

**APPENDIX 3 - BURNLEY  
HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH  
SLEEPING REVIEW APRIL 2020**

# Burnley Review of Homelessness April 2020

## Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local housing authorities to compile a Homelessness Strategy and to renew the strategy at least every five years. In order to do that, a review of homelessness needs to take place, which informs both the development of the new strategy and the action planning needed to deliver the objectives within the strategy. This review document is the background document which we have used to inform the new homelessness strategy and the action plan for Burnley.

The issues surrounding homelessness in any local area are multi-faceted and complex. This document sets out a wide range of information about homelessness in Burnley, which will inform our new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the action plan.

We have followed the Government's Homelessness Code of Guidance in preparing this review. Chapter 2 of the Code sets out the minimal requirements that a review should cover. Based on this we have split the review into 2 sections:

- 1) The local housing context and data available on homelessness
- 2) The current activity and resources available to manage homelessness services

The housing context and data section will cover much of the detail set out in the Code of Guidance:

- General information about Burnley's social and economic context
- Homelessness casework records and other local sources of data
- Trends in homelessness approaches and in underlying causes
- Which cohorts may be more likely to become homeless or be threatened with homelessness
- The profile of households who have experienced homelessness
- Equality monitoring data, including that relating to homelessness applications and outcomes
- The range of factors that may affect future levels of homelessness in Burnley
- The personal and structural factors that may contribute to people becoming homeless;
- Any planned legislation or local policy changes that are likely to impact on levels of homelessness for particular groups in the district.

The part which outlines current activity and resources will cover the following:

- Financial resources within the Council specifically for homelessness
- Other services to support homeless people, not provided directly by or on behalf of the Council
- What do we do now to prevent homelessness?
- Types of accommodation available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- What we know about our prevention work – which activities are the most successful, are there gaps and which groups are easier to assist and why?
- How do we assist people rough sleeping to come off the streets and into recovery and support services?

- What types of temporary accommodation are available in Burnley?

Whilst there are specific legal duties placed on local housing authorities in England in terms of homelessness, which are outlined below, it is useful to note that this is not the whole picture, in terms of the services delivered by different agencies and services. Many of the services that can prevent homelessness occurring in the first place or support people who are recovering from homelessness do not sit within a legal framework and whilst of these are some are delivered by Burnley Council, some are delivered by other organisations.

### **Changes to the homelessness legislation that will inform this Review**

The homelessness legislation changed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018, when Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 was amended to incorporate the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017. This is a significant change, with many commentators describing it as the biggest change in homelessness for 40 years.

This Act does not replace the previous legislation but adds on some new duties. These aim to ensure local authorities intervene earlier to prevent homelessness and to take 'reasonable steps' to assist people who are eligible to prevent homelessness or 'relieve' their homelessness.

It is important to set out the basic elements of the legislation at this point in the Review, so the reader can then understand some of the tables and data set out later in this document.

The overall aims of the Act are to reduce homelessness by:

- Improving the quality of the advice available
- Refocusing local authorities on prevention work and within a new legal framework
- Increasing support for single people
- Joining up services to provide better support for people, especially those leaving prison/hospital and other groups at increased risk of homelessness, such as people fleeing domestic abuse and care leavers

### **The Act requires local authorities to give free information and advice on:**

- Preventing homelessness and securing accommodation when homeless
- The rights of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- How to get help
- Information on tenants' rights, rights to benefits, advice on debt, rent and mortgage arrears, help for people at risk of violence and abuse and advice on how to obtain accommodation in the social sector and private rented sector.

### **There is a new 'Prevention Duty':**

Local Authorities' must take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for any eligible applicant, at risk of homelessness within 56 days, regardless of priority need. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live. The local authority

must be satisfied that any accommodation retained or found under the prevention duty must have a reasonable prospect of being available for 6 months or more.

### **There is also new 'Relief' Duty:**

Local authorities have a 56 day duty to take 'reasonable steps' to help the applicant to secure suitable accommodation. Accommodation must be suitable, and the local authority must be satisfied it has a reasonable prospect of being available for at least 6 months. Help could be, for example, providing a bond guarantee, funding a rent deposit, or working with a private landlord to make properties available. Where an eligible applicant who is homeless has or may have a 'priority need' for accommodation they must be offered temporary accommodation.

If the relief duty activity fails after 56 days, and the applicant is still homeless, the tests of priority need and intentionality are applied to ascertain if the person is owed the 'main' homelessness duty. If they are not owed the main duty, the 'relief duty' can continue at the discretion of the local authority.

### **Assessments and Personal Housing Plans:**

Councils must carry out a holistic assessment of the applicant's housing circumstances, their housing needs and any support needs they have which need to be addressed for them to be able to sustain accommodation in the future. This assessment will result in developing a Personal Housing Plan with them, that sets out the 'reasonable steps' that the Council and the applicant, if applicable, other professionals, will take in order to prevent or relieve their homelessness.

### **A new 'Duty to Refer' on some public bodies:**

Some public bodies must refer (with consent) details of any person they are aware of who is at risk of homelessness, within 56 days, to the housing department. The list of the public bodies are:

- prisons
- youth offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentre Plus
- social service authorities
- emergency departments
- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
- Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the armed forces

**Prevention and relief duties can be ended in a number of ways** including:

- The 56 days of prevention or relief duty has expired
- If an applicant becomes homeless during the 'Prevention Duty' stage, that duty ends and a new 'relief' duty would be owed for 56 days

- Refusing of an offer of suitable accommodation that is likely to be available for 6 months or more
- Deliberate and unreasonable non-co-operation with the Personal Housing Plan, after a formal warning notification
- Becoming intentionally homeless from accommodation provided as a 'reasonable step'
- Securing suitable accommodation that has a reasonable prospect of being available for a minimum of 6 months
- No longer being 'eligible'
- Withdrawal of the homelessness application

### **Care Leavers:**

In addition to having a local connection to the authority who looked after them, a care leaver will also have a local connection with an area if they have lived there for 2 years, including some time before their 16th birthday.

More detail on this can be found on the Government website, where there is an overview of the legislation and what it means in practice in the MHCLG Homelessness Code of Guidance. See here for the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>

## **Section 1: The local housing context and data available on homelessness**

### **General information about Burnley's social and economic context**

The borough of Burnley is situated in Lancashire, 21 miles north of Manchester and 20 miles east of Preston and covers an area of 42 square miles.

There are two main urban settlements, focused on Burnley and Padiham and a number of small villages and hamlets in the rural area of the borough. Burnley is one of the main urban centres in Lancashire along with Blackpool, Blackburn and Preston. It serves a wide catchment that includes parts of Pendle, Rossendale and Calderdale.

The population of Burnley at the 2011 census was 87,059. Between 1991 and 2011 Burnley's population fell by 4.5%. This is in contrast to a 12.7% rise in England as a whole over the same period. The Office of National Statistics estimated in its' Labour Market Survey of 2018/19 that the population of Burnley had risen slightly to 88,500.

In terms of the age profile of the population, there is a growing proportion of older people within the borough, due to a combination of people living longer, lower birth rates and outward migration of younger age groups. Burnley's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) predicted the proportion of households headed by people aged 65 and over would increase from 27.2% in 2012 to 35.4% by 2032.

Based on the 2011 Census, 51.9% of the population is female in Burnley. Around 87.3 % of the

population in Burnley reported their ethnicity as White British or Irish, with the second highest overall ethnic grouping being people of Asian origin who made up 11% of the population. Of this group, 5,924 people reported a Pakistani background and 2,425 people reported a Bangladeshi background. A more detailed breakdown on ethnicity in Burnley is available here: [https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/DC2101EW/view/1946157091?rows=c\\_ethpuk11&cols=c\\_sex](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/DC2101EW/view/1946157091?rows=c_ethpuk11&cols=c_sex)

The 2011 Census indicated that Burnley has levels of limiting long-term illness which are above the regional and national averages, at 22.5%, compared with 20.2% at a regional and 17.6% at a national level.

There are high levels of poverty and related forms of disadvantage in Burnley. In the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, **Burnley is ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> most deprived local district authority area in England**, out of 317 district authorities. The Indices scoring is based on:

- **Income Deprivation:** the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings.
- **Employment Deprivation:** the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.
- **Education, Skills and Training Deprivation:** the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: one relating to children and young people and one relating to adult skills.
- **Health Deprivation and Disability:** the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.
- **Crime:** the risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- **Barriers to Housing and Services:** the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.
- **Living Environment Deprivation:** the quality of the local environment. The indicators fall into two sub-domains. The 'indoors' living environment measures the quality of housing; while the 'outdoors' living environment contains measures of air quality and road traffic accidents.

The full set of information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Information produced by the Office for National Statistics shows that between October 2018 and September 2019, 28.6% of people of working age (between the ages of 16 – 64) were economically inactive in Burnley. This compares to 22.6% across all of the North West and 21.1% across all of

Great Britain. Not everyone in this group is actively seeking work, as some may be students, already retired or have young children. Just over a third were on long term sickness benefits.

See the link here for more information:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157091/report.aspx?town=Burnley#tabempune mp>

More detailed information about Burnley can also be found here:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/burnley-district/>

Burnley's Housing Strategy includes a wide range of information about the local housing market. This was last written in 2016, and is due to be updated in 2021. The strategy can be found here:

<https://www.burnley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Housing%20Strategy%202016.pdf>

There is more detail about the housing market in the housing strategy. Three key points are:

- 1) There is a **relatively high proportion of privately rented property**, with a very significant concentration in some wards and less social rented accommodation as a proportion of tenure. In the 2011 Census, the tenure status was as follows:

Tenure Type	Burnley	North West	National
Owner Occupier	65%	64.5%	63.5%
Private Rented	19.4%	15.4%	16.3%
Social Rented	14.1%	18.3%	18.2%

- 2) The **proportion of private rented property has been increasing**. The proportion of private rented properties has risen from 9.3% in 2001 to 19.4% in 2011. Out of 39 local authority areas Burnley is ranked the 4th highest in the Northwest for the percentage of the population living in the private rented sector (PRS). Between the 2001 Census and the 2011 Census, the number of people living in the PRS increased by 85%. Private rented accommodation is more concentrated in the 2 urban areas of Burnley and Padiham and as noted above is more concentrated in some wards within the 2 towns.
- 3) There is a **higher occurrence of property disrepair** which is more heavily concentrated in the private rented sector. 71% of the stock in Burnley was built before 1919, compared to 24.6% nationally. The 2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey (PSHCS) found that 33% of pre-1919 stock had Category 1 hazards. 43.6% of all housing, across all tenure types was assessed as 'non-decent' compared to 36.7% nationally. Private rented stock had the highest proportion of 'non-decent' stock at 46.3%. The proportion of non-decent dwellings which were owner occupied was 45.5% and housing association stock was 31.3%.
- 4) There is a **higher occurrence of empty homes** in Burnley. In 2016, there were 2,384 empty homes in the borough, representing 6% of the overall housing stock. There is a downward trend however: in 2018 this was down to 2,261 and by 2019 the figure was 2, 089.

## Affordability of private rented accommodation in Burnley

Even though rents in Burnley in the private sector are low, if compared to other parts of England and within the North West, they can still be unaffordable for many single people on low incomes who would need to claim housing costs through the welfare benefit system. Where there is a difference between the levels of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the market rents, people need to make up the difference from their own income. There is no exact way of measuring this gap but the table below is an indication of the gap for single people in particular.

At the time of writing this review in late March and early April 2020, the Government, as part of the response to the Coronavirus outbreak, has made a significant announcement regarding the LHA levels. The Chancellor announced in March 2020 that from April 2020 the LHA rates will be set at levels that mean housing support from the benefits system should be sufficient to cover the cheapest 30% of all rental properties in any local area.

This will go some way to reverse the reductions made by the Government to the LHA levels since 2012, when the rates increased with inflation until 2015, and then were subject to the four-year nominal freeze that affected most means-tested benefits.

The levels are set through a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) assessment of rental costs, and Burnley is almost entirely within the West Pennine BRMA. The table below sets out the increase from 2019/20 to 2020/21 against the market rents.

