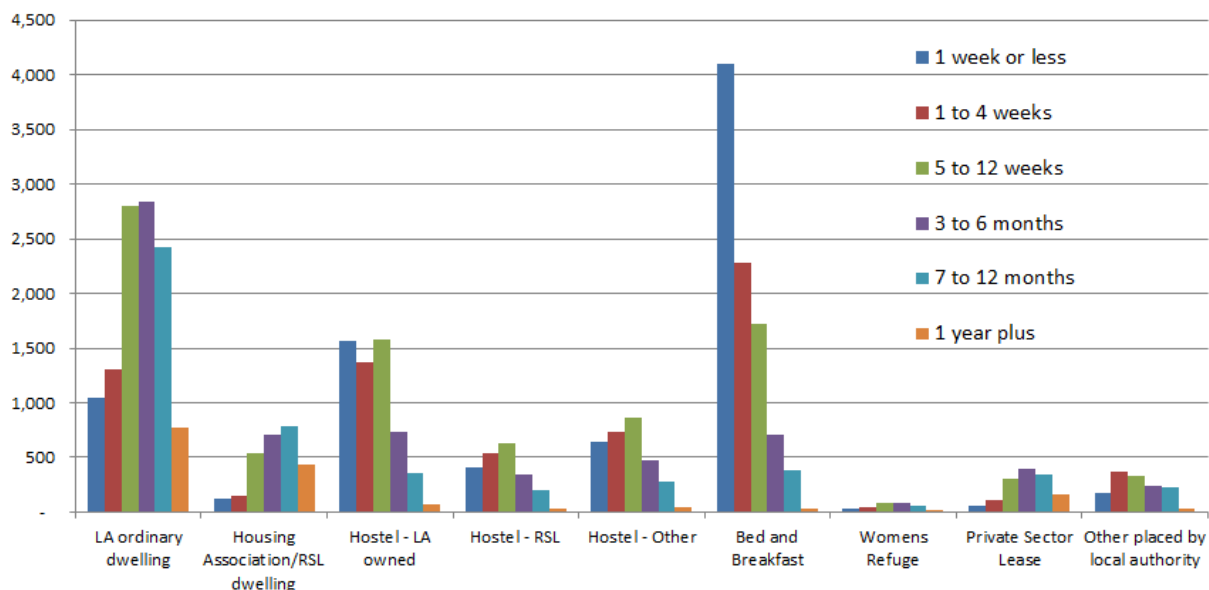


Chart 14 shows that across temporary accommodation placements which ended during 2017/18, the average length of stay can vary by accommodation type. Local

authority, housing association and private sector placements are likely to involve longer periods (i.e. 3 months or longer). Most hostel placements last 12 weeks or less. Bed and breakfast placements tend to be much shorter in length (most placements fall in the 1 week or less category); nonetheless, the chart shows that in some cases, such placements last for longer than 7 months and in some cases, over a year.

**Chart 14: Duration in Temporary Accommodation by placement type**  
*Based on the duration of individual placements that ended during 2017/18*



**Chart 15: Duration in Temporary Accommodation by household type**  
*Based on the duration of individual placements that ended during 2017/18*

