

## Appendix 1

### Overview of Homelessness and Housing Advice Service at Fylde Council 2022

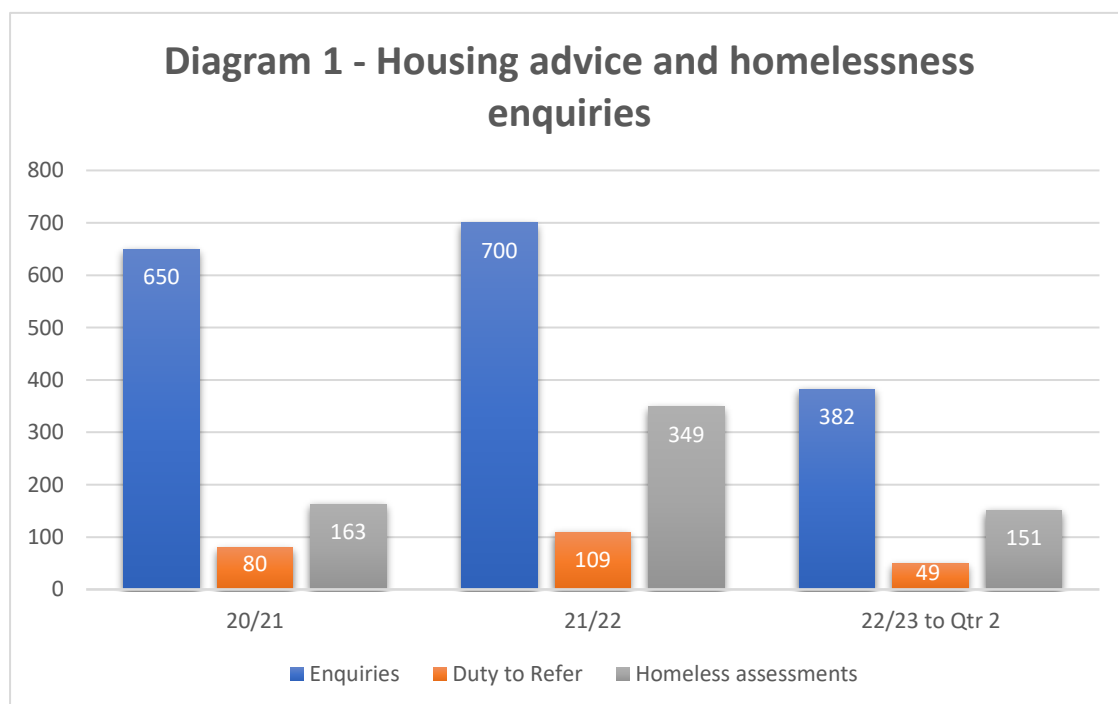
#### Enquiries and Homeless Assessments

**The Homeless Reduction Act 2018** fundamentally changed the way local authorities support homeless people in their areas. From April 2018 **prevention and relief statutory duties** are available to any household vulnerable to homelessness in 56 rather than 28 days. This broader definition of homelessness beyond priority need groups means that local authorities are able to support households that are currently considered the hidden homeless and will provide greater assistance to single person households not in a priority need category.

The service deals with around 700 approaches from clients for housing advice and facing homelessness and 100 Duty to Refers from Statutory Agencies. Duty to Refers (DTR) are from agencies such as the Police, Fire Service, Social Services, Hospital discharges, Mental Health and Substance Misuse Services and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) for vulnerable clients presenting to their services facing homelessness.

Following the Covid pandemic there was a ban on evictions to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 and issuing of Section 21 notice as an intention to end tenancies. From June to the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021, the notice period was 6 months. After this date it returned to the 2 months' notice.

This policy has had an impact on service delivery following on from the pandemic. During 2020/21 the number of enquiries the service received remained at normal levels but the number of homeless assessments fell. In 2021/22 the service has seen an increase in enquiries and assessments and this trend is continuing into 2022/23. Around 50% of approaches received in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have resulted in a full homelessness assessment being required and a formal Prevention, Relief or Main Housing Duty being taken. In 2020/21 around 25% of approaches were resulting in a full homelessness assessment being required.



## Homeless Reduction Act 2017

The diagram below illustrates the Statutory Duty stages under the Homeless Reduction Act enacted in 2018/19. Clients remain within each stage for a period of 56 days and if their homelessness cannot be prevented or relieved they move into Main Duty stage, where the Local Authority owes a full homeless duty.

## Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

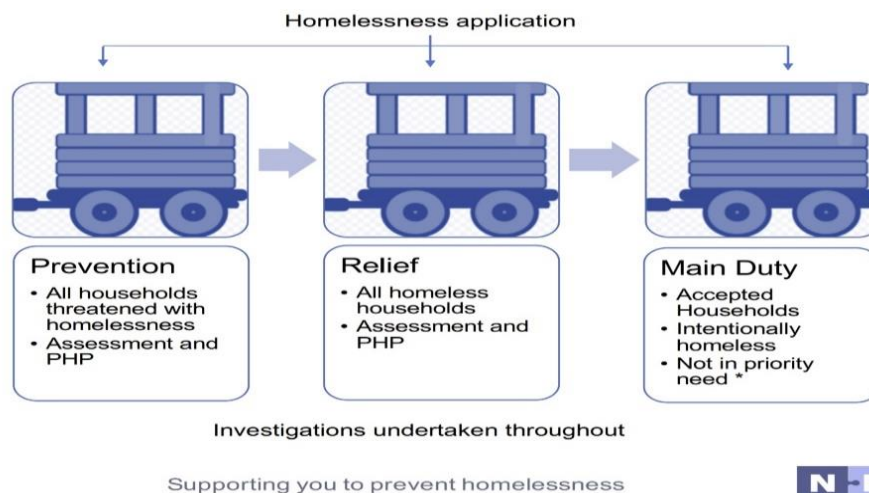
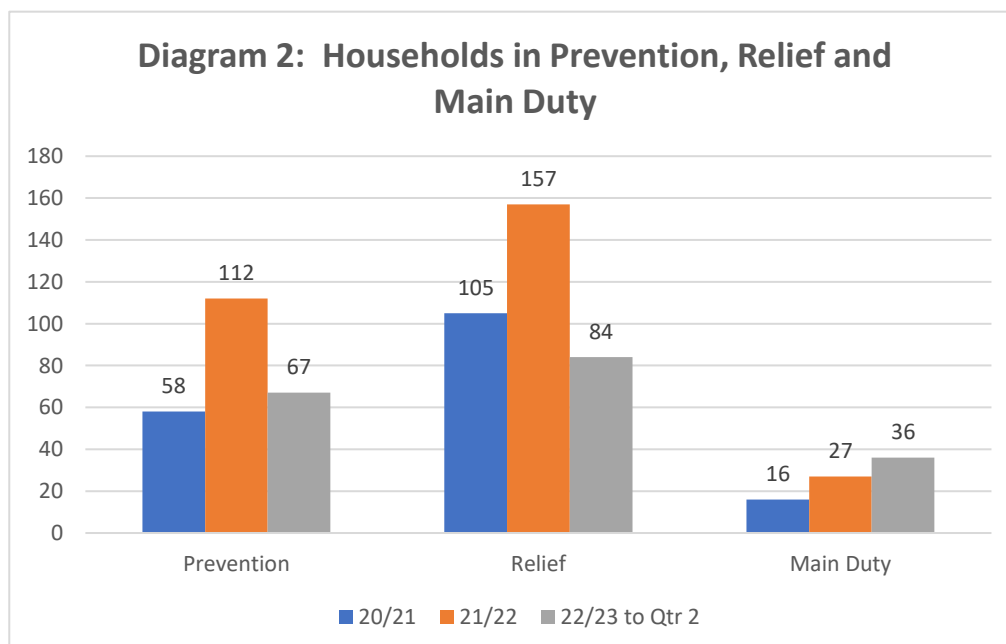