Size of accommodation	LHA rates PCM for Burnley 2019/20	LHA rates PCM for Burnley 2020/21	Average rent costs in Burnley PCM *	Lowest third of the market rental costs over 12 months Jan. to Dec. 2019^
1 room in a shared house	£271.14	£303.34	£368	Not available
1 bed	£338.93	£350.01	£351	£337
2 bed	£369.35	£389.99	£425	£357
3 bed	£430.35	£449.99	£550	£437
4 bed	£596.64	£650.00	£713	Not available

\*Taken from the figures for 2018/19 from the Office for National Statistics.

^Taken from BBC website page 'Where Can I Afford to Buy or Rent?' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-23234033>

## What is the demand for and supply of social housing?

**Social housing** is owned by Registered Providers in Burnley. Burnley Council transferred 4,700 units of social housing to Calico Homes in 2010. This has now reduced to 3,486 properties. Burnley Council have 50% nomination rights for all general needs voids within the Calico portfolio. In addition to its general needs housing, Calico Homes also own and manage other accommodation services for vulnerable people, including those at risk of homelessness. These are outlined in Section 2 of the Review.

There are a number of other housing associations which own some properties in the local authority area:

Accent Group

Your Housing

Hanover Housing Association

Muir Group

Housing 21

Anchor Housing

Great Places

Burnley Council's allocations policy is a sub-regional one and also covers Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Pendle, Hyndburn and Rossendale, which are all partners in the "B-With-us" Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme. The housing register, which is managed through the CBL scheme, B-With-Us, had 1,541 households registered and waiting for social housing in Burnley in 2018/19.

The allocations policy was amended in early 2020. The changes were made to ensure the policy was up to date with the legal requirements and also incorporated the following changes:

**Local Connection** – introduction of a local connection criteria in order to qualify to join the register

**Housing-related debt**- greater clarity in terms of how housing debts owed will be considered under the new scheme.

**Homeowners**- to help ensure best use of stock by only allocating to those persons who are unable to secure alternative accommodation, thus applicants who have equity in a property of £120,000 will be disqualified from joining the housing register.

**Deliberate worsening of circumstances** – this is a new policy and intended to ensure that applicants do not deliberately worsen their circumstances in order to be awarded higher priority.

**Suspensions** – greater clarity in terms of eligibility and qualification criteria

**Banding changes** – rearrangement of some of the criteria within bands to ensure that those in a 'reasonable preference' category continue to receive sufficient priority. This includes the addition of a fifth band and the end of cumulative need. There is more on the banding changes specifically in relation to homelessness in Section 2 of this document.

Of those people on the Housing Register in 2018/19, the demand for different property sizes was as follows:

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedrooms
833	470	195	43

Of the 1,541 people on the housing register, 510 had some priority or 'reasonable preference' awarded. This is then sub divided into the reason for awarding reasonable preference. Some

people within the 'reasonable preference' groups are given a higher priority, or 'additional preference' due to the urgency of their situation and this is shown in the 2 columns on the right side of the table below.

Reasonable Preference awarded	Homeless within meaning within Part VII of Housing Act, regardless of whether there is a statutory duty to house them	Owed a duty or are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under the Act	Occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions	Need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability	Need to move to a particular locality in the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).	And of the households in reasonable preference groups, how many have urgent housing needs & are given additional preference	of which, how many are members of the Armed Forces community
Numbers waiting on the 2018/19 Housing Register with 'reasonable preference'	10	106	200	169	6	203	29

There were 472 lettings in 2018/19.

### Waiting times on the housing register in Burnley from April 2019 to March 2020

	1 Bed/Bedsit	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Average waiting time per Band
Band 1	146 days	404 days	148 days		232 days
Band 2	160 days	206 days	303 days	483 days	288 days
Band 3	178 days	241 days	289 days		236 days
Band 4	112 days	171 days	311 days	293 days	221 days
Average waiting time for property type across all bands	149 days	255 days	262 days	388 days	

### Homelessness casework records and other local sources of data

For this review, we are drawing on a range of information sources:

- **Casework information from our work under statutory duties.** Since April 2018, when the Homelessness Reduction Act commenced, a new system, called 'H-CLIC' has been used in England to record statutory homelessness. See below for more information on this.
- **Information from our partners.** We sent out a request for information to 30 agencies and services, emailing in total 80 different people that work in those organisations with some

customers or clients who are or may be at risk of homelessness.

- **Other information that we record outside the H-CLIC requirements.** This includes people who contact us for advice and information because they have a housing need and the numbers of people who are sleeping rough in Burnley.

Alongside the new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for everyone who is eligible and homeless, or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 new case level information collection requirements were set out for local housing authorities to adhere. All cases where a homelessness application is taken should be reported to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through a quarterly return, known as H-CLIC.

H-CLIC replaced the P1E as the means for local authorities to report updates on all new statutory homelessness assessments and cases from April 2018. Because this is a new system for recording and the legislation has changed so significantly, the Government's statutory homelessness statistics are classed as 'experimental'. The April – June 2018 period was one where all local authorities were getting used to the new systems and processes. Please note that for the purposes of this review we have used 12 months of data, from July 2018 to June 2019.

The key point to note for the purposes of this review is that much of the data which was recorded prior to the changes to the homelessness legislation cannot be compared directly to data recorded for H-CLIC after the Homelessness Reduction Act changes commenced in April 2018. Where it is possible to make some comment on the data trends across the different data sets, we will do so.

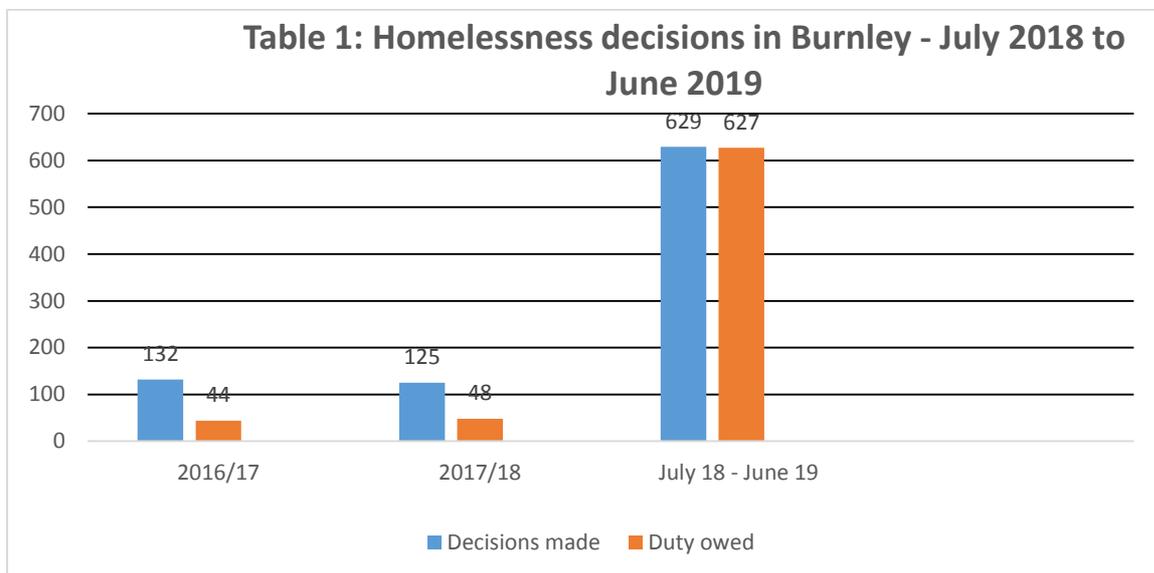
## **What do we know about how many households in Burnley are threatened with homelessness or actually homeless?**

The changes to the homelessness legislation were introduced to offer earlier assistance to prevent people who are at risk of homelessness. The period a household can be assisted if they are at risk of homelessness has moved from a 28 day threshold to 56 days threshold and in some instances local authorities can use their discretion and take applications over 56 days.

In addition, the change in the law gave more statutory assistance to eligible single people and childless couples, in terms of preventing or relieving their homelessness, as the test to assess if someone has a 'priority need' or not is applied later in the process, giving more time to assist people.

These factors mean that comparing quarterly or annual data sets before April 2018 and any after that point is not straightforward. The rise in numbers of applications has risen, but particularly single people may well have been getting assistance before April 2018 through advice and assistance outside the homelessness legislation.

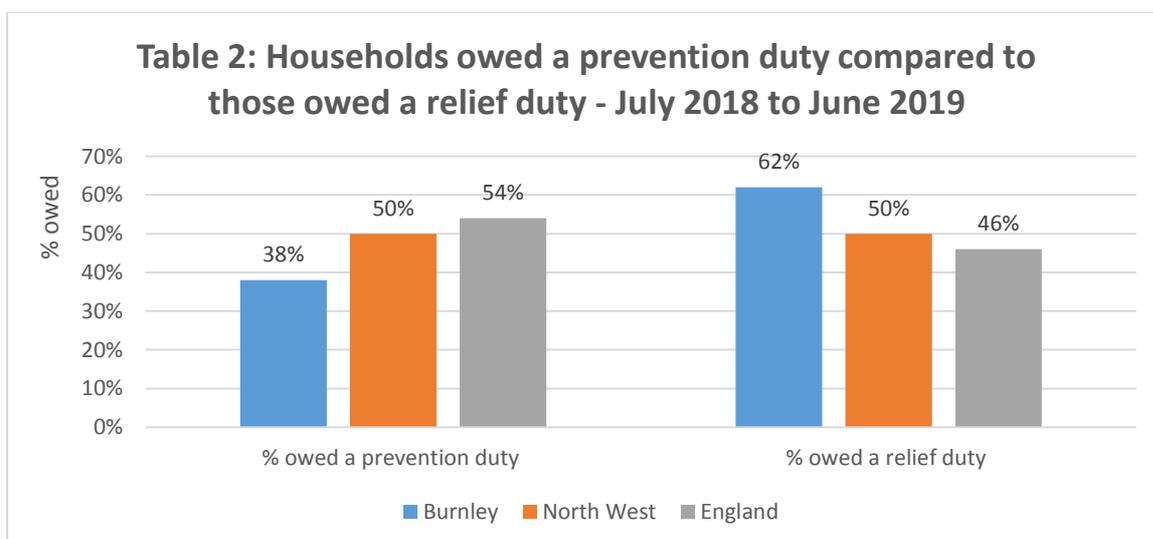
The first table shows the numbers of homelessness decisions made and the numbers owed a statutory duty. Note this includes households who are threatened with homelessness.



The contrast in the table above is significant above. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was introduced to assist more people and different tests are applied at different points, so the data is not, by itself, easily comparable, as many people may have been getting assistance outside the legislative framework before April 2018. Of the 629 households who made a homelessness application and had a decision in 2018/19, only 2 households were not owed any statutory duty and were found to be not homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is a low number compared to the North West as a whole, where 5% households were not owed any duty in the same year and also nationally, where 7% were found to be not homeless.

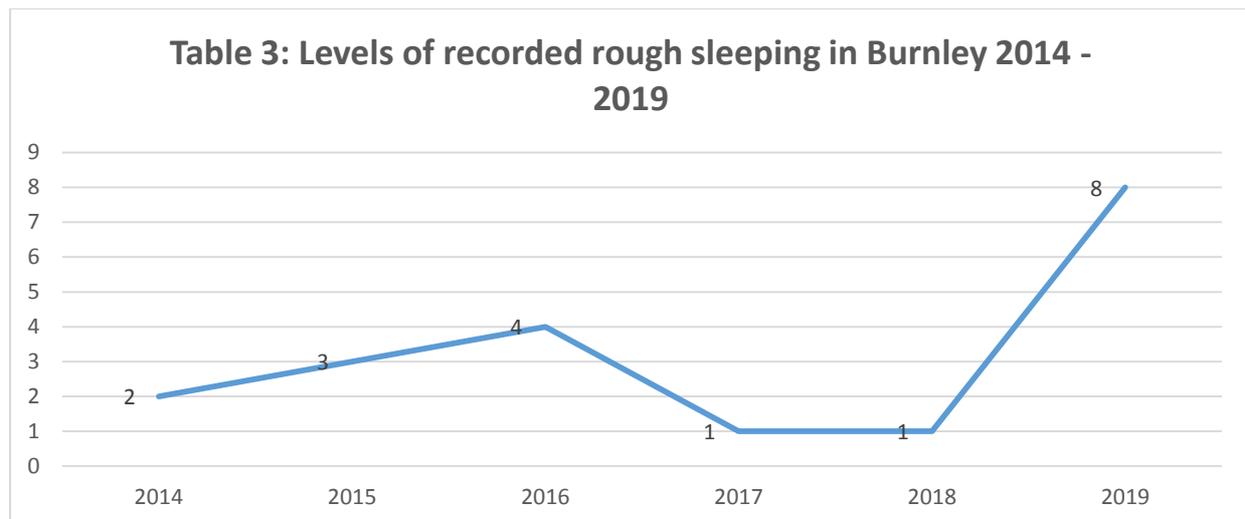
People who come to ask for help, or are referred for help, before they are homeless are offered support under the ‘prevention’ duty – Section S195 of the Housing Act 1996, and households who are already homeless are offered support under the ‘relief’ duty – Section 189B of the same Act.