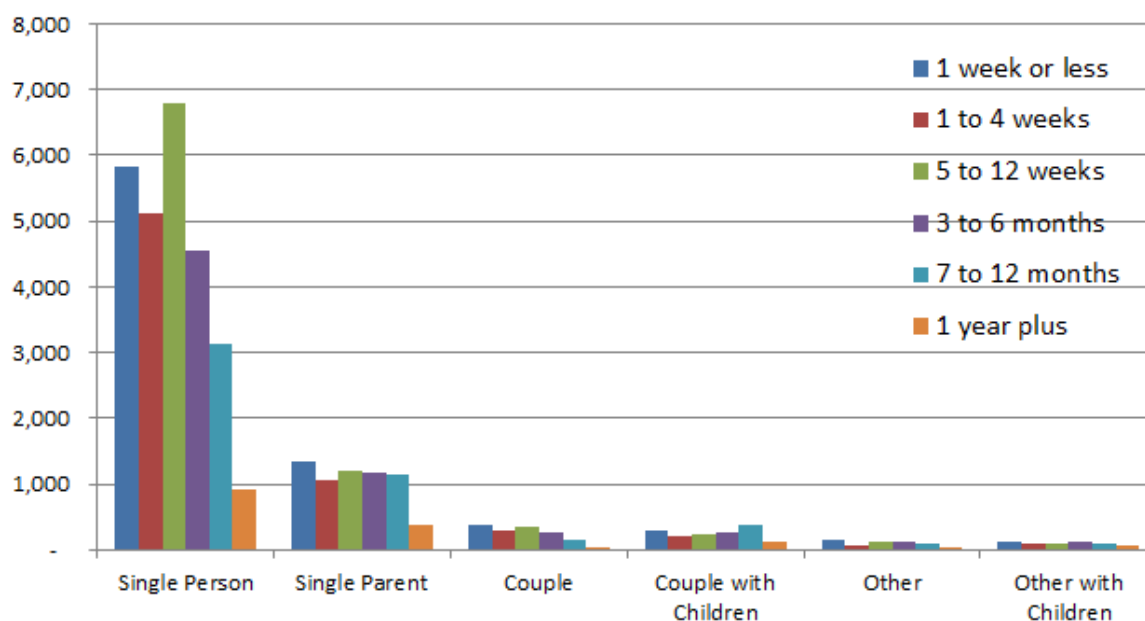


Chart 15 shows that the majority of single person households are in temporary accommodation placements for shorter periods (12 weeks or less); this is likely due to the volume of single person households in accommodation types which are intended to be shorter-term, i.e. bed and breakfast accommodation and hostels

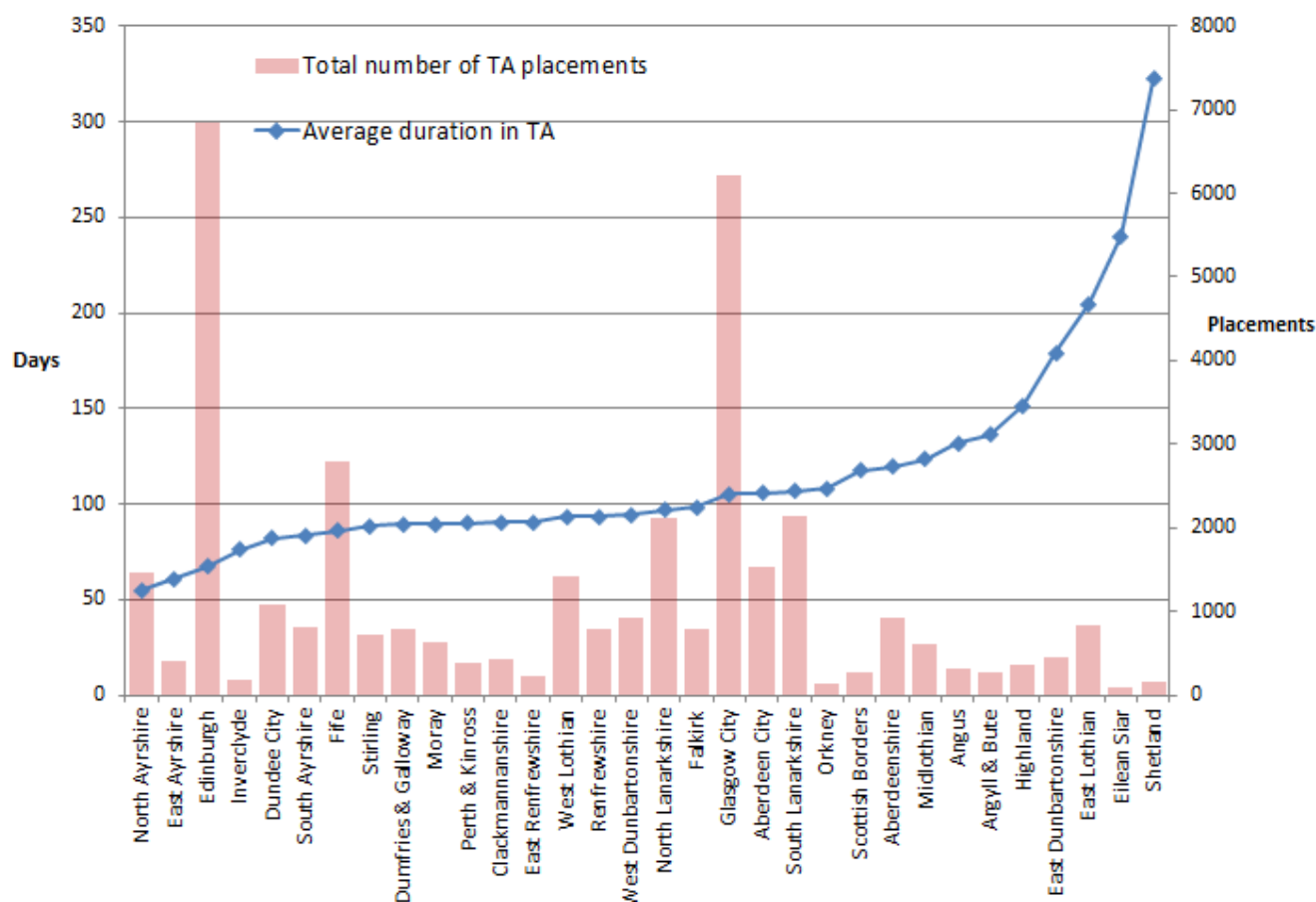
(Table 28). For other household types there is a fairly constant distribution across the duration periods other than lower numbers for 1 year plus.