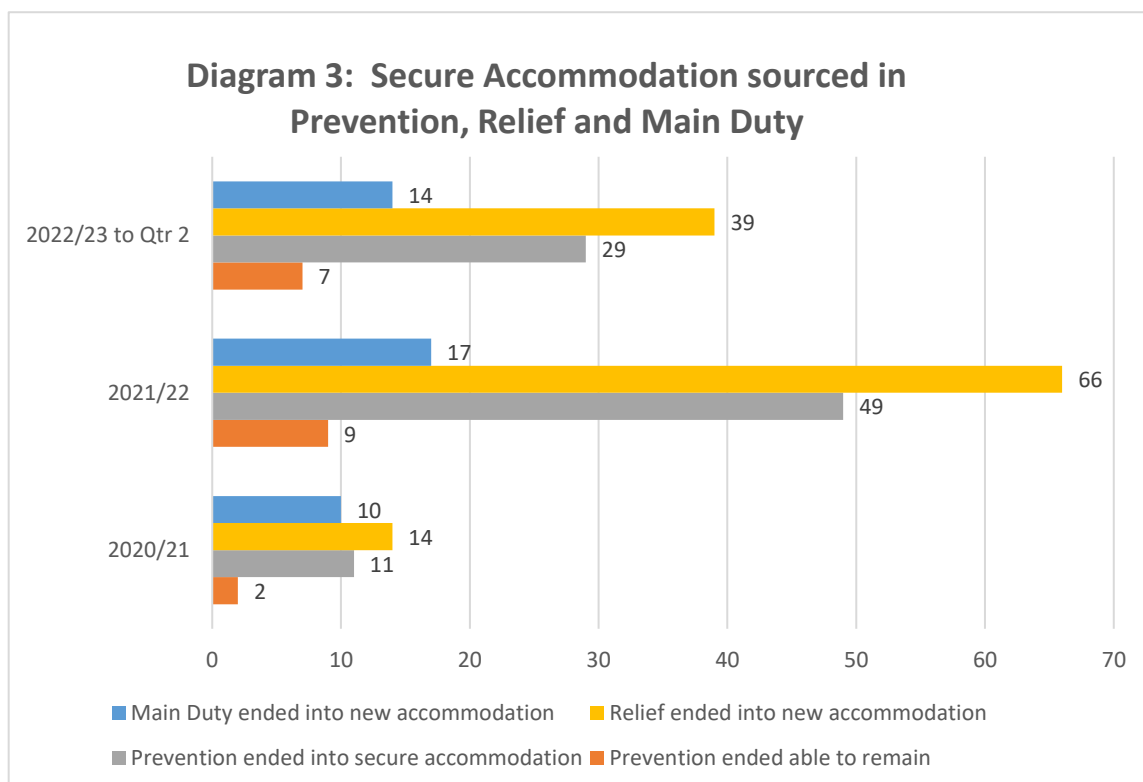
Diagram 2 below provides data on all the households the homeless service has accepted either a Prevention or Relief Duty towards under the Homeless Reduction Act 2018. There will be an element of duplication as clients move from Prevention to Relief and Main Duty.

The effect on the housing service in 2020/21 as a result of the ban of evictions was a decrease in households to whom a Prevention Duty was owed and an increase in households approaching in Relief, as a result of being homeless. This trend in households approaching under Relief continues to increase throughout 2021/22 and into 2022/23. In 2022/23 we are also seeing a significant number of households moving into Main Duty as the service has been unable to source alternative secure accommodation to meet the Homeless Duty at Prevention, Relief and Main Duty stages.



Despite the increase in clients approaching the service it continues to be successful in preventing and relieving homelessness by sourcing alternative secure accommodation. Secure is classed as accommodation available for a period of 6 months. Diagram 3 details the number of properties that have been secured to end the homeless duty and at which stage Prevention, Relief or Main.

In 2021/22 following on from the pandemic and the ban on evictions up to the end of May 2021 the service supported into new accommodation 132 households and assisted 9 households to remain in their current accommodation. In the first 6 months of 2022/23 the service has assisted 82 clients into secure accommodation and supported 7 clients to remain in their own homes.



