



South Tyneside Council

South Tyneside Council

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review (2019-2024)

23 September 2024

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**THIS IS  
SOUTH  
TYNESIDE**

# Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that all councils in England, referred to as Local Housing Authorities in legislation, with a responsibility for providing homelessness services to carry out a review of homelessness and related housing need every 5 years.

Councils must carry out a review of that covers 3 main aspects of homelessness in their area. Councils must review:

- (a) the levels and likely levels of homelessness in their area,
- (b) what they have done in tackling homelessness in their area to:
  - i. prevent homelessness in the district of the authority
  - ii. secure that accommodation is or will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless
  - iii. provide support for people in the district:
    - who are or may become homeless; or
    - who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.
- (c) what resources they have available to tackle homelessness in their area

Once the review has been completed, the 2002 Act requires the council to publish the findings free of charge and to use this review to formulate a “Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy”.

This review will cover the 5-year period since our last published strategy and will look at the financial years 2019/20 to 2023/24 inclusive and will demonstrate some of the challenges within housing and homelessness services affecting South Tyneside in that time.

Although there is no minimum age for homelessness applications those under the age of 16 are supported through Children’s Social Care services and not through homelessness. Those aged 16-17 will be supported by the councils homeless and social care teams who will work in collaboration to provide support. Therefore, this review will only look at those households who are aged 16 or over.

## National and Local Context

It is important to be aware of national and local changes that affect South Tyneside Council and its residents when carrying out this review. This section highlights some of the national and local issues and policies that affect the lives of those in the borough. Although not all will have had significant widespread impacts on homelessness in the borough, they can all contribute to causing crisis with our residents and we feel it is important to be aware of these issues to ensure our homelessness advice and assistance resources and services can react to support any residents affected.

## **COVID-19**

This review includes one of the most unprecedented periods in recent history. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 impacted residents and council services significantly and has seen changes in how people engage with services and how organisations had to alter how these services were delivered.

## **Cost of Living**

The Cost of Living Crisis, which started in 2021 has impacted residents and saw the cost of everyday living, such as housing, food and energy increase to unsustainable levels. This makes it difficult for individuals and families to maintain their standard of living and meet their basic needs. Key factors contributing to this crisis can include inflation, supply chain disruptions, increased demand, economic policies, and geopolitical events. The crisis impacts lower and middle-income households the most, as they typically spend a larger portion of their income on essential goods and services.

## **Brexit**

Following the referendum in 2016 to formally withdraw the UK from the EU “Brexit” officially came into force on 31 December 2020. Concerns around the impact of Brexit on the UK economy, decline in immigration from EEA countries and added steps to allow trade and movement could impact employment and financial stability of our residents.

## **Russian Invasion of Ukraine**

The Russian invasion of the Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the UK’s support of Ukraine saw changes to the immigration system<sup>1</sup> and additional support to provide Ukrainian nationals with a place of safety.

## **Universal Credit**

The full roll out of Universal Credit for working age residents continues and presents a challenge to those who are used to “legacy benefits”. Universal Credit sees residents moving to less regular payments with many now required to budget their finances over unfamiliar periods. Housing costs are also no longer paid directly to landlords automatically and could cause arrears and eviction action if not aware or confused by new benefit system. Support is available to residents from the Welfare Team.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/russian-invasion-of-ukraine-uk-government-response/about>

## Employment

The national collapse of large high street retailers such as Wilko and Debenhams alone saw the loss of 24,000 jobs across the country. Data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that the unemployment rate in South Tyneside 2023 stood at 5.6%<sup>2</sup> and although this was a reduction compared to 7.4% in 2022, we have the highest unemployment rate in the North East region.

## Legal Framework

This section provides more details on the main legislation that influences and informs the delivery of homelessness services in England. This is not an exhaustive list as there are other laws impacting on how duties are determined.

### Housing Act 1996, Part VII

The Housing Act 1996, Part VII<sup>3</sup> is the primary legislative framework that councils must follow in administering their legal duties relating to homelessness. The 1996 Act covered a number of housing related duties, but Part VII sets out the main duties councils must provide to applicants who are or at risk of homelessness.