### Local authority variation in placement duration

Most local authorities have an average placement duration of around 100 days (Chart 17). This is the average length of time for all placements.

Chart 17 shows that some local authorities with a relatively small number of placements exiting temporary accommodation during 2017/18 can have the longest average stays (for example, Shetland and Eilean Siar). Conversely, local authorities with a much greater volume of placements (Glasgow and Edinburgh), can have smaller average durations, particularly Edinburgh, where the average placement is less than 70 days.

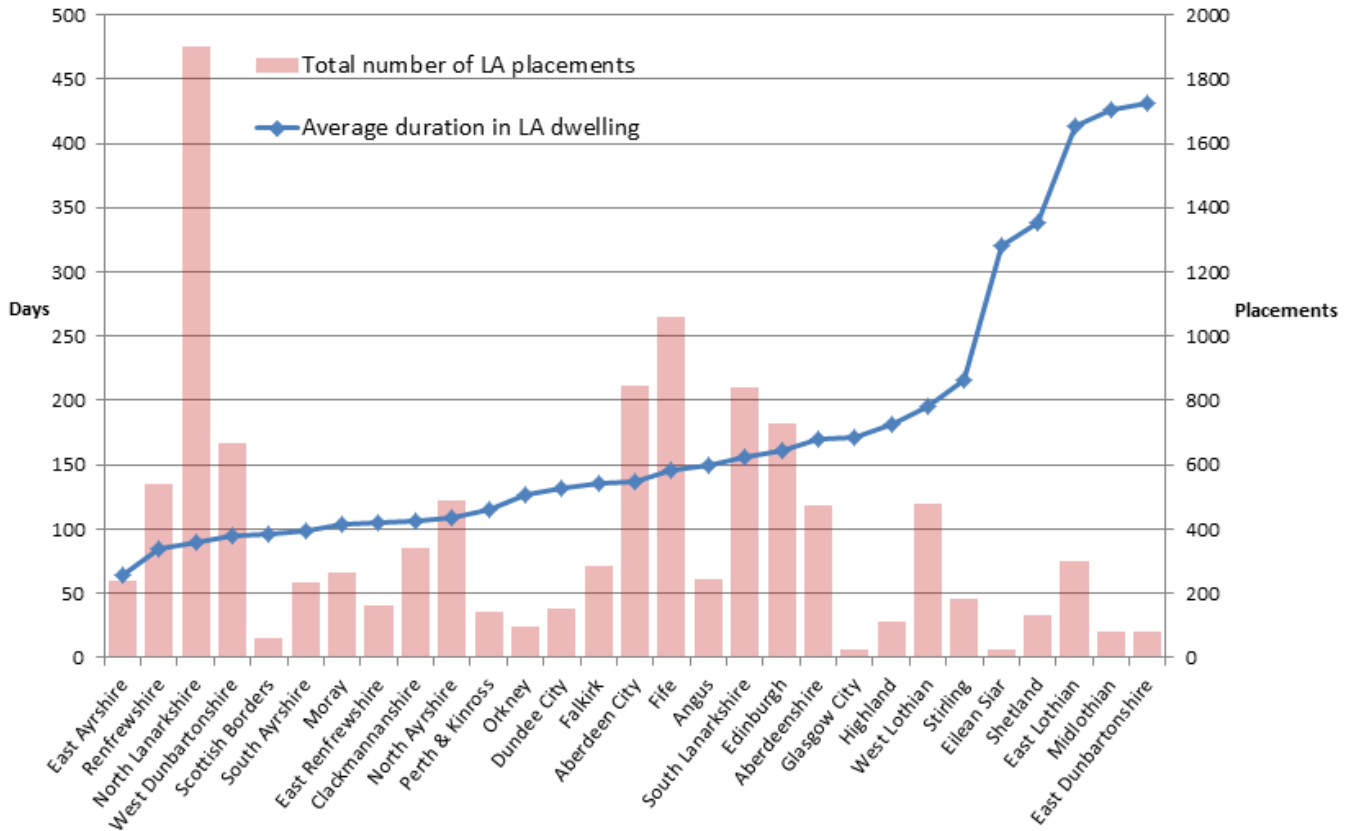
**Chart 17: Average duration in Temporary Accommodation by local authority**  
All placements exiting during 2017/18



Different local authority trends emerge when looking at average time in specific temporary accommodation types. Notably, some local authorities do not use some accommodation types, for example stock transfer local authorities make very little, or no use of local authority dwellings (Glasgow, Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute, Inverclyde and Eilean Siar); other local authorities do not use Housing Association accommodation (for example, Aberdeen City,

Clackmannanshire and Fife). See Chart 18 to see average duration by local authority dwellings and Chart 19 for average duration in Housing Association dwellings.