### Main reason for approaching the service

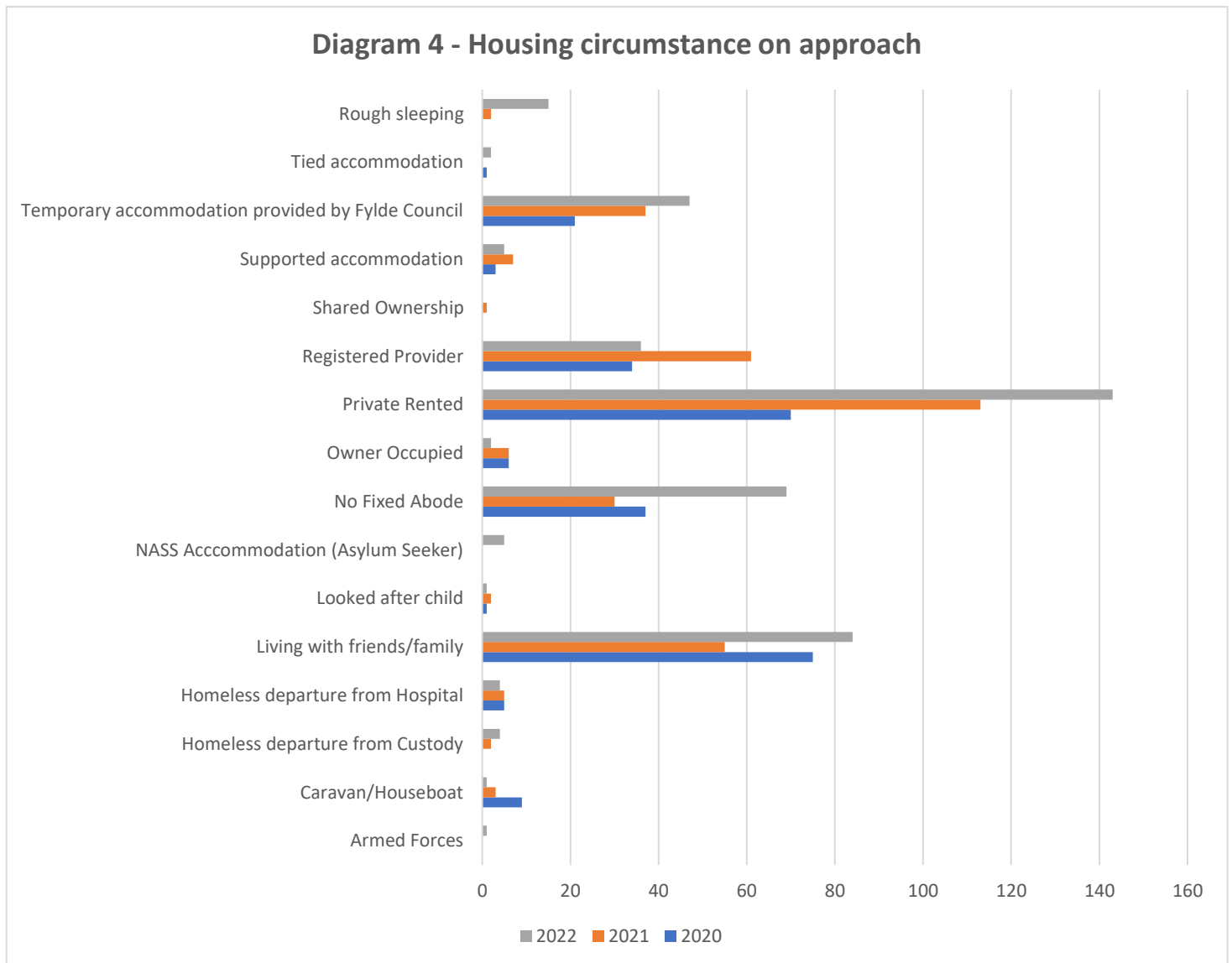
To understand the homelessness pressures within the borough it is worthwhile to have an awareness of the current housing situation of households approaching the service as homeless.

The service continues to see a large number of Clients approaching who advise they have no fixed abode and living with family and friends tend to clients who are sofa surfing between family and friends homes.

Numbers are high for approaches from the private rented sector and 2022 has seen unprecedented levels of clients approaching from private sector tenancies. This will be a direct result of the ban on evictions that was lifted in October 2021.

The service has seen a significant increase in supporting clients who are rough sleeping, from 2 in 2020/21 to 13 at the end of Quarter 2, 2022/23. The majority of clients who approach the service rough sleeping are provided with temporary accommodation as NSNO (No Second Night Out) to either reconnect with family or friends or connect with support available.

In November 2022 the Housing Service conducted a physical count to provide data to Shelters Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot, a requirement of all Local Authorities. The November Count recorded 2 rough sleepers. Without the support of the Housing Service and provision of NSNO accommodation this figure could have been much higher.