Table 2 below shows the percentage of households owed a prevention duty in comparison to those owed a relief duty. This shows that a higher proportion of households present as already homelessness in Burnley when compared to the North West overall and England.



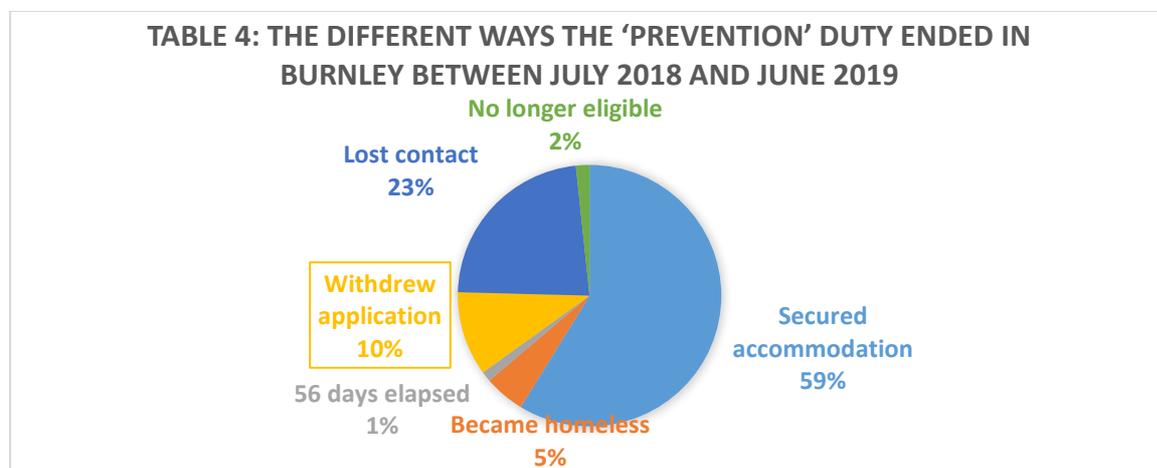
The most acute form of homelessness is rough sleeping. In most local authority areas not everyone who is rough sleeping has approached the Council for help and therefore they may not appear in the statutory homelessness statistics set out in Table 1 and 2 above.

Later in this document there is more detail on what we know about rough sleeping in Burnley and what we and our partners are doing about this currently. But to give an overview of rough sleeping numbers at this point, Table 3 sets this out. The Council are required to complete a count of people rough sleeping or provide an estimate each year to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). In Burnley an estimate is made based on a range of local information and using a nationally agreed methodology. This takes place in November each year. Table 3 sets out the numbers estimated in Burnley over the last 6 years based on this methodology.



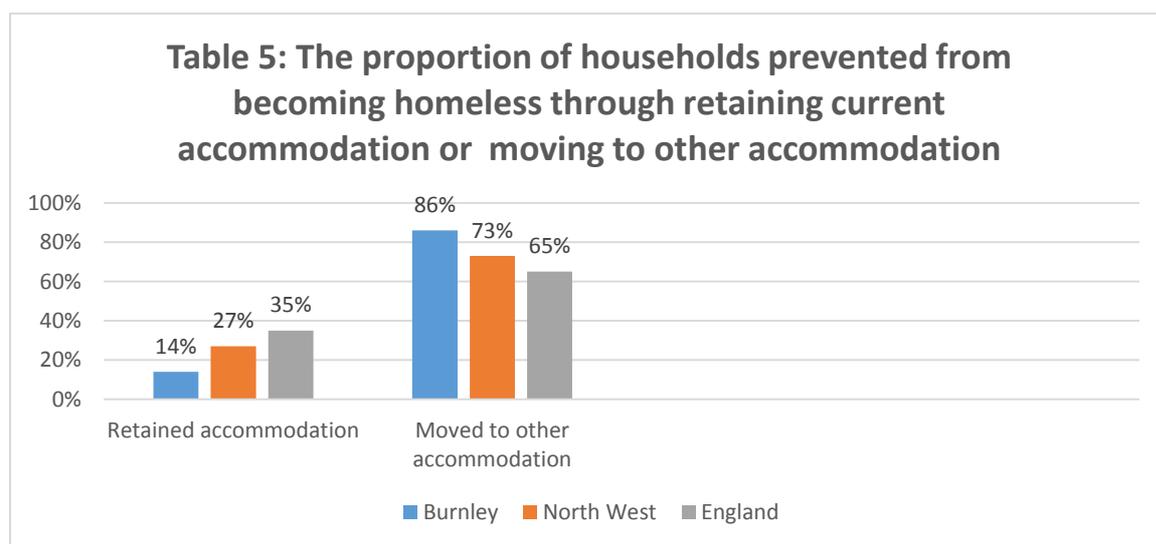
### How successful is the Council at preventing homelessness?

Between July 2018 and June 2019, 240 households who were owed a prevention duty had the duty ended. This is set out in Table 4 below. For 59% this was a positive outcome, in that they secured accommodation. This position for Burnley mirrors the North West overall and is slightly higher than the all-England figure of 57%.



Note that the prevention duty can also be lawfully ended through other means: ‘non co-operation’, ‘refusal of a suitable offer’ or ‘not known’, but none of these 3 categories was used by Burnley over this period.

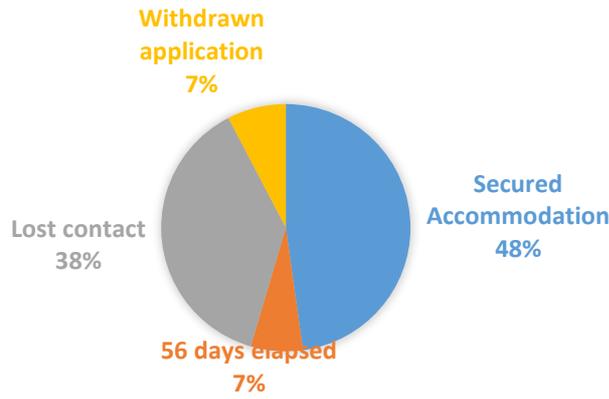
Assisting an applicant to secure accommodation can be broadly split into 2 sub-outcomes : the applicant is assisted to move to new accommodation or they retain their current accommodation because they are assisted to resolve whatever was the underlying cause(s) of the threat of homelessness. In both scenarios, the accommodation must be suitable, and the local authority need to be satisfied that this has a ‘reasonable prospect’ of being available for six months or more.



### How successful is the Council at relieving homelessness?

Between July 2018 and June 2019, 377 households who were owed a ‘relief’ duty had the duty ended. Table 6 below sets this out, in terms of how the duty was ended. For 48% this was a positive outcome, in that applicants who were homelessness were assisted to secure accommodation. Overall, in the North West region 44% of applicants had their homelessness relieved, whilst nationally, 41% of applicants had. The relief duty can also be lawfully ended through other means which are not shown on the table below. This is because either the category was not used (for ‘non –co-operation’ and ‘not known’) or it was used only once in the year ( for ‘refusal of a final offer’, ‘no longer eligible’ and ‘intentionally homeless for accommodation provided’).

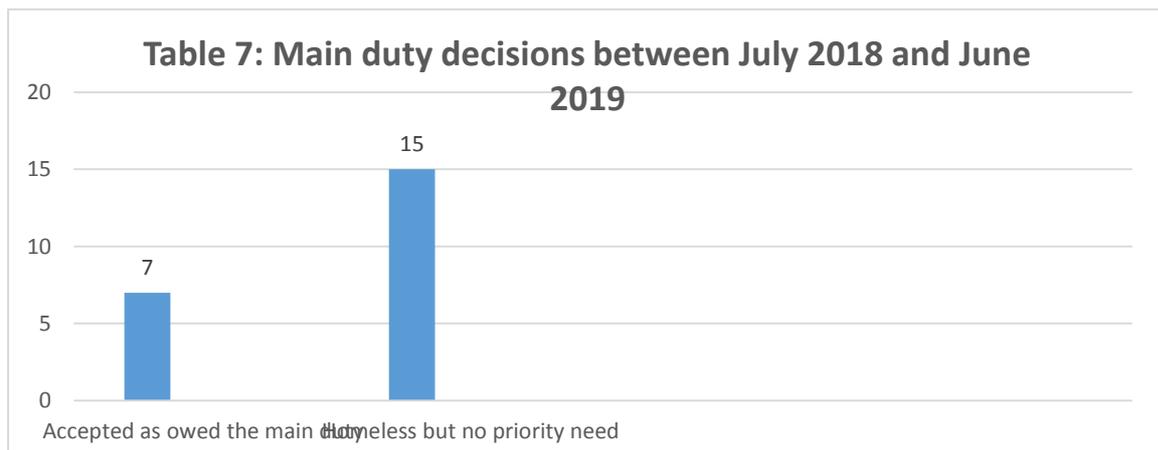
**TABLE 6: THE DIFFERENT WAYS THE 'RELIEF' DUTY ENDED IN BURNLEY  
BETWEEN JULY 2018 AND JUNE 2019**



The number of households accepted as owed the 'main' homelessness duty has fallen in England because of the change in legislation, which brings the 'prevention' and 'relief' options in before the 'main' duty is applied. Most people are assisted before they reach the 'main' duty point. This makes direct comparisons to the year 2017/18 difficult.

In Burnley in the year 2017/18, before the change in the legislation, 127 'main' duty decisions were made and of these, 41 were accepted as owed the main duty. For 78 applicants the decision was that they did not have a 'priority need' and the 'main' accommodation duty was not owed as a result. There were very low numbers of 'intentionally homeless' and 'not homeless' decisions.

As Table 7 below sets out, the numbers of 'main duty' decisions are low since the commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act, as most people will be getting assistance before this point. The majority of decisions at the 'main duty' point in Burnley are that applicants do not have a priority need. This predominantly be people who are single or in couples where there are no dependent children.



The most recent data on acceptances of the main duty, taken from April 2019 – March 2020, shows that of the 7 households which were owed the main duty, the basis of this was:

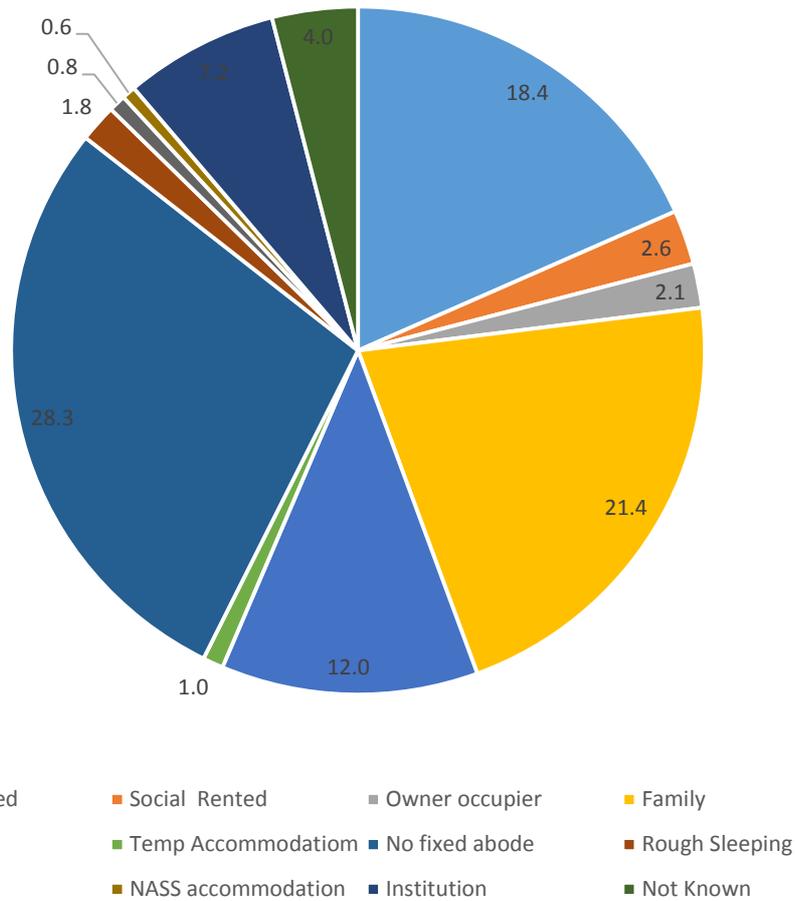
- 3 were households that included dependent children
- 2 were care leavers age 18 – 20
- 1 was a household assessed as vulnerable as a result of physical disability/ill health

- 1 was a household assessed as vulnerable due to mental health problems

## **Where were people living at the time they became homeless or were threatened with homelessness?**

To understand the causes of homelessness, there are several data sources in the H-CLIC statistics to draw from. Firstly, data on where applicants were living at the point they approached the Council can give some context to what has driven their homelessness, although this alone does not tell us why someone became homeless. This information is based on the assessment of an applicants' housing circumstances. Taken together, the highest percentage was applicants were living with either family (21%) or with friends (12%). However, 'No fixed abode' (28%) was the highest single reported housing circumstance and is likely to include people who are sofa surfing in very unsettled circumstances and are homeless on that basis. A small number of people said they were rough sleeping (2%). Around 18% were living in private rented accommodation. It is useful to note that 7% had been living in an institution and of this group, which was 45 applicants in total, 38 had left custody. This will warrant some further exploration.