**Chart 18: Average duration in local authority dwellings**  
*All LA placements exiting during 2017/18*



**Chart 19: Average duration in Housing Association accommodation**  
*All housing association placements exiting during 2017/18*

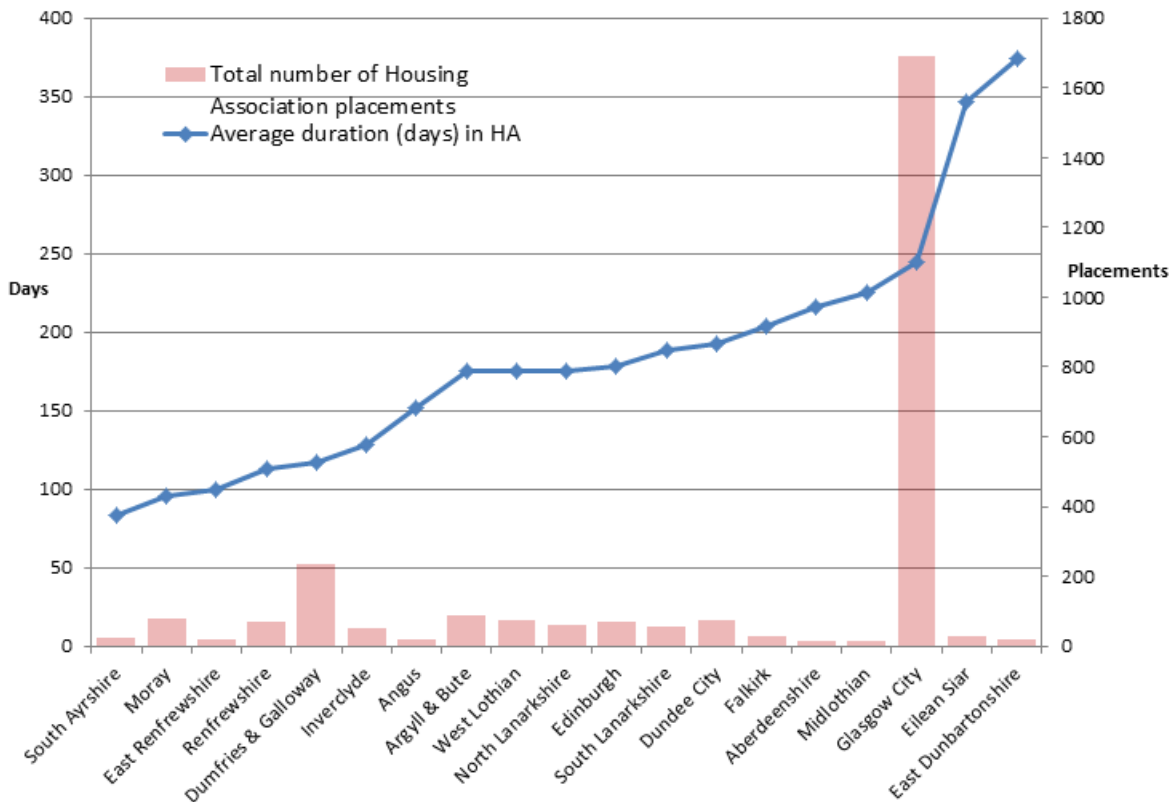
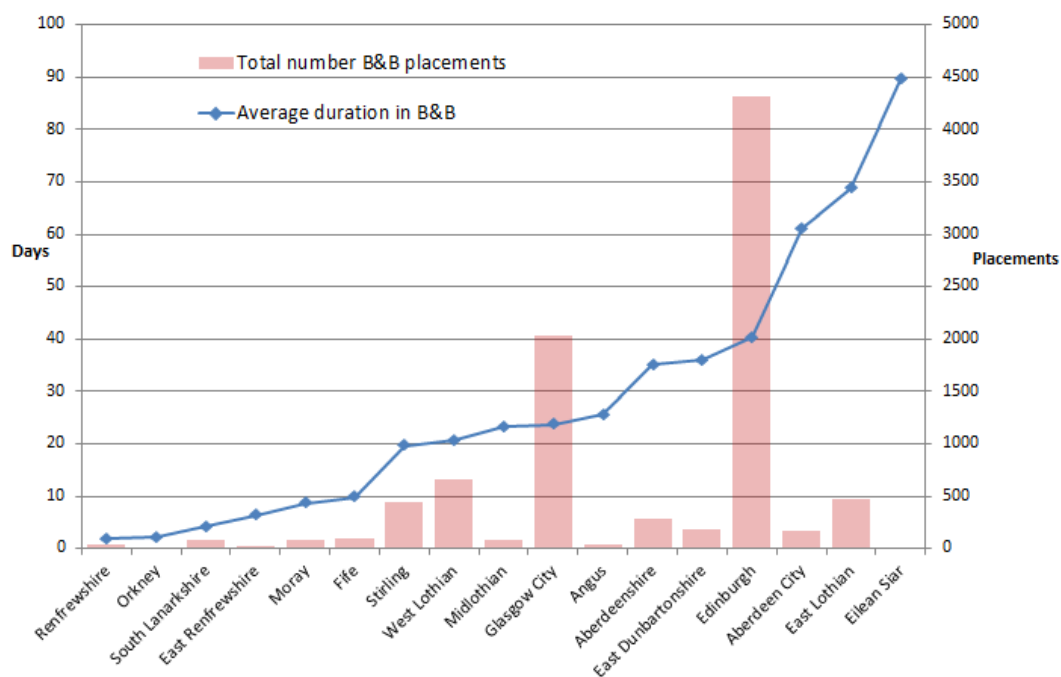