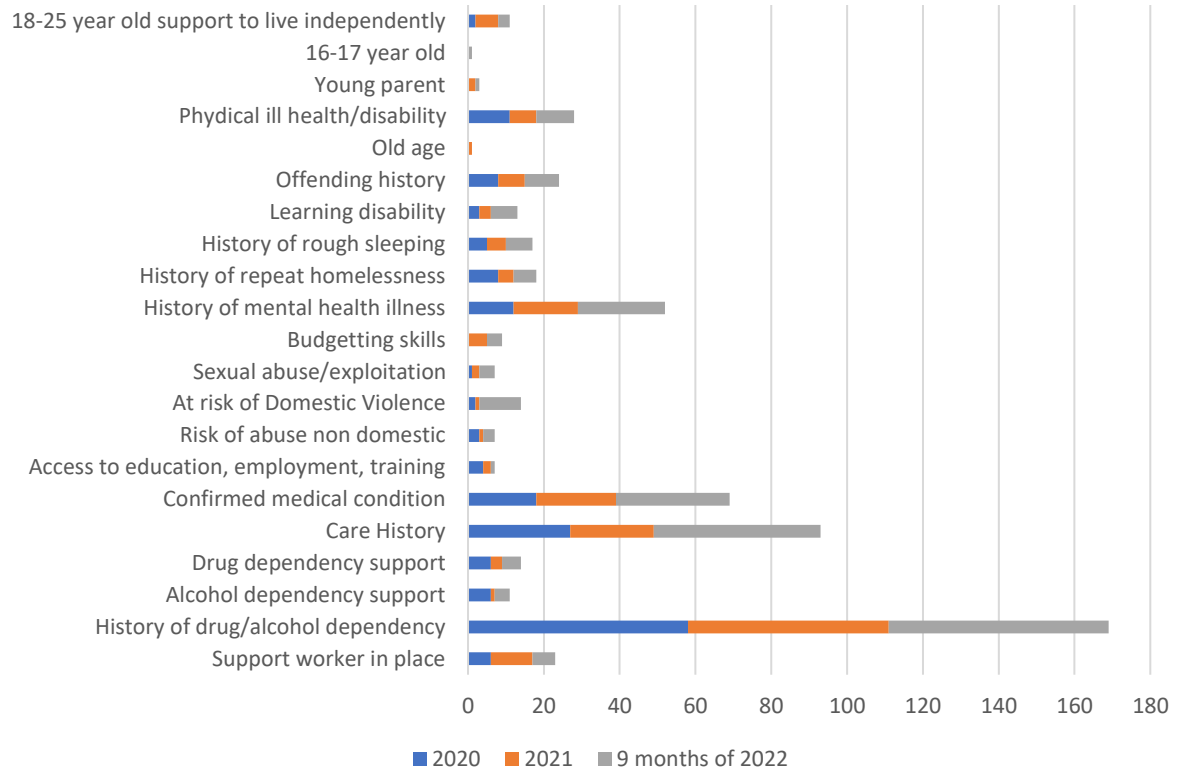
Tables 1 considers the main single reason clients approached the service as homeless. Those lines highlighted orange are main reasons where the service is seeing a significant increase in reasons for approach.

Most notable is the increase in tenancies being ended with a section 21 or section 8 notice. Of concern is the increase in the number of clients approaching the Authority as a result of domestic violence, fleeing harassment from their current accommodation and violent relationship breakdown. Clients who would class their current housing circumstance as No Fixed Abode includes staying with friends, family or sofa surfing and this an area where the service is seeing an increase demand for support into housing.

<b>Table 1 – Main reason for approaching the service as homeless</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>9 months 2022</b>
93 days notice armed forces	1	3	1
Abandoned accommodation	5	4	1
Affordability of current accommdoation	10	9	9
Advice on Tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities	0	4	3
Asked to leave by family	50	57	55
Asked to leave by friends	11	12	12
Sofa surfing	26	19	35
Rough sleeping	10	7	13
Care leaver	1	3	0
Discharge Psychiatric Unit	5	8	4
Hospital discharge	1	2	1
Emergency (Fire/Flood/Disaster)	6	1	0
Fleeing Domestic Abuse	17	19	34
Fleeing Harassment	11	8	7
Violent relationship breakdown	11	4	7
Leaving Prison/Bail conditions	4	10	6
Home office/asylum seeker accommodation	1	0	7
Homeless Homes for Ukraine	0	0	1
Downsize	1	1	1
Loss of tied accommodation	1	2	4
Overcrowding - asked to leave	1	2	9
Property not fit for habitation	7	5	6
Current accommodation is detrimental to health	1	8	12
Rehousing options	5	9	8
Relationship breakdown	27	17	22
Rent arrears private sector	5	2	1
Rent arrears registered provider	2	3	4
Mortgage repossession	0	3	2
Section 21 notice	25	65	97
Section 8 notice	2	3	13
Loss of private sector accommodation Not S21 or S8	10	17	25
Evicted/ready to move on from Supported accommodation	3	4	4
Removed from home/area by Police	0	4	1

Diagram 5 over-leaf considers the support needs of clients approaching the service as homeless. The main reasons for support are drug/alcohol dependency, history of being in care, confirmed medical conditions, history of mental health and physical ill health or disability. Despite these support needs a minimal number of clients report having support in place to deal with their support needs.