This legislation has seen many minor adjustments through government policy and case law decisions over the last 28 years but saw major changes in 2002 and 2017. Key amendments to Part 7 include:

- Homelessness Act 2002
- Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

### Homelessness Act 2002

The 2002 Act<sup>4</sup> introduced the requirement for councils to develop a homelessness strategy based on a review of homelessness in their area every 5 years. The strategy must set out how the council will prevent homelessness and how it will ensure that there is sufficient accommodation for those at risk of it.

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<sup>2</sup> Unemployed people are defined as those without jobs who are actively seeking work and available to take up a job.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/part/VII>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/contents>

# Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>5</sup> which came into force in April 2018 was the biggest change to homelessness legislation for 40 years. The Act which also included a new Code of Guidance for Local Authorities and data monitoring process (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC)).

The 2017 Act introduced new duties that required councils to assess and agree a personalised housing plan for all applicants who are at risk of homelessness within a new 56-day timescale. The assessment and plan must consider:

- what caused the risk of homelessness, and
- the applicants housing needs, and
- the support the applicant needs to be able to have and maintain suitable accommodation.

Additionally, the 2017 Act also added duties ensure that:

- councils take “reasonable steps” to prevent and relieve homelessness
- applicants will be expected to cooperate with the council
- councils must establish a system for the acceptance of referrals from public agencies to work with those at risk of homelessness (Duty to Refer<sup>6</sup>)
- the “full homelessness duty” comes into effect where steps to relieve homelessness fails

Councils are also encouraged to assist households as early as possible under prevention duties rather than require them to return when homelessness is more likely to occur.

There is also increased requirements to provide more tailored information and advice for groups considered more likely to be at risk of homelessness.

## Levels of Homelessness

### Population

The latest population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)<sup>7</sup> show that South Tyneside is home to 148,667 people, of which 121,919 were 16 or over. The overall population of South Tyneside has been increasing slowly between 2016 and 2019 by an average of 0.4% per year, with the 16+ population growing on average 0.3% in the same period. Due to the exceptional impact the COVID-19

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-duty-to-refer>

<sup>7</sup> ONS: Mid-year population estimates, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

pandemic had on our residents we have looked at a 4-year period prior to the pandemic to identify what a “normal” pre-pandemic population trend looked like to predict future levels of demand on housing services.

This is because in 2021 population figures showed that for the population as a whole and those aged 16+ both displayed a reduction of 2%. Overall, the total population reduced by 3,218 people from 2020 to 2021.

The mid-year population estimates published by the ONS show that the total South Tyneside population increased by 0.5% in 2022 (most recent available data) suggesting that the average upward trend seen prior to the pandemic has continued.

The pre-pandemic average of 0.4% has been used to predict our future population of the borough and it is estimated that by 2027, South Tyneside will see an increase of 2% overall and have an additional 3,009 people living in the borough accessing local services, of which 1,845 will be aged 16 or over.

Population data also shows that there were 8,732 young people in the borough aged between 11 and 15 years old in 2022. Due to legislation, children under 16 are supported through Children’s Social Care and mainstream homelessness assistance is not accessed until the age of 16.

Although not all those 11 to 15-year-olds will access homelessness services this indicates that there is a significant potential pressure on housing services with this cohort reaching the age of 16 within the next 5-year review period.

## **Demand Overview**

The Housing Act 1996, Part VII<sup>8</sup> outlines the duties councils must provide to households who are homeless or may become threatened with homelessness. This section looks at those seeking assistance from the council with their housing situation. In South Tyneside, applicants fall into 2 categories:

- applicants who are seeking generic advice on their housing situation, or
- those who trigger a statutory homeless application due to a “reason to believe” they are homeless.

In cases where a household contacts the council and there is no apparent threat of homelessness and no indication that it may occur, they are supported through the provision of advice and assistance only from the Housing Options Team in accordance with s.179 of the 1996 Act supplemented by published self-help resources where appropriate.

Applications for homeless assistance can be made to any department of the council and can be made in various forms<sup>9</sup>. This means that the applicants do not need to explicitly tell the council that they are homeless or threatened with homelessness but

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-18-applications-decisions-and-notifications>

if they are asking for help to find accommodation and it gives the council have a “reason to believe” that they might be, this triggers an application under the 1996 Act and the council must assess their housing needs.