Chart 20 shows that average length of stay in B&B accommodation (for local authorities which use this accommodation type) ranges between 20 and 40 days for most local authorities (including Edinburgh and Glasgow). Three local authorities (Aberdeen City, East Lothian and Eilean Siar) have average durations over 60 days.

## Chart 20: Average duration in Bed and Breakfast accommodation

All B&B placements exiting during 2017/18, local authorities with 10 or fewer placements not presented



To note, several local authorities did not use bed and breakfast accommodation during 2017/18: Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway, East Ayrshire, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, South Ayrshire and West Dunbartonshire.

## Applications in which temporary accommodation was not offered

An HL3 return is completed when a local authority has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation under the homeless persons legislation, however, a local authority is also required to indicate when they do not offer any temporary accommodation to a household and thus, are acting unlawfully. During 2017/18, 3,200 HL3 applications were 'not offered' temporary accommodation (Table 29). The majority of these cases were in Glasgow.

## Breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order

In addition to the information on breaches available through the HL2 (the number of breaches at a 'snapshot' date), the HL3 return provides the number of breaches throughout the time period; we would expect the number of breaches shown through the HL3 to be higher as these are based on breaches throughout the year rather than a single point in time. In total, there were 400 breaches of the Homelessness Persons Unsuitable Accommodation Order during 2017/18 (Table 30), based on temporary accommodation placement cases closed during this year.

A greater number of breaches of the Order were recorded in the most recent two quarters (235 between 1 October and 31 March) compared to the first two quarters (165 between 1 April and 30 September). This is likely due to the Amendment

Order 2017, which was implemented from October 2017 and which shortened the number of days that local authorities can use unsuitable accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts, for families with children or pregnant women from 14 to 7 days, except in exceptional circumstances. The majority of breaches during 2017/18 were in Edinburgh, but there were nine other local authorities in which breaches of the Order were recorded.

### **Monitoring of Temporary Accommodation**

We would be pleased to hear your views on the new placement level HL3 analysis provided in this publication, and further on any additional tables or charts which you may find useful. You can get in touch with us via email at [homelessness\\_statistics\\_inbox@gov.scot](mailto:homelessness_statistics_inbox@gov.scot)

## **Outcomes**

(Tables 31 to 34)

Households assessed as unintentionally homeless have a right to settled accommodation - this is usually a tenancy with a local authority landlord or Housing Association, or a tenancy in the private rented sector. In 2017/18, just over two-thirds of unintentionally homeless households secured settled accommodation (18,457 or 69% of unintentionally homeless households which had an outcome in 2017/18). This proportion has gradually increased each year since 2013/14 (when 66% secured settled accommodation) (Table 31).

For those households assessed as unintentionally homeless, Orkney had the highest proportion of outcomes securing settled accommodation during 2017/18 (89% of outcomes). While Midlothian and Glasgow City had the lowest (48% and 54% of outcomes respectively) (Table 32).

### **Contact Lost / Unknown Outcomes**

In 2017/18, local authorities closed 28,102 cases (Table 34). Of these, following an assessment of homeless or threatened with homelessness, contact was maintained until case closure for 23,890 applications (85% of cases). An outcome of lost contact or unknown outcome was reported for 15% of cases. The overall proportion of lost contacts has remained roughly the same for the past 8 years (varying between 17% and 20%) but reduced by two percentage points when comparing 2017/18 with 2016/17.



## Notes on Tables

Please note:

All of the tables and charts in this publication are available in electronic format at:

<http://www.gov.scot/homelessstats>

## HL1 and HL2 recording

We are grateful to all 32 Scottish Local Authorities who submitted their HL1 and HL2 returns on time.

Given the continuous nature of the recording system, figures are updated on an on-going basis and may differ from those previously published. There may be delays in some cases being reported to the Scottish Government due to IT issues, quality assurance processes and delayed entry of data – particularly at the end of the financial year. As a result, we estimate that the headline number of applications may change by as much as 1% between first and subsequent publications.