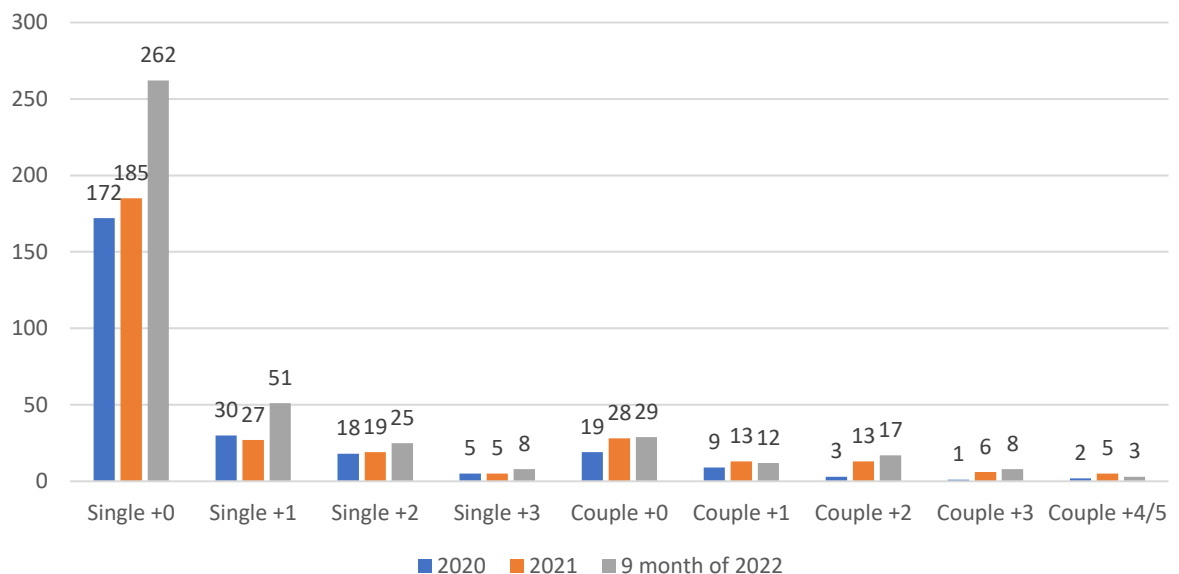
**Diagram 5 - Identified Support Needs**



**Household Make up**

Diagram 6 details the size of households approaching the service. For all households types the service has seen a significant increase in approaches under homelessness legislation. There has been a significant increase in single person households with numbers in 2022 from January to September being the highest the service has ever experienced with an increase of 35% on average since 2000.

**Diagram 6 - Household make up**



This situation is mirrored for households with children, single parents and couples, where there has been a 25% on average of approaches for support.

The service has seen an increase in families with children following the easing of restrictions for Landlords to be able to proceed with possession proceedings approaching as homeless, either due to rent arrears or the Landlord wishing to sell the property. In the majority of these cases negotiation with the Landlord to prevent homelessness has not been successful.

This has had a knock on effect on the use of temporary accommodation. The service has available 10 units of temporary accommodation in Fylde as dispersed housing stock leased from Progress Housing Association. The service attempts to place clients in either self-catering or B&B accommodation in Fylde, however this can be expensive and difficult to source. In the absence of accommodation in Fylde the service will place clients out of area in Blackpool B&B. The service cannot place families with children in B&B for longer than 6 weeks and to date despite the extreme demand for temporary accommodation the service has achieved this. The increase in the requirement to provide temporary accommodation for clients approaching as homeless, has a knock on effect on the storage costs of furniture and pets.