## Overall Presentations

South Tyneside Council have recorded an increase in presentations for housing and homelessness advice by an average of 9% per year over the 5-year review period. This represents an overall rise of 36% in households approaching for advice and assistance on housing related issues to the Housing Options Team. This has increased from 2,280 households in 2019/20 to 3,093 presentations in 2023/24.

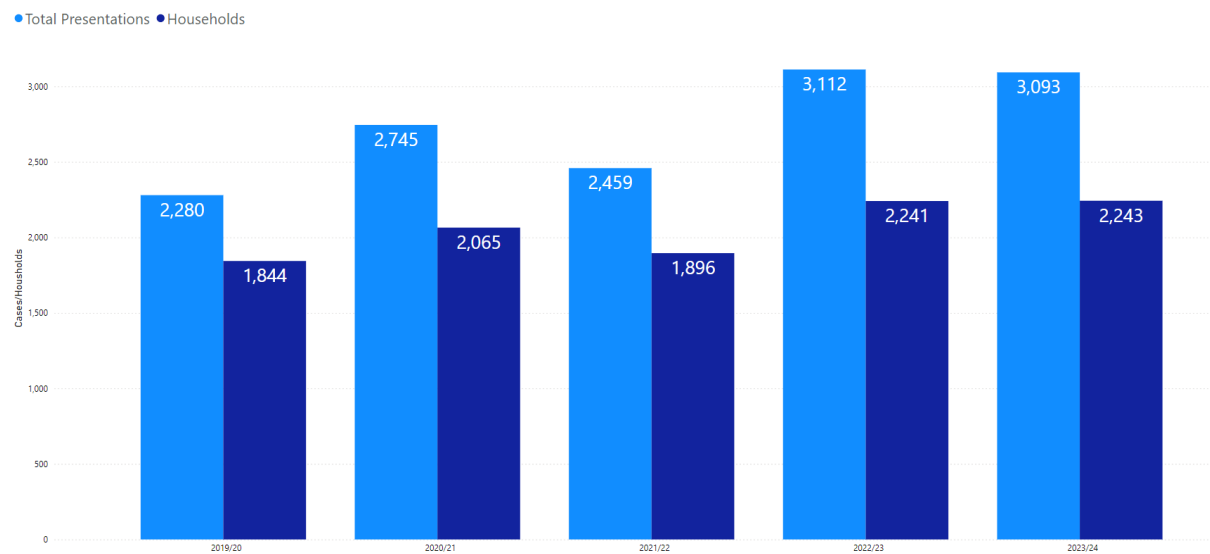


Fig. 1: Presentations for Housing and Homelessness Advice

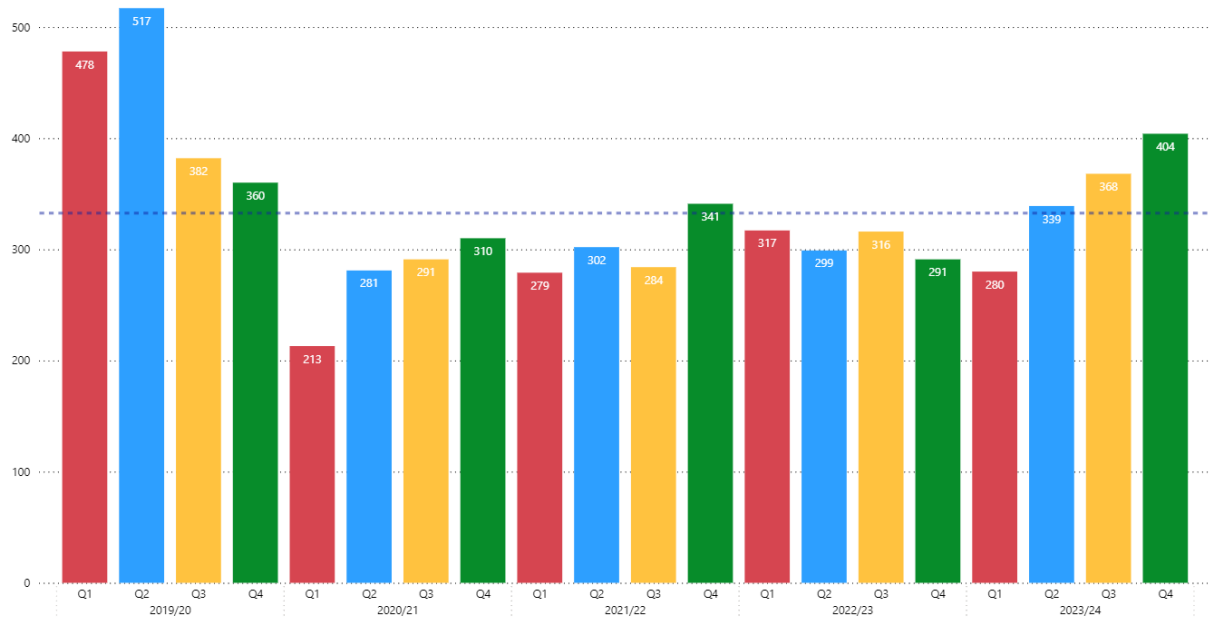


Fig. 2: Part VII Homeless Applications (Per year / Quarter)

## Advice and Guidance

Prior to the pandemic, the number of times households sought advice and guidance on a housing related issue from the council stood at 543 in 2019/20. This figure rose steeply, by 204%, in 2020/21 to 1,650 instances and this steep rise is attributed to the Coronavirus pandemic where temporary legislation suspended evictions and initiatives such as “everyone in” were implemented. Many of these changes raised housing concerns