Reporting of the Number of Applications													
Publication Date	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
19-Jun-18	60,542	59,586	57,325	57,672	57,212	55,640	45,537	40,028	36,825	35,964	34,939	34,570	34,972
27-Jun-17	60,560	59,590	57,327	57,676	57,213	55,642	45,545	40,036	36,819	35,946	34,926	34,100	
28-Jun-16	60,568	59,596	57,337	57,682	57,217	55,646	45,551	40,040	36,824	35,949	34,662		
30-Jun-15	60,662	59,554	57,253	57,682	57,220	55,646	45,552	40,051	37,234	35,764			
24-Jun-14	60,662	59,555	57,255	57,688	57,228	55,651	45,550	40,050	36,457				
16-Jul-13	60,684	59,609	57,208	57,676	57,211	55,644	45,547	39,827					
26-Jun-12	60,698	59,608	57,211	57,681	57,214	55,663	45,322						
30-Aug-11	60,820	59,654	57,239	57,668	57,122	55,227							
<b>Difference in applications between publication shown and most recent publication</b>													
27-Jun-17	- 18	- 4	- 2	- 4	- 1	- 2	- 8	- 8	6	18	13	470	
28-Jun-16	- 26	- 10	- 12	- 10	- 5	- 6	- 14	- 12	1	15	277		
30-Jun-15	- 120	32	72	- 10	- 8	- 6	- 15	- 23	- 409	200			
24-Jun-14	- 120	31	70	- 16	- 16	- 11	- 13	- 22	368				
16-Jul-13	- 142	- 23	117	- 4	1	- 4	- 10	201					
26-Jun-12	- 156	- 22	114	- 9	- 2	- 23	215						
30-Aug-11	- 278	- 68	86	4	90	413							
<b>Percentage difference in applications between publication shown and most recent publication</b>													
27-Jun-17	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	
28-Jun-16	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	
30-Jun-15	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	-1%	1%			
24-Jun-14	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%				
16-Jul-13	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%					
26-Jun-12	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%						
30-Aug-11	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%							

## The data over time

In 2001, the Scottish Parliament passed legislation which placed additional duties on Local Authorities to provide a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance to all applicants assessed as homeless. From September 2002, this took effect and councils have been required to provide temporary accommodation, advice and assistance to non-priority applicants who in the past would have received advice and assistance only. This has had a noticeable impact on applications, which has been reflected in changing assessments and outcomes for homeless people. Some tables in this release therefore present time series data so that this impact can be tracked.

In December 2001, the Scottish Government changed the data collection system for the case-based HL1 return to provide more detailed information on applications by individual households and to allow more timely reporting. This entailed changing to an electronic data capture system which allows cases to be registered and

updated on a continuous basis, as well as enabling applications made by the same household to be linked.

The data collection system introduced in December 2001 allows analysis by individual households and the identification of repeat applications. However, this is not the case for earlier data and so analyses comparing data over longer time periods will tend to refer to applications rather than individual households. This is also the case for analyses of flow through the assessment process where repeat applications by the same individual household might be assessed differently and have different outcomes. For other analyses, it is useful to distinguish individual households and so the unit of analysis (applications or individual households) is specified in the footnotes for each table.

The data collection was further revised in April 2007 in the light of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003, with some additional information included to reflect current best practice. Further information on the HL1 can be found at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/15257/HL1revisions>.

### **Interpretation of statistics on temporary accommodation**

The figures on households in temporary accommodation relate to households which have been placed in temporary accommodation by a Local Authority under the Homeless Persons legislation. This will include households for whom the Local Authority's decision and final action is still pending, as well as households which were secured such accommodation as a final action by the authority under the legislation.

The summary HL2 return (since 2002) has provided a snapshot picture of the numbers of households in temporary accommodation as at the last day of each quarter.

In June 2005, the HL2 return was revised in order to monitor the implementation of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2004. The revised return records the number of households with children or pregnant women in temporary accommodation as at the end of the quarter, the number of those in unsuitable accommodation as defined by the Order, and the number of those in accommodation which breaches the Order. Not all use of unsuitable accommodation is in breach of the Order as such use may be allowed under exceptional circumstances as defined in the Order (see [summary of legislation](#) below).

Since April 2016, it has been mandatory for local authorities to also complete an HL3 return, which provides placement level information on households in temporary accommodation. By providing placement level information, it is possible to provide in-depth analysis of the temporary accommodation use, for example, length of stay in temporary accommodation.

## **How we maintain quality**

### *HL1 and HL2*

The quality of this publication depends critically on the quality and consistency of the information supplied to us by Local Authorities on the HL1 and HL2 returns. The quality statement on the Scottish homelessness statistics website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/15257/quality> sets out the ways in which we do this. The main focus of our systems is to ensure consistency between the HL1 and HL2 and consistency of the case level information within each HL1 return.

### *HL3*

The quality of the additional temporary accommodation analysis provided in this publication also relies on the information supplied by local authorities. From April 2016, it became mandatory for local authorities to submit placement level information on temporary accommodation through the HL3 return. The Scottish Government have been working with local authorities to quality assure this data. This has involved comparison with snapshot HL2 figures at the end of each quarter and further, consistency checks with associated HL1 records.