**Table 8: Where applicants were living at the point they became homeless or threatened with homelessness, shown as a percentage, taken from July 18 -June 19 data**

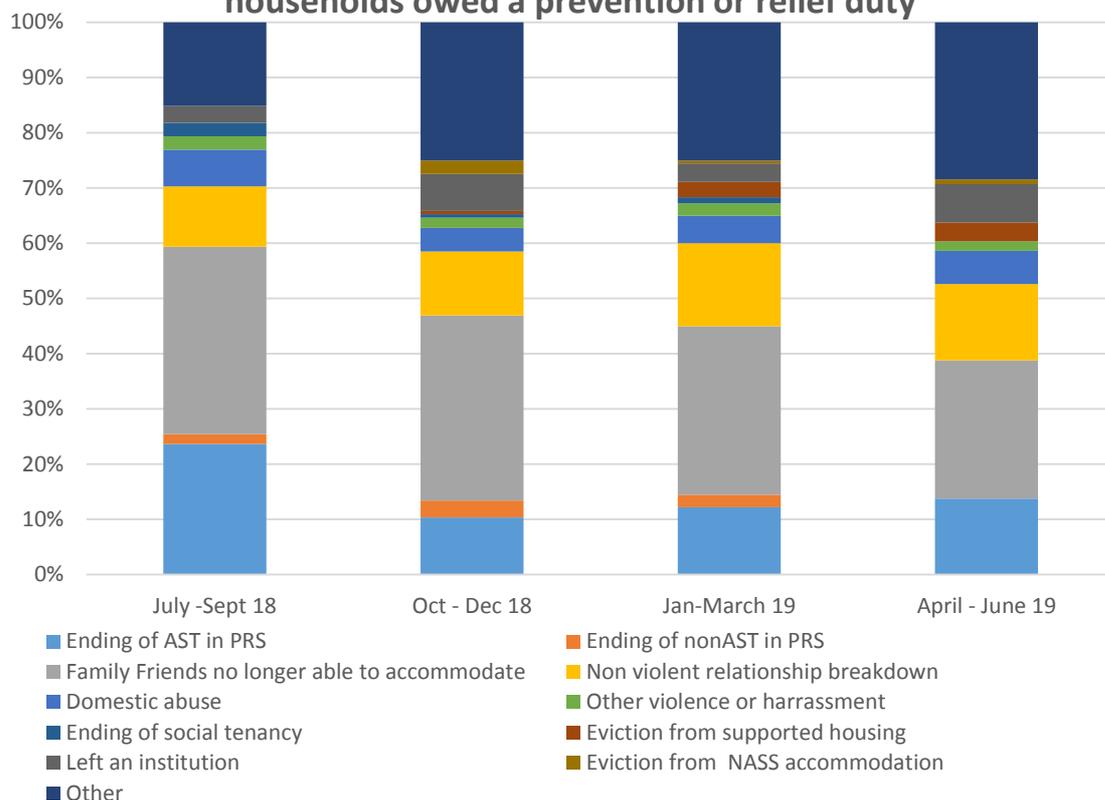


In Table 9 below, the data from July 2018 to June 2019 shows that there is some consistency regarding the main causes of homelessness in Burnley and also read across with Table 8 above in terms of accommodation at the point of approaching the Council for assistance. Across all 4 quarters, the 5 main known causes of homelessness are:

- family or friends asking the applicant to leave;
- the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) in private rented accommodation (PRS)
- non-violent relationship breakdown
- domestic abuse
- leaving an institution (e.g. prison or hospital)

However, the 'Other' category is recorded as the second highest cause - this is a significant proportion, but is unclear in terms of what this is telling us and warrants more focus, in terms of why officers in the Council are using this category so frequently. It may refer to the very unsettled position of those people who are sofa surfing between different sorts of accommodation.

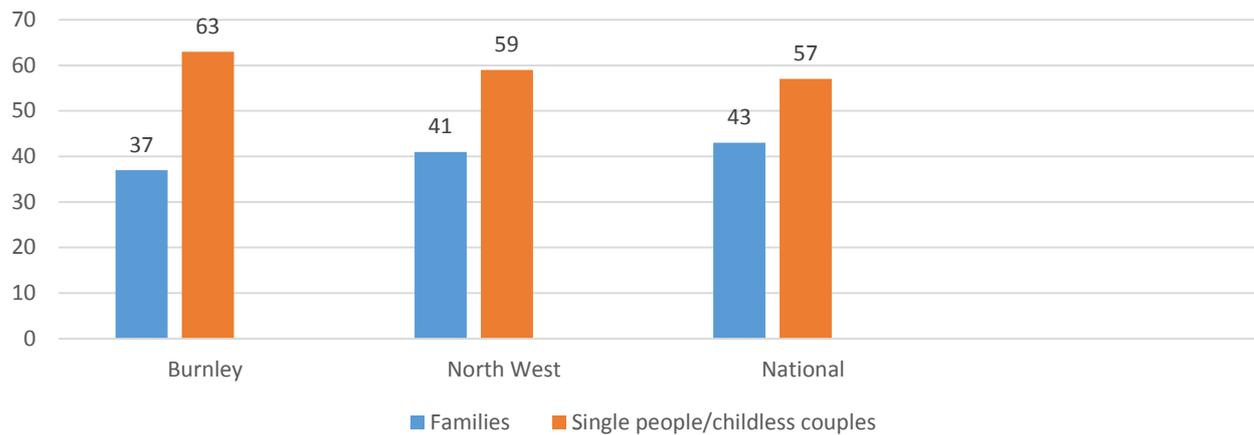
**Table 9: Reason for loss of last settled accommodation for households owed a prevention or relief duty**



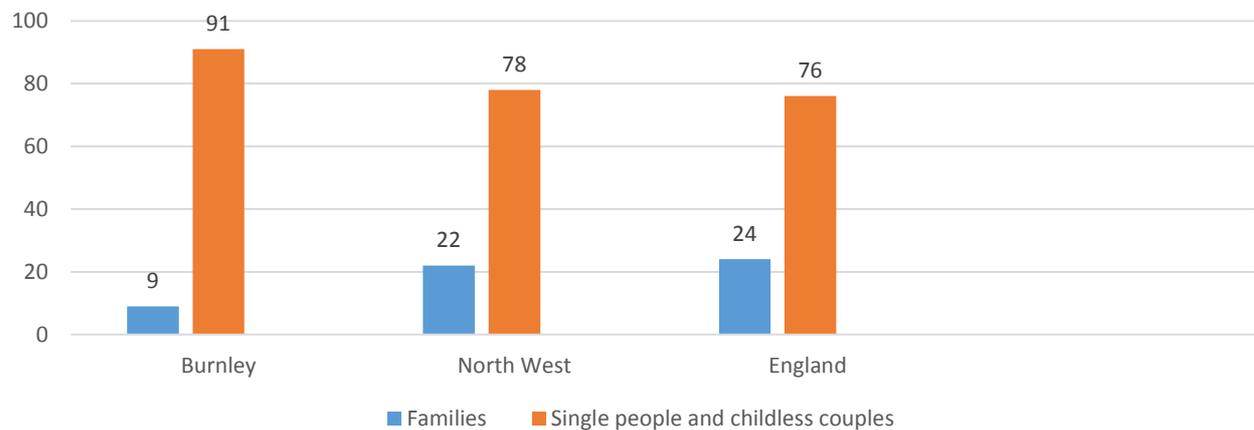
**Which groups of people are at higher risk of becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness in Burnley?**

More single people with no dependent children or childless couples approach the Council seeking assistance than families – see Tables 10 and 11 below. Whilst this is a national trend, which is more pronounced since the commencement of the new homelessness legislation in April 2018, a higher proportion of households who approach Burnley Council for assistance are single or childless couples, in comparison to both the North West as a whole and all of England. This particularly the case when applicants are already homeless and are owed the relief duty, as set out in Table 11 below.

**Table 10: Percentage of families and single people owed prevention duties between July 2018 - June 2019**



**Table 11: Percentage of families and single people owed relief duties between July 2018 - June 2019**



The new homelessness legislation placed a duty on some public bodies to refer to a housing authority anyone that they believe is or may be at risk of homelessness within 56 days. The referral can only take place with the consent of the client. The referral in itself does not automatically trigger a homelessness application as the housing authority would need to be satisfied that there was reason to believe the person was homeless or may be at risk of homelessness within 56 days. Whilst this duty is still relatively new, as it commenced 6 months after the Homelessness Reduction Act, it does give an indication of some of the other public agencies working with people who have a housing need.

Referrals made to Burnley Council by public bodies subject to the 'Duty to Refer' between October 2018 and September 2019 are set out below.

**TABLE 12**

<b>Referring body</b>	<b>Number of referrals between Oct 2018 and Sept 2019</b>
-----------------------	---

Prison Service	23
Adult Social Care	1
Children's Social Care	9
Probation Service	11
Community Rehabilitation Company	8
Job Centre *	13
Hospitals	5
Mental Health Acute Inpatient	7

\*Referrals from the Job Centre are higher than reported above, but the referral process through a confidential portal and information requested by the local authority is not always followed by DWP, making it difficult to contact clients.

In addition, some referrals were received for the same period of time from the following agencies:

**TABLE 13**

<b>Agency making the referral</b>	<b>Number of referrals between Oct 2018 and Sept 2019</b>
-----------------------------------	---

Mental health service - community based	4
Faith organisations	3
Police	1
Street Services to rough sleepers	10
NASS	1
Refuge	1
Supporting Housing provider	3
Housing association	2
Youth Services	1
Children's Services' Early Help services	4

We have looked at our statistics in relation to different groups of people, including those groups which are included within the protected characteristics set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty. This is important to understand if any groups are over or underrepresented our statistics. This will then help to inform any changes to priorities and services to address any in-balances or possibilities of direct or indirect discrimination.

In the table below the age group of 18 – 25 year olds appear to be over represented in homelessness figures in comparison to the overall population.

**TABLE 14: AGE OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

Age	% of Homeless applicants (and number)	2011 census : % of population
0-15	N/A*	19.7%
16-17	0.7% ( 10)	2.6%
18-25	22.9% (322)	9%
26-65	59.9% (842)	52.5%
	Note: below is a further breakdown of this wide age group but no comparison with Census data is possible: 26-35 yr olds: 26.5% (373) 36-65 yr olds: 33.3% (469)	N/A
66+	1.4% ( 20)	22.2%

\*Applications can only be taken from people aged 16 and over. The percentages for homelessness applications have been adjusted to take into account the assumed proportion of the population ( 19.7%) aged under 16 age group so a direct comparison of the percentages is possible.

In the table below, men are over-represented in the homelessness statistics, indicating as a group men are at higher risk of homelessness in Burnley.