nationally amongst residents who sought advice on concerns about homelessness and eviction due to affordability, unemployment and concerns for their health at the time.

The number of households seeking advice since the increase in 2020/21 fell briefly but has returned and remains above pandemic levels over the last 2 years (see Fig. 3, below). Over the last 5 years we have supported 4,865 separate households responding to 7,037 housing related matters, averaging 1,400 advice cases per year.

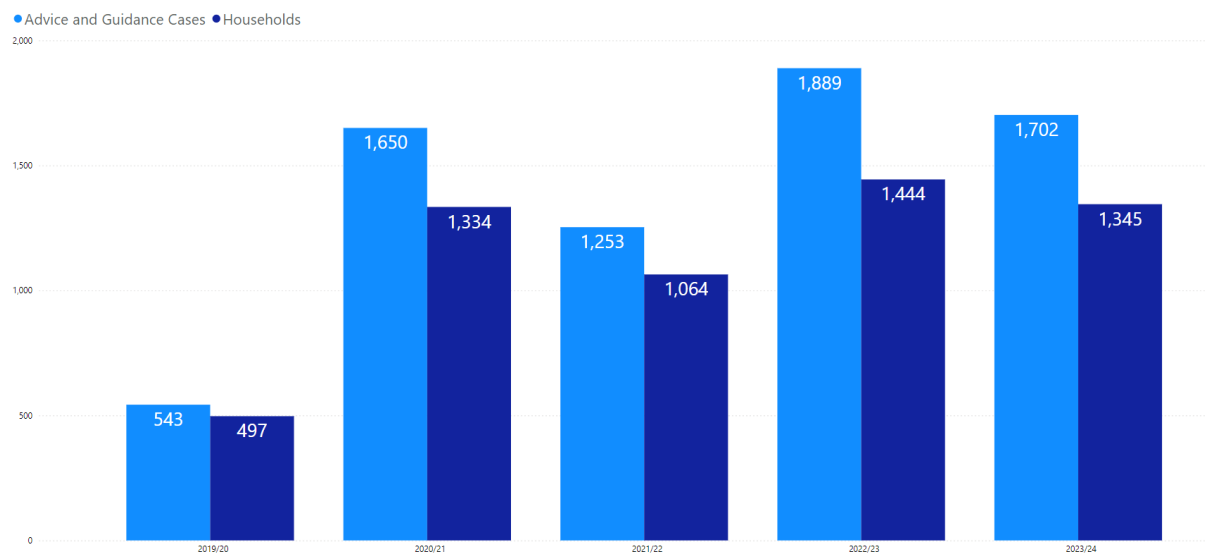


Fig. 3: Advice and Guidance Cases

## Homeless Cases

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amended the homelessness provisions in the 1996 Act and introduced new duties for councils to intervene earlier and to prevent and relieve homelessness. The 2017 Act also introduced a “duty to refer” for a selection of other public services. This required those public bodies to refer, with consent, clients to the council where there was homelessness or threat of homelessness. Each of these duties are covered later in this review.