The 'Tables' document, which is published alongside this document (and available here: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>) provides an additional 'HL3 Data Quality' tab with a local authority breakdown. Some local authorities have a larger than 10% difference between the number of households in temporary accommodation recorded through their HL2 versus their HL3 data as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (Fife, Orkney, Midlothian and Perth and Kinross). Reasons for these differences are given below the table.

Highland is highlighted in the table because it is the only local authority which has a large proportion of HL3 records which do not match with an HL1 record on the Scottish Government's data system. For this reason, Highland are caveated in all tables where HL3 household level analysis is carried out as numbers are likely to be subject to change to incorporate future data revisions and corrections.

## **How we deal with revisions and corrections**

Our approach to revisions and corrections is set out in detail on the Scottish homelessness statistics website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/15257/revisionpolicy>. In summary, published statistics and supporting reference tables are generally revised when the figures next appear in any publication. However, if a revision is significant resulting in a major change to the published figures a note showing the revisions will be published as soon as possible on the homelessness statistics website. It will also be distributed to all known recipients of the originally published data via email and the ScotStat mailing list.

## **How we consult with users and providers of statistics**

Local Authorities in Scotland provide homelessness statistics as a by-product of their administration of Scottish homelessness legislation. The main users of homelessness statistics are Local Authorities, housing associations, The Scottish Government and voluntary bodies such as Shelter, Homeless Action Scotland and Crisis. In November 2011, we re-established the Scottish homelessness statistics user provider group with representatives of providers and users of the statistics. We aim for the group to meet once a year. The minutes and papers from meetings of the group can be found on the Scottish homelessness statistics website at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/15257/22540>.

## Summary of current legislation

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, now consolidated into Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, introduced statutory duties on Local Authorities to assist those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness (potentially homeless), including providing accommodation in certain circumstances.

The legislation currently requires Local Authorities to make inquiries into the circumstances of applicants to satisfy themselves whether the applicant is homeless or potentially homeless. Once the authority is satisfied this is the case, prior to 31st December 2012, it also determined whether the applicant had a priority need. However, from 31st December 2012, the priority need test has now been abolished (see Paragraph 24). The Local Authority then tests whether the applicant became homeless intentionally and, in some cases, whether the applicant has a local connection with another authority in Scotland, England or Wales. A local connection with an authority means that the applicant normally resided in that area from choice, either because he/she was employed in or had family associations with it, or for other special reasons.

Section 24 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended, defines homelessness for the purposes of the Act as follows. A person is homeless if he/ she has no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere. A person is also homeless if he/ she has accommodation but cannot reasonably occupy it, for example because of a threat of violence. A person is potentially homeless (threatened with homelessness) if it is likely that he/ she will become homeless within two months. A person is intentionally homeless if he/ she deliberately did or failed to do anything which led to the loss of accommodation which it was reasonable for him/ her to continue to occupy.

Section 25 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended, defined the categories of household regarded as having a priority need for accommodation. Further details can be found in the Code of Guidance on Homelessness. This is available on-line at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/05/31133334/33366>.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 amends the 1987 Act and requires councils to provide a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance to all applicants assessed as homeless, regardless of whether they have been assessed as being in priority need. The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 is more long-term in scope, notably introducing a phasing out of the distinction between priority and non-priority applications, and enabling the suspension of the test of local connection. The ultimate aim of the Act was to ensure that everyone assessed as being unintentionally homeless was entitled to settled accommodation from 31st December 2012.

In November 2012, the Scottish Parliament approved the Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need Test) (Scotland) Order 2012 which gave effect to this commitment.

From 31st December 2012 the priority need test for homeless households was abolished. As a result, from this date, all unintentionally homeless households are entitled to settled accommodation.

### **Summary of Local Authority duty to homeless households:**

1. Unintentionally homeless [and in priority need]<sup>14</sup>
  - Provide temporary accommodation until permanent accommodation has been secured.
  - Permanent accommodation is defined as:
    - A Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)
    - An Assured Tenancy (not a Short Assured Tenancy)
    - If the applicants have previously been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years, or if they are subject to an anti-social behaviour order - a short Scottish Secure Tenancy can be offered.

In some circumstances, the Local Authority can provide non-permanent accommodation. These circumstances are laid out in the Homeless Persons (Provision of Non-permanent Accommodation) (Scotland) Regulations 2010.

Under certain circumstances, a Local Authority may apply a local connection test and refer the applicant to another Local Authority. However, the receiving Local Authority must then secure settled accommodation for the applicant.

2. Intentionally Homeless [and in Priority Need / Homeless and not in Priority Need]:
  - Provide temporary accommodation for a reasonable period of time, advice and assistance.
3. Potentially homeless, unintentionally so [and in Priority Need]<sup>14</sup>:
  - Take reasonable steps to ensure that accommodation does not cease to be available.
4. Potentially homeless, intentionally so [and in Priority Need / Potentially Homeless and not in Priority Need]:
  - Provide advice and assistance to help retain accommodation.