**TABLE 15: GENDER OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

	% of Homeless applicants (and number)	2011 census : % of population
Female	42.7% (510)	50.8%
Male	57.2% (683)	49.2%
Transgender	0	-
Prefer not to say	0	-

The table below indicates that there are no groups which are significantly over-represented in terms of ethnicity, although people identifying as British Pakistani are slightly under-represented in the homelessness statistics.

**TABLE 16: ETHNICITY OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>2011 census : % of population</b>
White English/Scottish/Northern Ireland	86% (1,027)	85.5%
White Irish	0.8% (10)	0.6%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.4% (5)	0
Other White	2.3% (28)	1.2%
Mixed multiple groups –White & Black Caribbean	0.08% (1)	0.3%
Mixed multiple groups – White & Black African	0.1% (2)	0.1%
Mixed Multiple groups – White & Asian	0.6% (8)	0.5%
Any other mixed multiple groups ethnic background	0.3% (4)	0.2%
Asian British Indian	0.4% (5)	0.4%
Asian British Pakistani	4.6% (56)	6.8%
Asian British Bangladeshi	1% (12)	2.8%
Asian British Chinese	0.08% (1)	0.3%
Other Asian Background	0.5% (7)	0.8%
Black African Caribbean Black British African	0.2% (3)	0.2%
Any other Black African Caribbean background	0.08% (1)	0
Other Ethnic Group – Arab	0.08% (1)	0.1%
Any other Ethnic Group	0.4% (5)	0.2%
Don't Know – refused	1.4% (17)	-

**TABLE 17: NATIONALITY OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>2011 census : % of population</b>
--------------------	--	--------------------------------------

UK national	95.6% (1122)	92.3%
Irish	0.4% (5)	0.6%
EU and EEA nationals*	4.1% (49)	1.3%
Non EEA country nationals^	1.4% (17)	5.8%

\*note that the time lag between the census and the homelessness data and test of eligibility should be considered in relation to this comparison

^Note that this figure is not directly comparable as the test of eligibility will apply

There are several different ways of presenting information about health and disability. Caution should be used if making direct comparisons with the 2011 Census data to see if people with a disability or ill health are over or underrepresented in the homelessness statistics. We have both the self-reported claims of physical ill health and disability and information on benefit related claims (for ESA, incapacity benefit and Disability benefit) in the table below to show that there is not one reliable source of data and that this may be an area which warrants more focus in the future.

**TABLE 18: ILL HEALTH AND DISABILITY OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>2011 census : % of population</b>
Self-reported physical ill health & disability	13.1% (154)	31%

	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>NOMIS Labour Market Profile 2019 :% of population in Burnley</b>
Claiming benefit on the basis on long term illness or disability	27.1% (319)	10.9%

The table below shows data on sexual orientation of applicants. This indicates that people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender are over-represented in the homelessness figures.

**TABLE 19: SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20**

	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>2018 Population Survey, Office of National Statistics for the North West as a %</b>
Heterosexual	84% (988)	96.7%
Gay Lesbian	2% (24)	1.8%
Prefer not to say	9% (107)	0.1%

Other

6% (74)

0.5%

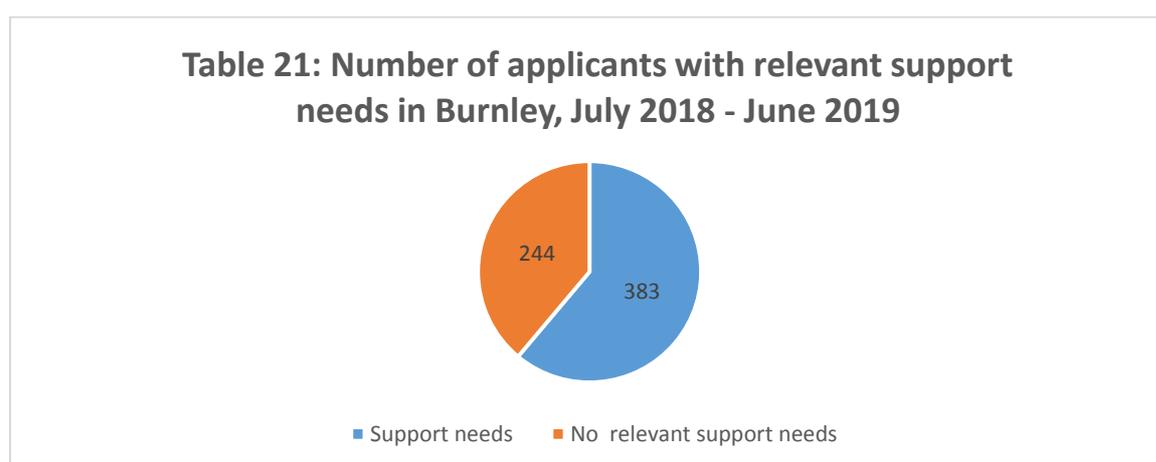
Finally, it is clear that economic activity is a protective factor in terms of reducing the risk of homelessness in Burnley. People who are not in paid work are at a much higher risk of becoming homeless.

**TABLE 20: OVERALL ECONOMIC STATUS OF HOMELESS APPLICANTS IN 2019/20 COMPARED TO THE OVERALL POPULATION**

	<b>% of Homeless applicants (and number)</b>	<b>NOMIS Labour Market Profile 2019 :% of population in Burnley</b>
Economically active (part time, full time, self-employed or in training/apprenticeship)	15.4% (181)	74.2%
Economically inactive ( due to sickness or disability, unemployed seeking work, carer for children or others in family, retired, students)	72.9% ( 856)	25.8%
Didn't report/refused to report during homelessness assessment	13.2% (156)	N/A

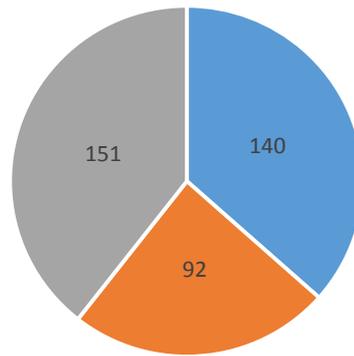
### **What do we know about the support needs of people who homeless or threatened with homelessness in Burnley?**

The assessment process under the new homelessness legislation requires Councils to find out about any particular issues that an applicant might need support within order to have and to sustain suitable accommodation. Table 21 sets out the overall numbers:



Some applicants have more than 1 support need and this is recorded as well. Of the 383 people who were assessed as having support needs over the 12 month period shown in Table 21 above, this can further broken down into how many support needs were identified (Table 22 below) :

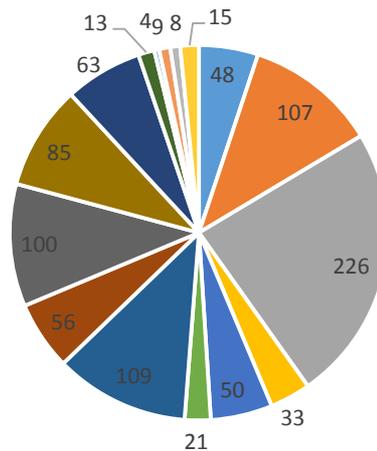
**Table 22: Number of assessed support needs for each applicant in Burnley, July 2018 - June 2019**



■ 1 support need ■ 2 support needs ■ 3 or more support needs

The final table below on assessed support needs highlights the different types of support needs. Note that the support needs of young people are assessed by age and legal status (16/17 year olds, 18 – 25 year olds, care leavers aged 18 – 20, care leavers aged 21+ and young parents) but we have grouped these together for the purposes of highlighting overall youth related support needs.

**Table 23: The assessed support needs of applicants in Burnley by type of support, July 2018 - June 2019**



■ Young person under 25 (48) ■ Physical ill health /disability (107) ■ Mental health (226)  
 ■ Learning disability (33) ■ Domestic abuse (50) ■ Abuse ( non domestic) (21)  
 ■ Drug dependency(109) ■ Alcohol dependency (56) ■ Offending history (100)  
 ■ Repeat homelessness history (85) ■ History of rough sleeping (63) ■ Sexual exploitation (13)  
 ■ Former asylum seeker (4) ■ Old person (9) ■ Served in armed forces (8)  
 ■ Access to ETE (15)

## What do we know about people who are rough sleeping in Burnley?

Some people who sleep on the streets or outside do so for relatively short periods of time, days or

weeks, whilst for other people, this could be for several months or years. Like many other areas of England, there are some people who have spent significant periods of time living in hostels, sofa surfing and at times rough sleeping and there are some people who are 'new' to homelessness and rough sleeping.

Since July 2019, when a new service, funded by MHCLG's 'Rapid Rehousing Pathway', set up a team of 'navigators' to work with people who are rough sleeping, more detailed understanding about people who are rough sleeping has been available. This is a new cross-borough service and has been developed between Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale and Ribble Valley.

The data we have looked at locally and other qualitative evidence informs the picture about people who are rough sleeping in Burnley. In part this is drawn from the annual estimates the Council has undertaken, as well as more recent information taken during the Covid – 19 pandemic, when the local authority offered accommodation to everyone who was rough sleeping or at high risk of doing so. This was part of the England-wide 'Everyone In' programme to offer accommodation to everyone who was rough sleeping during the 'lockdown' which started in late March 2020.

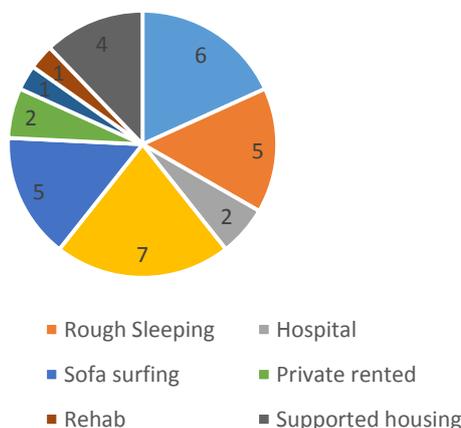
Until November 2019 the annual estimate on single night in November has had very low numbers. The last estimate was 8 and from this we collected some very basic information:

- 7 were men, 1 person was a woman
- All were aged over 26 and were UK nationals

Over the 'lockdown' during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the support of the Rapid Rehousing Pathway 'navigators', the Council has in accommodated 33 people through the England-wide 'Everyone In' programme aimed at people who are already rough sleeping or at high risk of doing so.

The information that the Council has about the people who have taken up offers of accommodation is the most up to date and detailed information available and assists in understanding more about single people who are either rough sleeping or are at high risk of homelessness.

**Table 24: Where the 33 people were staying/living prior to accommdoation through 'Everyone In'**

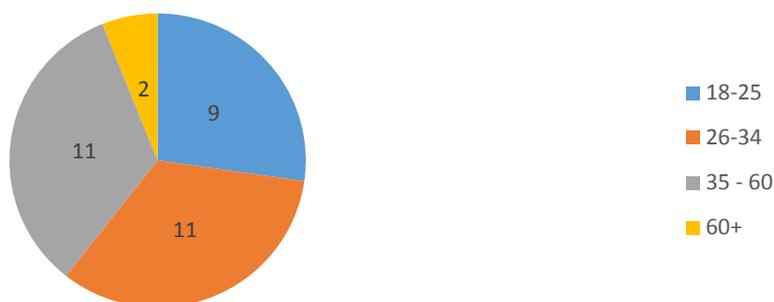


In addition to the 5 people who were rough sleeping before 'Everyone In', there were 3 other people who were known to be rough sleeping and were offered accommodation several times but did not take up the offer.