### Households in temporary accommodation

The service records the number of households living in temporary accommodation at the end of every quarter. Since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act in 2018/19 the service has seen a steady increase in households to whom the Local Authority has a statutory housing duty to provide temporary accommodation. At the end of 2018/19 following the introduction of the Act the service had 14 households in temporary accommodation. In Qtr. 4 2020/21 and 2021/22, the service has seen a 50% increase in the need to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households. Demand for temporary accommodation provision in 2022/23 is the highest the service has experienced since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act. In September 2022/23 the local authority had 41 households in temporary accommodation.

2018/19 Qtr 4	2019/20 Qtr 4	2020/21 Qtr 4	2021/22 Qtr 4	2022/23 Qtr 1	2022/23 Qtr 2
14	20	27	28	33	41

### Costs of temporary accommodation

The following table shows the cost of B&B accommodation to Fylde Council over the last few years together with housing benefit/universal credit income receivable from clients in B&B which offsets the gross cost of the accommodation:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 year to date
<b>Gross costs</b> of B&B accommodation to FBC	£42,437	£62,716	£127,234	£141,245	£218,741
Housing benefit/universal credit <b>income</b> received by FBC	(£25,632)	(£32,279)	(£65,905)	(£54,191)	(£54,300)
<b>Net cost</b> of B&B to FBC	£16,805	£30,437	£61,329	£87,054	£164,441

## Conclusions

1. The service deals with around 700 approaches from clients for housing advice and facing homelessness and 100 Duty to Refer from Statutory Agencies. Duty to Refer (DTR) are from agencies such as the Police, Fire Service, Social Services, Hospital discharges, Mental Health and Substance Misuse Services and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) for vulnerable clients presenting to their services facing homelessness.
2. During and in the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, the ban on evictions till the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 and extension of the notice period from 2 months to 6 months until October 2021 has impacted on service delivery with an increase in enquiries for support to Housing Services and resulting full homelessness assessments. 50% of enquiries received in 2021/22 and 2022/23 resulted in a full homelessness assessments. In 2020/21 around 25% of enquiries were resulting in a full homelessness assessment being required.
3. The effect on the housing service in 2020/21 as a result of the ban of evictions was a decrease in households to whom a Prevention Duty was owed and an increase in households approaching in Relief, as a result of being homeless. This trend in households approaching under Relief continues to increase throughout 2021/22 and into 2022/23.
4. The service continues to be successful in preventing and relieving homelessness by sourcing alternative secure accommodation. In 2021/22 following on from the pandemic and the ban on evictions up to the end of May 2021 the service supported into new accommodation 132 households and assisted 9 households to remain in their current accommodation. In the first 6 months of 2022/23 the service has assisted 82 clients into secure accommodation and supported 7 clients to remain in their own homes.
5. The service in 2022/23 has seen a significant increase in approaches from clients leaving the private rented sector as a result of a Section 21 or Section 8 notice to end the tenancy. The numbers of clients who declare they have No Fixed Abode has also increased and this will include clients sofa surfing and staying with friend and relatives.
6. The number of approaches from clients rough sleeping has increased since 2020 where it stood at 10 for the entire year. In the first 9 months of 2022 the service has supported to date 13 approaches from Rough Sleepers. Of note is that the Rough Sleeping Count conducted in November 2022 recorded 2 rough sleepers. Without the support of the Housing Service and provision of NSNO accommodation this figure could have been much higher.
7. The service continues to see an increase in clients approaching the service with multiple support needs and the main recorded needs since 2022 have been drug/alcohol dependency, history of being in care, confirmed medical conditions, history of mental health and physical ill health or disability. Despite these support needs a minimal number of clients report having support workers in place to deal with their support needs.
8. The service has seen a significant increase in approaches from all types of households. Taking an average over the three years from 2020, the service has seen an increase in demand for support from single persons of 35% for the first 9 months of 2022 at 262, compared with 172 and 185 for the full years in 2020 and 2021.
9. A similar situation is reflected with households with dependent children. Taking an average over the three years from 2020 the service has seen an increase in demand from single and two adult households with dependent children of 25% for the first 9 months of 2022 at 124, compared with 48 and 88 for the full years in 2020 and 2021.
10. Since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act in 2018/19 the service has seen a steady increase in households to whom the Local Authority has a statutory housing duty to provide temporary accommodation. At the end of 2018/19 following the introduction of the Act the service had 14 households in temporary accommodation. In Qtr. 4 2020/21 and 2021/22, the service has seen a 50% increase in the need to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households. Demand for temporary accommodation provision in 2022/23 is the



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