The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2004 came into force on 6 December 2004, and is intended to prevent the routine use of unsuitable temporary accommodation for households with family commitments. Under this Order, Local Authorities cannot put households with children and pregnant women into temporary accommodation which is not suitable, unless exceptional circumstances apply. Unsuitable accommodation is defined in the

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<sup>14</sup> If before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

Order as accommodation which does not meet standards relating to the physical properties of the accommodation (the physical standard), its proximity to health and education services (the proximity standard) and its suitability for use by children (the safety standard).

The 2004 order was revoked by [The Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Order 2014](#), which came into force on the 21st November 2014. The 2014 order adds the additional requirement that the accommodation must be wind and watertight.

While the Order provides for exceptional circumstances, in which accommodation which does not meet the physical and/or proximity standards may be used, the safety standard must always be met. Further details can be found in the Code of Guidance available on-line at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/05/31133334/33366>

The 2014 Order specifies that the local authority may provide an applicant with temporary accommodation which does not meet the requirements set out by Article 5 of the Order, but for no longer than 14 days in total in respect of that person's application. The [Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2017](#), which came into force in October 2017, reduces the number of days from 14 to 7 days before a 'breach' is recorded for the applicant remaining in such unsuitable accommodation.

The Housing Support Services (Homelessness)(Scotland) Regulations 2012 came into force on 1st June 2013. These Regulations make provision in relation to the duty of Local Authorities to assess whether some persons found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness ("an applicant") need housing support services. Regulation 2 prescribes four types of housing support services which apply for the purposes of that duty. If a Local Authority has reason to believe that an applicant may be in need of one or more of these services, it must assess whether the applicant, or any person residing with the applicant, is in need of such support. If so, the Local Authority must ensure that the service is provided to the person who needs it. Further information on these regulations can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/3279/2>.



## **Comparability with other UK homelessness statistics**

### **England**

In England, Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002 place statutory duties on local housing authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or assistance in obtaining accommodation. A main homelessness duty is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group, which are specified in the legislation (e.g. households with dependent children or a pregnant woman).

Where a main duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, the authority must make an assessment of their housing needs and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves. Where the applicant is found to be intentionally homeless but falls in a priority need category the authority must also ensure that accommodation is available for long enough to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to find a home.

Data on Local Authorities' activities in carrying out their statutory homelessness duties are collected on the quarterly P1E return.

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for England are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government introduced a Homelessness Case Level Information Classification (H-CLIC) in April 2018 to coincide with the commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. H-CLIC will collect case level data and provide more detailed information on the causes and effects of homelessness than has been collected in the past.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 will place new legal duties on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help, irrespective of their priority need status, as long as they are eligible for assistance. The Act will amend part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

### **Wales**

In Wales, Local Authorities are bound by similar statutory duties as those in England. The data is collected on a quarterly Local Authority level WHO12 return, similar to the P1E form in England.

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Wales are available at: <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/homelessness/?lang=en>

The National Assembly for Wales has enacted new homelessness provisions which can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/7/contents/enacted>. In particular, section 66 details a new prevention duty.

## **Northern Ireland**

In Northern Ireland statistics on homelessness are sourced from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Under the Housing (NI) Order 1988, NIHE has a similar statutory responsibility to secure permanent accommodation for households who are unintentionally homeless and in priority need; to secure temporary accommodation in a variety of circumstances and to provide advice and assistance to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Northern Ireland are available at: [http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/housing\\_bulletins.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/housing_bulletins.htm)

## **Scotland**

Scottish homelessness statistics are available at: <http://www.gov.scot/homelessstats>

## **Key similarities and differences**

Because of the differences in collection methods, and in the legislative duties to homeless households in Scotland following the 2001 homelessness legislation, care needs to be taken in comparing homelessness statistics across the 4 countries.

Under the Scottish legislation, Local Authorities have wider duties to assist non-priority homeless households. In addition, a key part of the Scottish legislation, often referred to as the 2012 homelessness commitment, led to increasing proportions of homeless households being assessed as priority and from 31 December 2012 this test has been abolished. As a result, the definition of priority need was therefore broader in Scotland than in other parts of the UK. As a direct consequence of these changes, significantly higher proportions of all homeless and priority homeless households in Scotland are single person households. In addition, the time scale for threatened with homelessness is two months in Scotland compared to 28 days in England.

In England and Wales, analyses for 'households accepted by Local Authorities as owed a main homelessness duty' are roughly equivalent to Scottish analyses for unintentionally homeless households [and in priority need for those assessed prior to 31st December 2012].

## A National Statistics publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

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### How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via an alternative route <http://www.gov.scot/homelesstats>
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

### Complaints and suggestions

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