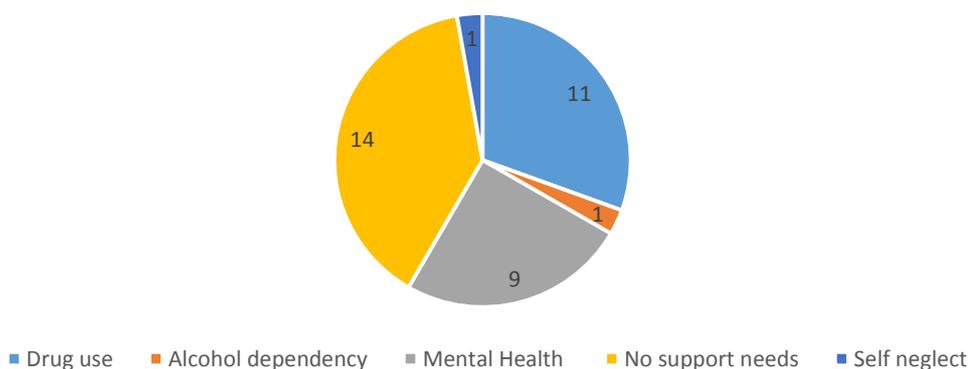
In terms of the profile of people who accepted accommodation:

- 30 of the 33 were men
- 2 women were pregnant
- 32 people had a local connection to Burnley
- 11 were assessed as having or likely to have a 'priority need' for accommodation
- 17 of the 33 people reported they had a history of offending behaviour
- 28 people were white British, 2 were of white and Asian heritage, 1 was Asian Pakistani and 1 was a Gypsy/Traveller

**Table 25: Age of people taking up 'Everyone In' accommodation**



**Table 26: Assessed main support needs of people in 'Everyone In' accommodation**



It should be noted that the majority of people who took up short term accommodation offers through 'Everyone In' were not rough sleeping, but they were at risk of this form of homelessness without help from the local authority.

More information on support needs and pathways in and out of rough sleeping for those who end up rough sleeping in Burnley should emerge over time through this work.

For planning purposes, we base our assumptions about the needs of rough sleepers on local information and knowledge and national research, which has been cited by the Government in the 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy. This is the 2015 Hard Edges Report, mapping severe and multiple disadvantage in England by Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick and Professor Glen Bramley, and can be viewed here:

<https://lankellychase.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Hard-Edges-Mapping-SMD-2015.pdf>

Severe and multiple disadvantage is defined as a combination of 2 or more of: homelessness, substance misuse, mental health problems and involvement in criminal justice system. Poverty is also an underlying feature but is not taken into account in the methodology used to assess the extent of severe and multiple disadvantage.

The report findings include evidence of higher concentrations of multiple and severe disadvantage in some areas, cities and large towns in the North of England, seaside areas and London Boroughs.

## **What legislative or local policy changes might impact on levels of homelessness for particular groups in Burnley?**

### **At a National level**

#### **Changes brought in as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic:**

This review has been undertaken during the outbreak of the coronavirus (Covid -19). The short, medium and long term impact of the pandemic on the economy, public services and society is not yet known.

Funding was announced for English authorities to support vulnerable people during the Covid -19 pandemic and distributed to local authorities by the Government. This funding is not ring-fenced. £1.6 billion was announced in March 2020, of which Burnley received £75,175. A further £1.6 billion was announced in April 2020, of which Burnley received £882,080.

In order to assist those at risk of homelessness in **rented accommodation**, the Government introduced some new measures in March 2020, some of which are short term. These include:

- All landlords will have to give renters 3 months' notice if they intend to seek possession. This is in place until 30 September 2020 and the Government has signaled that both the end point and the 3 month notice period can be extended if needed. This covers most tenants in the private and social rented sectors in England.
- A suspension of housing possessions action will initially last for 90 days from 27/3/2020, but this may be extended if needed. This measure is intended to protect private and social renters, as well as those with mortgages and those with licenses covered by the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.

- Both Universal Credit and Housing Benefit will increase and from April, Local Housing Allowance rates will be updated to cover the lowest 30% of market rents in each area. This is expected to be long term and remain in place after the pandemic is over.
- Protecting landlords with Buy to Let mortgages from proceedings leading to re-possession.
- £500 million has been made available to support households experiencing financial hardship.
- As part of the workers' support package, the Government will pay up to 80% of a worker's wages, up to a total of £2,500 per month, where workers are placed on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

In addition to the above, some work is underway to extend the 'pre-action protocol' on possession proceedings to include private renters and to strengthen its remit. It is intended this would increase engagement between landlords and tenants to resolve disputes and landlords will have to reach out to tenants to understand the financial position they are in and reasonable repayment terms. This is hoped to alleviate pressures on people renting both social and private accommodation.

The Government also announced in early May 2020, during the pandemic, its intention to support an amendment in the Domestic Abuse Bill which will mean those who are homeless as a result of domestic abuse will have a priority need for accommodation. Until the legislation is passed there is no further guidance about this.

The Government is committed to ending rough sleeping by end of this Parliament which is in 2024. In order to deliver this, a programme based on the 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy has been developed. Funding has been allocated to local authorities in England, including Burnley. More detail on this is set out in Section 2 of this review.

Local authorities in England were initially allocated £3.2 million funding for the Covid-19 pandemic response for people rough sleeping. The 'Everyone In' programme has been to find accommodation and support for people who were sleeping rough or approached as homeless with no available accommodation, regardless of if they have a 'priority need' for accommodation or not. In May 2020 the Government announced that the £381 million to end rough sleeping over the next 4 years ( first outlined in the March 2020 budget) , would increase to £433 million and £160 million would be available in the next 12 months to keep people off the streets and find 3,300 new homes.

### **Welfare changes:**

The Chancellor announced in the March 2020 budget that the **Shared Accommodation Rate exemption groups will be expanded from 2023** to include:

- Young people under 25s who have spent 3 months or more in resettlement accommodation/hostel accommodation will be immediately exempt from the SAR on leaving resettlements. Note that currently this only applies to young people leaving resettlement accommodation once they reach the age of 25.

- Single people who are under 35 and need accommodation due to being a victim of domestic abuse or modern-day slavery
- Care leavers up to the age of 25. Note that currently this only applies to care leavers up to the age of 22.

### **Housing reform changes:**

Private renting tenants have some more protections, brought in over the last 5 years:

**The Tenant Fees Act 2019** bans private landlords and letting agents from charging a ‘relevant person’ (a tenant, licensee, guarantor or person acting on their behalf) any fee unless it is a ‘permitted payment’. Where a local housing authority is acting on behalf of someone in helping them to secure accommodation under homelessness duties, they are exempt from the restrictions. A ‘permitted payment’ includes rent, a tenancy deposit (up to maximum of five or six weeks’ rent), a holding deposit (up to maximum of one week’s rent), a fee in the event of a ‘relevant default’, damages for breach of agreement, in connection with tenant’s request for a change in their tenancy agreement or in respect of council tax, utilities, communication services and TV licence.

**The Deregulation Act 2015** introduced protection for private rented tenants against retaliatory evictions. Retaliatory eviction is where a tenant makes a legitimate complaint to their landlord about the condition of their property and instead of making the repair the landlord serves them with an eviction notice. All new Assured Shorthold Tenancies starting on or after 1 October 2015 are covered by the provisions in the Act.

In April 2019 the **Government signaled it was considering abolishing ‘no fault’ evictions**. This would mean bringing in new legislation which would end Section 21 evictions and only allow landlords to issue notices to tenants in specific circumstances. The consultation has now closed and the outcome of this is not yet known. Section 21 notices are reported to be the second highest cause of homelessness in Burnley, which mirrors the national position.

### **Local**

Burnley Council has introduced **selective licensing in some areas** in order to improve private landlord management standards and improve property conditions. This means every private landlord in a selective licensing area has to be licensed in order to legally rent to a tenant. The areas covered by selective licensing since 2016 are:

- **The Burnley Wood and Healey Wood**
- **The Leyland Road area**
- **The Ingham and Lawrence Street area**

Since November 2019 the following areas were also designated as selective licensing areas:

- **The Trinity area**
- **The Queensgate**
- **The Gannow area**
- **The Daneshouse and Stoneyholme area**

In order to deliver this a Selective Licensing Team works in all the areas, alongside a wider Housing

Conditions Enforcement Team, that works all over the local authority area.

Burnley Council have noted there are many benefits from this approach including: improved working relationship with landlords, reduced anti-social behaviour and environmental crime, reductions in empty homes, more collaborative work between landlords and tenants

## **Section 2: The current activity and resources available to manage homelessness services**

This part of the review outlines the resources available to the local authority as well as current services available to give advice and support to people who may have housing problems, be threatened with homelessness. Where people are already homeless, the options for accommodation and support are outlined. Where any relevant monitoring information is available, this is also provided.

### **Financial resources**

Burnley Council has financial resources to support work on both preventing homelessness and also relieving homelessness, including targeted funding which is specifically aimed at assisting people who are rough sleeping.

The Government conducted a 1 year spending review in the Autumn of 2019, so the funding figures below are all known for 2020/21 but beyond this there is not yet any certainty about funding.

We have set the funding out in 2 headings: General Homelessness Prevention and Relief and below that a heading specifically for Rough Sleeping work, but there is some cross over between these, as people rough sleeping who are eligible could access services under the Homelessness Reduction Act and would be able to get some assistance on that basis as well as through the targeted rough sleeping funding services.

### **General Homelessness Prevention and Relief funding for 2020/21:**

**TABLE 27**

<b>Source of funding</b>	<b>Description of funding terms &amp; use</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Central Government funding to local authorities	From the general funding (Core Spending Power) local authorities make local decisions about the core funding for their homelessness services.	£13.9 million Note this is the total core funding for all services from Government to Burnley Council.
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant(FHSG)	Ring fenced for any work on prevention or relief of homelessness, can include staffing and costs of temporary accommodation.	£60,597

Homelessness Reduction Grant	This was the 'new burdens' funding for Councils to implement the new homelessness legislation and was originally for 2 years. It has continued as a grant for 2020/21. This can be used for any work on homelessness including additional staffing	£70,423
Homelessness Prevention funding	This is a named line in the overall Core Spending Power funding for local authorities from central Government. It can be used for any work on preventing homelessness, including funding other agencies to provide services to support people at risk of homelessness	£108,662  Of this the Housing Options Service received £17,599 for 20/21.
Discretionary Housing Payments ( DHP)	DHP is funding that is available through the Dept for Work and Pensions (DWP) to local authorities to assist people on a one off or short term basis if they are in receipt of housing costs/housing benefit and where there is a shortfall in their rent. Guidance set out how this may be used and DHP use for prevention of homelessness is a significant element of its function. It is at a local authority's discretion if they wish to award DHP over the amount awarded by DWP but can only do so up to an overall limit.	£321,111  The overall limit for DHP spend for Burnley is £802,778

**TABLE 28: Targeted funding to reduce and end Rough Sleeping**

Source of funding	Description of funding terms & use	Amount and financial year
Burnley Council	One off funding amount agreed for 2020/21 to support work to end rough sleeping through development of a night shelter	£45,000 for 2020/21
MHCLG Rough Sleeping Initiative funding	Funding agreed with MHCLG and shared across the following neighbouring authorities, as well as Burnley: Blackburn with Darwen, Rossendale, Pendle, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley	£184,000 for 2020/21
MHCLG Rapid Rehousing Pathway	Funding for 1 year for 2 navigators covering Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	To cover all 3 local authority areas:  £35,000 in 2019/20  £61,250 for 2020/21
MHCLG Cold Weather Fund	Funding to be used for emergency provision during cold weather e.g. winter night shelters or additional bed spaces in hostels etc.	£16,165 for 2019/20

## What do agencies do now to help to prevent homelessness occurring in Burnley?

The services below offer advice and support to different groups of people in different circumstances. Where a move to different accommodation is needed because the person/household cannot remain where they are, the aim is to plan ahead and avoid any risk of homelessness.