Where an applicant gives the council a “reason to believe” that they may be homeless they are required to trigger a statutory homelessness assessment in line with the Housing Act 1996, Part 7. A homeless application consists of many “duties” that the council must carry out to determine which, if any, are owed to the applicant. Here we initially look at the volume of cases that triggered a statutory homeless application. We look at the details of homeless cases later in this review.



In the period covered by this review South Tyneside have taken a cumulative total of 6,652 homeless applications. In the 12 months before the pandemic, South Tyneside took 1,737 cases that triggered a statutory homeless application. Homeless applications fell by 35% in 2020/21 and shows a correlation with the increase in advice and guidance cases because of the restrictions on evictions from rented accommodation and the “everyone in” initiative.

Between 2019/20 and 2023/24 we have seen an overall reduction of 20% in homeless applications triggered. Our data shows that in the 3 years since the pandemic homeless application numbers have been on an upward trend by an average of 8% annually and suggests we will reach pre-COVID levels by 2026/27 and would exceed 2,000 applications triggered by 2030.

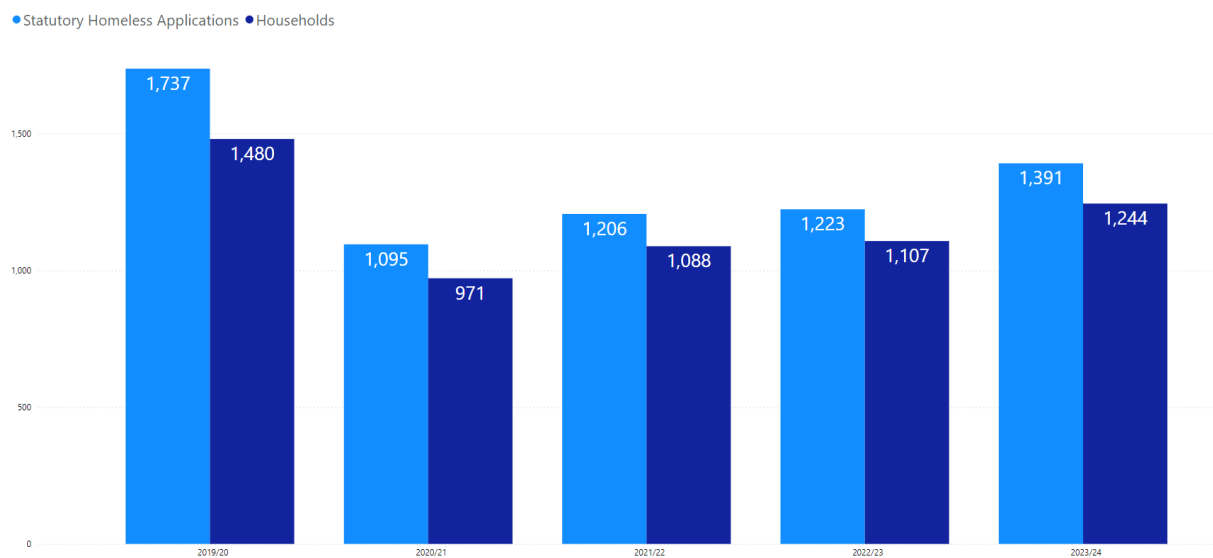


Fig. 4: Statutory Homeless Applications

## Causes of Homelessness

The greatest cause of homelessness in South Tyneside between 2019/20 and 2023/24 was due to family members asking the applicant to leave. Our data shows that “family no longer willing or able to accommodate” was actually the main cause of homelessness in every year (Table. 1, below) and represents the cause in 22.91% (1,524) of all homeless applications during the review period.

8.6% of all applications for homelessness assistance who had been asked to leave by family were homeless from the Beacon and Bents and Simonside and Rekendyke wards of the borough.