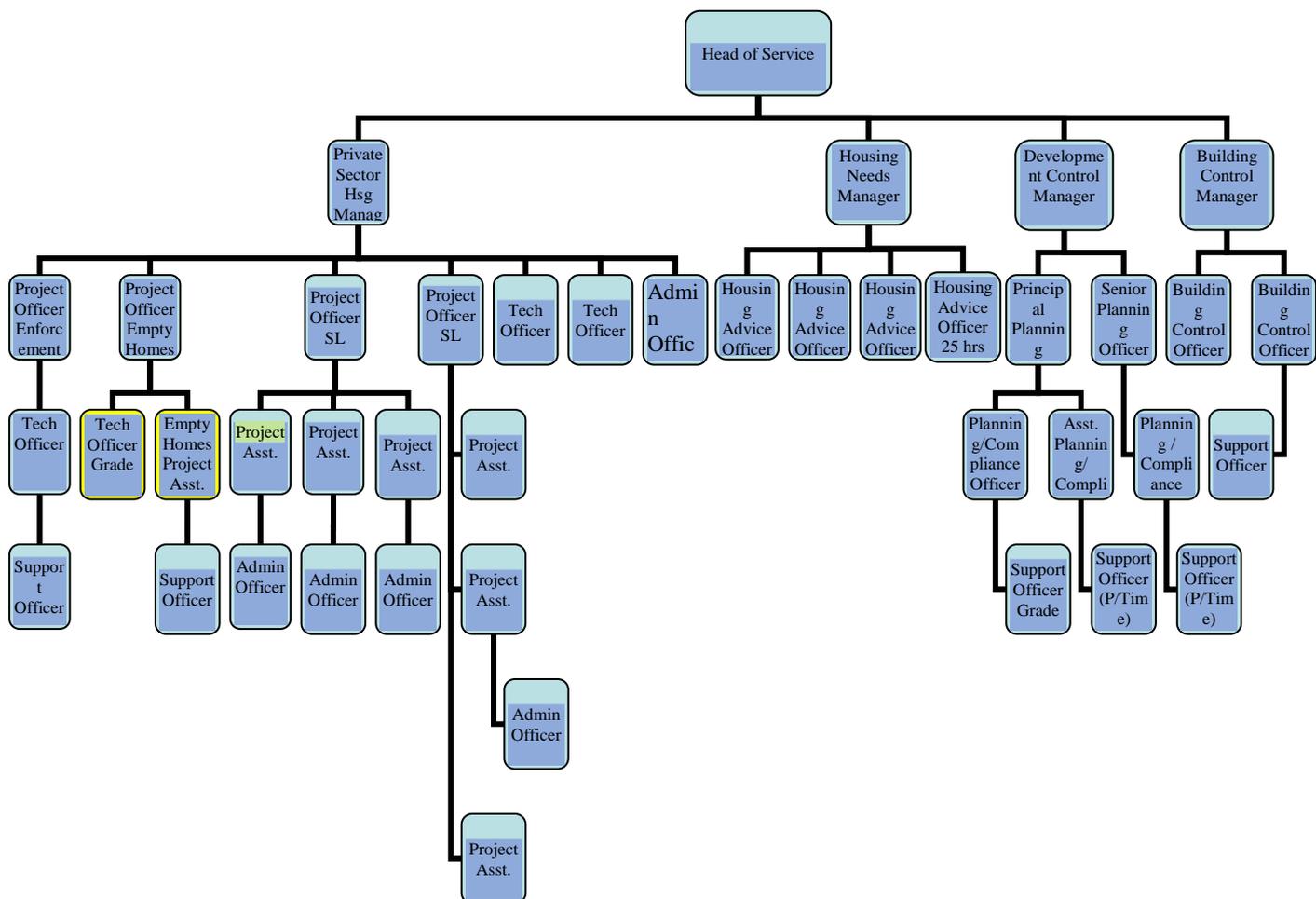
Most of the services below will offer people advice and assistance where homelessness may be a threat in the future, but they are not at risk of homelessness within 56 days, as set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act.

There is a multi-agency Homelessness Forum for Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale which meets quarterly and many of the organisations and services listed in the section below attend this. In addition, a Lancashire –wide Homelessness Forum meets quarterly.

**Burnley Council's Housing Needs Service** will offer people threatened with homelessness within 56 days assistance under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. In Burnley this can include:

- Negotiation with landlords or with parents/family/friends to prevent eviction
- Use of Discretionary Housing Payments to access housing or in specific circumstances, pay off some arrears so the person can remain in their accommodation
- Referral to advice agencies such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau or Lancashire County Council Welfare Rights Service
- Referral to other support services such as SMILE Mediation Service, which can offer family mediation
- Referral to the Pennine Community Credit Union for support with savings and loans
- Rent deposits through cashless bonds or in cash in some instances, can be offered to assist people to move to other accommodation in the private rented sector
- Help with registering for social housing
- 

In addition to working with households which are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the Housing Needs Service offers advice and assistance under S179 of the Housing Act 1996 to people who are not threatened with homelessness within 56 days, but are seeking advice due to concerns about homelessness in the future. The Service sits within the part of the Council will is focused on housing issues for local residents.



Where the Housing Needs Service sees someone and the case is an ‘advice only’ one, it is not reported to the Government through H-CLIC, as there is no requirement to do this. However, local authorities do collect some data on ‘advice only’ cases to assist them in planning services in the future. Many of the ‘advice only’ cases are very general advice on housing, for example, how to find a rented property or join the housing register.

**TABLE 29: Housing Advice only cases from 01/04/19 – 31/03/20**

Arrears (social housing) – pre notice	1
Arrears ( private landlord) – pre notice	9
Agency referral – no contact	17
Affordability	3
B-with-Us	16
Bond/rent in Advance	12
DHP	4
Disrepair	15
Harassment from landlord	4
Homeless refused to make application	10
Impact on welfare reform	1
Mortgage difficulties/arrears	2
Overcrowding	3
Unsuitable due to health issues	3

Seeking general advice*	559
Duplicate approach (case already open)	151
<b>Total</b>	<b>810</b>

\*General advice queries are usually about renting or finding other accommodation where there is no specific focus to the query beyond the generic enquiry

The **Housing Conditions Enforcement Team** within the Council works across the whole of the authority on enforcement of statutory requirements for landlords. There is strong collaboration between this team and the Housing Advice Service. Through this work some vulnerable clients have been identified and some have been assisted into more appropriate accommodation, either in the Private Rented Sector or into social housing.

**Shelter Lancashire** provide advice, information and a casework service to people in housing need and who are or may be threatened with homelessness. In 2018/19 the Shelter service assisted 166 people in Burnley, 57 of which needed 'initial advice' only, a further 102 needed more complex 'casework' support and a more specialist 'second tier' service involving legal advocacy to 7 people. Of those assisted, 76 were single people or couples with no dependents and 61 had dependent children or were pregnant.

#### **Burnley and Pendle Citizen's Advice Bureau**

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) works with people living in both Pendle and Burnley local authority areas. It is estimated that 55% of people who had advice from the CAB were from Burnley. The breakdown of primary nature of enquiries and advice areas highlighted:

37% of advice was about debt

20% of advice was about Universal Credit

14% of advice was about other benefits and tax credits

4% of advice was about housing

4% of advice was about employment

#### **Lancashire County Council's Welfare Rights Service**

The Service works across all 12 District Councils and promotes the take up of benefits, gives advice and information to people claiming benefits and with managing payments of utility bills. Where needed, the Service will follow up benefit issues with the DWP or local Housing Benefit Offices on behalf of a client. They are also able to represent clients through appeals processes.

There is no available data on the breakdown of clients per District.

#### **Services for people who may be at risk of homelessness due to domestic abuse**

The Community Safety Partnership in Burnley co-ordinates work to support people who are at risk of domestic abuse. Advice and support are available through Lancashire Victim Services, funded by

the Police and Crime Commissioner and Lancashire County Council. Women's Aid also offer services in Lancashire.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisers offer an outreach service. Additional safety measures, such as additional locks, an alarm and cameras can be introduced into a victims' home in order that they can remain.

There is no longer a Sanctuary Scheme in Burnley. Over time the way in which this service was delivered changed and as a result there was limited connectivity between the Housing Needs Service in the Council and the delivery agent, which was not based in Burnley. This is now a gap in terms of homelessness prevention.

### **Identification of and support to people who may be at risk of homelessness when leaving hospital**

Burnley Council is signed up to the East Lancashire Hospital Discharge Protocol. This is an agreement between the East Lancashire Hospitals Trust and corresponding District Councils ( Burnley; Blackburn with Darwen; Ribble Valley; Hyndburn, Rossendale and Pendle).

It was developed in 2010 and reviewed in 2012. Whilst this document does need some updating to reflect changes in the law and local policies and personnel, it is reported to be working well in practice, suggesting that the ways of working set out in the protocol are embedded within the agencies' work together.

### **Services for people with mental health problems**

Mental health was reported as the most prevalent support need in Burnley amongst people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Until 2018 there was a Mental Health and Housing Team in Burnley but due to budget pressures this is no longer in place.

The Community Mental Health Team are based at the Mental Health Resource Centre in Gannow Lane in Burnley and there is also a community-based Crisis Team. The Council's Homelessness Service works with both of these.

There is no Mental Health Hospital Discharge Protocol in place, but Burnley Council are contacted directly if a patient is due to be discharged but has no accommodation to go to.

### **Services for people with substance misuse problems**

Inspire East Lancashire provide treatment services in Burnley for people with drug or alcohol related problems. The Service can offer advice, counselling, group work, harm reduction and de-tox or residential rehabilitation.

The Inspire Service includes the 'Comfort Zone' which provides a daytime drop in facility, including showers, free packs of toiletries, a laundry, clothing, hot drinks and snacks and a lounge area.

### **Services to people who may be at risk of homelessness when leaving custody**

The Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) for Cumbria and Lancashire supervises low risk offenders on release from custody. Shelter is one of the partners within the CRC contract and they provide support to people in prison as part of the 'Through the Gate' programme, which plans for and assists people who are leaving custody. Services include helping with accommodation, finance and debt. Shelter also works with service users in the community, providing the same support but combined with a mentoring service.

It should be noted that the Government has announced its intention to end early all the CRC contracts and to return to a single service, headed up by the National Probation Service.

The National Probation Service supervise high risk offenders on release from custody including planning for accommodation on leaving custody.

In terms of joint working, referrals under the 'duty to refer' vary in quality and some can be made close to the day of release, allowing little time for plans to be made for accommodation.

People leaving custody with no accommodation are not usually able to move into settled accommodation immediately but spend some time in short stay supported housing or temporary accommodation. A relatively high proportion of people referred do not come to the Council on the day of their release. Some people come several days or weeks after they have been released.

There is some on-going misunderstanding locally about what constitutes a local connection for people who are homeless on release from custody or whilst still working with the Probation Service. This may be because the Probation Service Office is based in Burnley but covers 2 other local authority areas as well.

### **Services for young people**

Note: There are some supported housing services for young people which are set out later in this section.

### **Services for young people who are leaving care in Lancashire**

All care leavers have support through a Personal Adviser in Lancashire until they are 25 years old. The Care Leaver Local Offer for Lancashire sets out the range of support care leavers will get and includes support from the Leaving Care Service with preparing for leaving care and managing more independently as well as practical help with accommodation, for example:

- **Rent deposit, bond and administrative fees**
- **Setting Up Home Allowance** - for appliances, bedding, furniture and contents insurance
- **A Television licence for 1 year**
- **Removal costs**
- **A starter pack for setting up home** – a one-off payment of £70 towards utilities, cleaning and food
- **Council Tax exemption until the age of 25**

Until the change in the B-With Us allocations policy in 2020, care leavers would only be in Band A if they were threatened with homelessness. This has now changed and care leavers are awarded Band A in the new scheme if they are determined by Children’s Services and the relevant local housing authority as ready to live independently at the conclusion of their looked after placement.

A post within the Lancashire’s Leaving Care Service has been funded for 2 years by the Department for Education to work across the whole County to prevent care leavers from rough sleeping. The funding will end in March 2021.

### **Work with 16/17 year olds who may be at risk of homelessness**

A joint protocol is in place between the 12 District Councils and Lancashire County Council’s Children’s Services in relation to homeless 16/17 years. This was agreed in 2017. In order to work effectively together there is a bi-monthly meeting in East Lancashire to discuss joint working and ensure the protocol is working effectively.

The changes in the homelessness legislation and new joint statutory guidance issued in April 2018 mean that this joint protocol needs updating.

**SafeSpace** run HAPI (Homelessness Awareness and Prevention Interventions) which provides advice and information to 14 – 25 year olds, including Positive Action in the Community work in schools and a mediation service.

Between January 2019 – Feb 2020, in addition to their work in schools, SafeSpace assisted 144 young people from Burnley with advice and support. Most of the young people were aged 18 and over.

They also offer an advocacy service and attend meetings with Lancashire Children’s Services on behalf of Burnley Council in relation to any 16/17s who are homeless.

**M3 Project** also has a prevention service called The Listening Project which provides advice, support and mediation using trained young volunteers for young people aged 14-17 who are at risk of homelessness.

### **Services for people who may be at risk of homelessness as refugees or following a decision from the Home Office on their asylum claim**

Serco hold the contract with the Home Office for provision of accommodation and support to people seeking asylum who are awaiting decisions in the North West. Burnley Housing Advice Service meets with Serco every quarter. An informal agreement is place that where an individual or family get leave to remain the Serco officer will email the Housing Advice Service. This generally works well.

Burnley is also part of the Lancashire-wide work to support Syrian refugees resettle in the UK. The Housing Advice Service in Burnley Council lead on this work, with Calico housing association providing properties. The Housing Advice Service furnish and ensure they are ready for families to move into.

Additional support for refugees in Burnley is provided through a local voluntary agency, New Neighbours Together. This service is reported to be a valuable additional source of advice and support to refugees. It is run by volunteers, with a range of different funding streams to support its work. It offers a drop-in facility, where refugees can access advocacy, English As a Second Language (ESOL) classes, access to clothing and essential goods, social and cohesion activities, a befriending service, a women's group.

## **Accommodation options to prevent and relieve homelessness in Burnley**

### **Supported housing**

**Gateway** in Burnley provides accommodation through a newly built 30 unit supported accommodation scheme for people with support needs including some people with complex needs, who are homeless. Gateway is owned and managed by Calico Homes, which is part of the Syncora group. Gateway aims to support people away from homelessness through providing high quality short stay accommodation and support which focusses on recovery from homelessness - counselling, training, employability and practical life skills.

All the 30 units of accommodation in the Gateway scheme are for single people. Within this there are 4 rooms for people who need emergency accommodation.

Burnley Council can place some people into Gateway as a form of temporary accommodation under homelessness duties, or as a supported housing option to prevent or relieve homelessness if single people do not have a priority need.

In addition, there are 4 'step-down' units for single people who are not yet ready to manage their own accommodation but no longer need a high level of support.

Over the winter period, Gateway have provided an additional 6 'SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol)' beds.

**Calico** provide 3 units of accommodation for families with complex needs.

**Emmaus** provide supported housing in Burnley for adults aged over 18 who have been homeless and are able to work in their social enterprise. There are 24 flats and 6 move on flats. In 2019, 156 referrals were made to the scheme, but these were not only from people in Burnley, as referrals can come from other area, however referrals are not monitored in a way which enables this review to identify how many people were from Burnley.

**Stepping Stone** provide accommodation and support for young people aged 16 – 21 in Burnley, which are funded through Lancashire County Council.

Lancashire Dispersed Housing (LDH) and Burnley Accommodation Sites (BAS) are separate schemes, which young people can progress through. Both provide accommodation and support for young people (16-21) at risk of homelessness. Young people can refer directly into the service, be referred by a professional or are referred via the Access to Resources Team (ART) at Lancashire County Council.

LDH can accommodate up to 85 young people in shared accommodation across East Lancashire – Burnley, Pendle, Hyndburn & Rossendale. Young people have their own lockable room but share kitchen, lounge and bathroom facilities; it is usually two people sharing one property.

BAS can accommodate up to 22 young people in self-contained single tenancy flats with staff on site, with two projects, one in Burnley and one in Padiham.

Both projects provide housing management and tenancy-related support centred upon independent living and successful move on into own accommodation or in to LDH, and also signpost and work in partnership with other agencies to deliver support to those with more complex needs.

**The M3 Project** runs 2 supported housing services, one is for teenage parents and the other is a supported lodgings scheme for young people.

The Supported Lodgings scheme covers all 5 East Lancashire authorities and operates for single young people aged 16-21 years. It provides a maximum of 13 placements and referrals normally come from Lancashire County Council Access to Resources Team, prioritised for looked after or homeless young people. Other referrals from outside agencies are also accepted, as are self-referrals from young people themselves.

It provides a lodgings type placement with support in the household of an adult volunteer (usually single but sometimes a couple) for between 56 days and 2 years depending on the age and care history of the young person. Further support for young people comes in the form of a key worker who will work with the young person around a support plan and help them move on to more independent accommodation when ready.

The Teenage Parent service also covers the East Lancashire area and is aimed at pregnant young

women or young mothers who are homeless and in need of both accommodation and support. The service uses fully furnished 2 bed properties from local social landlords in which to place and then support young families. The age range is from 16-21 year old and support can be given for up to 2 years. Referrals come from a variety of sources including Children's Social Care, Health Visitors, Children's Centres and young parents themselves.

Currently M3 Project is also developing a community based floating support project called A Place of Your Own. This will provide advice and support through adult community supporters for young people aged 18-21 who are moving on from supported accommodation into their own independent accommodation, or young people living independently for the first time.

### **Safespace**

SafeSpace is a supported accommodation project based in East Lancashire for 16 – 21 year olds who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, including young people who are leaving care. Care leavers who are 'former relevant' and from Lancashire aged between 21 and 25 can also live in the accommodation provided.

Whilst there is no accommodation in the area of Burnley Council, it is possible to refer young people from Burnley to the services provided in Pendle and in Rossendale. Referrals can be made through the ART (Access to Resource Team) at Lancashire County Council, the Safe Space HAPI (Homelessness Awareness and Prevention Interventions), or by district councils or direct referral.

In Pendle there are 19 rooms (4 emergency rooms and 15 rooms which are longer stay). All the longer stay rooms are self-contained, the emergency rooms have their own bathroom but share living space and kitchen.

The service based in Rossendale is in Rawtenstall and comprises of 14 rooms of self-contained accommodation, 9 longer stay units and 5 emergency units.

**SafeNet**, which is part of the Syncora collaboration, run the domestic abuse accommodation services in Burnley. The Refuge houses 20 women and their families. There are 9 dispersed properties for people fleeing domestic abuse, including one house for men, through the SafeNet Men's Project.

In addition, there is a more specialist services, called Janes Place, which has 15 flats for women with complex needs.

SafeNet had 61 referrals from women and 3 from men living in Burnley in 2018/19.

### **Use of Temporary Accommodation**

Based on 6 quarters of data, from July 2018 to December 2019, there were relatively low numbers of households in Temporary Accommodation (TA). Each quarter is set out below, so the household

type and TA type can be seen. Note the figures do not necessarily represent new admissions into TA but could be households who have been in TA for several months. There was a 'spike' in admissions in the last available quarter of data where the number increased from 2 to 8 households. All of these were single people with no dependent children.

As noted earlier in this document, the use of TA rose in March, April and May 2020, whilst this review was being drawn up. This is due to accommodation being offered to all people who were rough sleeping or at high risk of doing so during the Covid-19 pandemic and 33 people taking up the offer. However, this was a 'one-off' situation and should not, by itself, significantly increase TA use in the longer-term future.

**Table 30: Temporary Accommodation by household type and accommodation type**

Quarter	Total	Families	Children	Single people	LA/RP stock	Hostel	Bed&Breakfast	Out of area
July-Sept 18	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Oct-Dec 18	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	1
Jan-March 19	5	1	2	4	0	0	5	4
April –June 19	6	1	5	5	0	4	2	1
July –Sept 19	2	1	5	1	1	0	1	1
Oct – Dec 2019	8	0	0	8	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available

The use of different types of TA varies. This may be due to the particular issues with the TA itself, or the complexity of a person's needs, or particular issues within a family, which means placing them into the available suitable TA is not possible. Most TA is managed by Calico's Gateway service. There is a small amount of Temporary Accommodation which the Housing Needs Service manage directly, comprising of 1 property with up to 4 bedrooms and 1 property with 2 bedrooms.

B&B type accommodation out of the area is used on a regular basis. In almost every case this is for single people and childless couples on an emergency basis. As soon as possible Burnley Council's Housing Needs Service try to find alternative accommodation within the local authority area. In many cases this is accommodation in the Gateway scheme, which also has some support attached.

On very rare occasions, with particular circumstances, a family may be placed into B&B for a short period, but this is not a usual occurrence.

As outlined in Section 1 above, there are some social housing options for people in Burnley, through Registered Providers, but compared to the regional and national positions, Burnley has a smaller proportion of social housing available for people to rent.

Based on the Housing Register for 2018/9, there is a significantly higher overall demand for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation in social housing, compared to larger properties.

### **Access to Social Housing for homeless people**

The way in which social housing is allocated across the Registered Providers is set out in the B-with Us Allocations Policy, of which Burnley Council is a partner, with other local authorities which are part of the cross-authority agreement. The allocations policy has recently changed, and the general changes are set out in Section 1 of this review. In terms of homelessness and the allocation of social housing, the new banding reflects the changes in the homelessness legislation, brought in by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which amended Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

#### **Band One:**

- An applicant assessed by a local authority partner under homelessness legislation and who is owed the 'main' duty under S193(2) of the Housing Act 1996. This is where a relevant local authority partner has a legal duty to secure accommodation for households who are homeless, eligible, have a priority need and are unintentionally homeless  
Within this, details of expectations regarding bidding, accepting a suitable offer, what happens if the offer is refused and a local authority 'proxy' bidding on behalf of applicants is set out in the policy document.
- An applicant assessed by a local authority partner as owed a Section 195(2) Prevention Duty or 189B(2) Relief Duty, and who is likely to have a priority need and be unintentionally homeless, whether a decision to that effect has been made or not, and either provided temporary accommodation to meet a section 188 Interim Accommodation Duty if homeless or is at risk of being placed in temporary accommodation if they become homeless  
And where one or more of the following issues apply:
  - The local authority partner may be at risk of failing a legal duty under homelessness legislation
  - There would be considered to be significant financial implications of placing the applicant and household in interim accommodation
  - The applicant requires a specific type and/or size of property that rarely becomes available, such as a three bedroom bungalow or an adapted four bedroom house, or a location where vacancies rarely occur

#### **Band Two:**

- An applicant assessed by a local authority partner as being owed a duty to help prevent their homelessness – a section 195(2) duty of the Housing Act 1996
- An applicant assessed by a local authority partner as being owed a duty to help relieve their homelessness – a section 189B(2) duty of the Housing Act 1996

#### **Band Three:**

- An applicant who is homeless or at risk of homelessness within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 but who have not been awarded a duty as described for Band One or Band Two. This would be in circumstances where they:
  - Are found to be intentionally homeless from their previous settled address or from any accommodation made available by the local authority because they are homeless
  - Have refused suitable accommodation that had a reasonable prospect of being available for at least six months
  - have been notified that they have deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the steps set out in their Personal Housing Plan
  - do not have a priority need for accommodation
  - are referred to another local authority which is not a partner local authority under the local connection criteria
  - have voluntarily ceased to occupy as their only principal home the accommodation made available for their occupation
  - have been owed the prevention or relief duty as described in Band Two but 56 days have expired since the respective duty commenced

For many single people who are homeless but do not have a priority need for housing, the allocations policy banding means they will not be awarded a level of priority which might assist them to access social housing more quickly. The relative paucity of supply of social housing and the current over demand for 1 bedroom accommodation mean that a simple change to the allocations scheme and banding would not in itself be a solution, as more housing for single people and couples without dependents is needed.

### **Private rented housing**

The Council must be satisfied a property is suitable before making an offer to a household which is homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is set out in Chapter 17 of MHCLG's Homelessness Code of Guidance. As outlined earlier in this review, the suitability of private rented accommodation is a key issue in Burnley which is being addressed by the Council in its work to drive up housing standards through enforcement and selective licensing in some areas.

Affordability is part of the suitability assessment as well as the standards of repair and health and safety. As set out in Section 1 of this review, the private rented sector is not always affordable for some people on low incomes, despite the relative low cost of this option in comparison to other areas in the North West and the growth in private renting generally over the last decade in Burnley.

The Housing Advice Service support people to access the Private Rented Sector with a rent bond guarantee and can also assist people to access Discretionary Housing Payments.

### **Which groups of people we work with are harder to assist and why?**

- Young people aged 18 – 25 who are not care leavers but do have support needs. Most do not reach the threshold for Adult Social Care and so have fewer options than care leavers for supported housing
- Other under 35 year olds who are single where social housing would be the most appropriate option but where they do not have a priority need and have a low banding on Choice Based Lettings Scheme
- Under 35s who are single where the private rented sector would meet their needs for accommodation if it was self-contained, not shared, but because they are subject to the Shared Accommodation Rate, options are limited
- Larger families with a need for 3 or 4 bedroom social housing or a private rented property
- Families where parents have high level support needs, such as drug or alcohol dependency or mental health issues and require accommodation and intensive support
- People with one or more of the following issues: coming out of custody/offending background; substance misuse problems/addiction; mental health problems - as shown in Section 1 of the review these are the top 3 support needs identified and the numbers suggest there is not enough specialist advice or provision for people with these issues