This is followed by households presenting due to their private landlord issuing them with a notice to terminate their tenancy (13.4%, 889 applications). Private landlords noted in 329 (37%) cases of homelessness due to the termination of a private rented tenancy, that they were doing so in order to sell the property and required vacant possession.

This however may be as high as 58.6% (521 applications) as changes by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in recording options saw 2 new options implemented in 2021 to separate the previous “Landlord wishing to sell or re-let the property” to be offer more detailed insight.

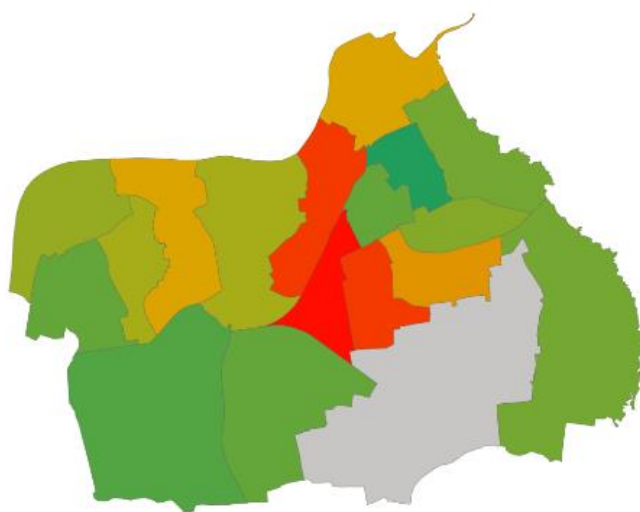
Relationship breakdown, not due to domestic abuse represents the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest cause of homelessness at 11.8% relating to 787 applications.

However, due to the changes to recording mentioned above in 2021 by government which also improved how Domestic Abuse was to be recorded by councils and our data suggests that this would be a prevalent cause of homelessness in the borough. Originally the option available to record “Domestic Abuse” did not offer a distinction to those homeless as having experienced domestic abuse and those homeless because of an allegation of perpetrating it. The 2021 changes separated both elements with clear distinct options.

The combined total for the original and new “Domestic abuse – victim\*” recording options for the review period would place domestic abuse as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common cause of homelessness in the borough with 854 applications taken and a proportion of 12.84% but as noted does not exclude alleged perpetrators prior to 2021.

Table. 1: Reasons for homelessness (all applications)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Total	
	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Num	%
Asked to leave by family	401	6.0	278	4.2	253	3.8	288	4.3	304	4.6	1,524	22.9
End of assured shorthold tenancy	149	2.2	109	1.6	164	2.5	201	3.0	266	4.0	889	13.4
Domestic abuse*	230	3.4	147	2.2	180	2.7	164	2.5	133	2.0	854	12.8
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)	176	2.6	140	2.1	147	2.2	144	2.2	180	2.7	787	11.8
Eviction from supported housing	109	1.6	107	1.6	132	1.9	83	1.3	123	1.9	554	8.3
Not Recorded	163	2.4	62	0.9	79	1.2	35	0.5	6	0.1	345	5.2



Of the 854 applications due to domestic abuse, 8.8% were living in 3 wards within the borough (Simonside and Rekendyke, Biddick and All Saints and Whiteleas). Cleadon and East Boldon had no homeless applications due to domestic abuse in the 5 years covered in this review (fig. 5, left).

Fig. 5: Ward Map, Domestic Abuse

## Temporary Accommodation

In cases where the applicant household is believed to be both homeless and eligible for assistance<sup>10</sup> but also give the council a reason to believe that they might be in priority need the council are subject to a duty under s.188 of the 1996 Act<sup>11</sup> to provide temporary or interim accommodation whilst further enquiries are carried out, to determine what, if any further duty is owed. This section looks at those case where an “interim” duty was accepted regardless of any subsequent duties owed to the household.

South Tyneside have provided 619 interim accommodation placements to homeless households in the last 5 years. Data shows that interim housing has been offered in 9.3% of all cases taken in the period of this review. As can be seen in fig.6 below, interim placements increased sharply in 2023/24, rising 420% over the 5-year review period.

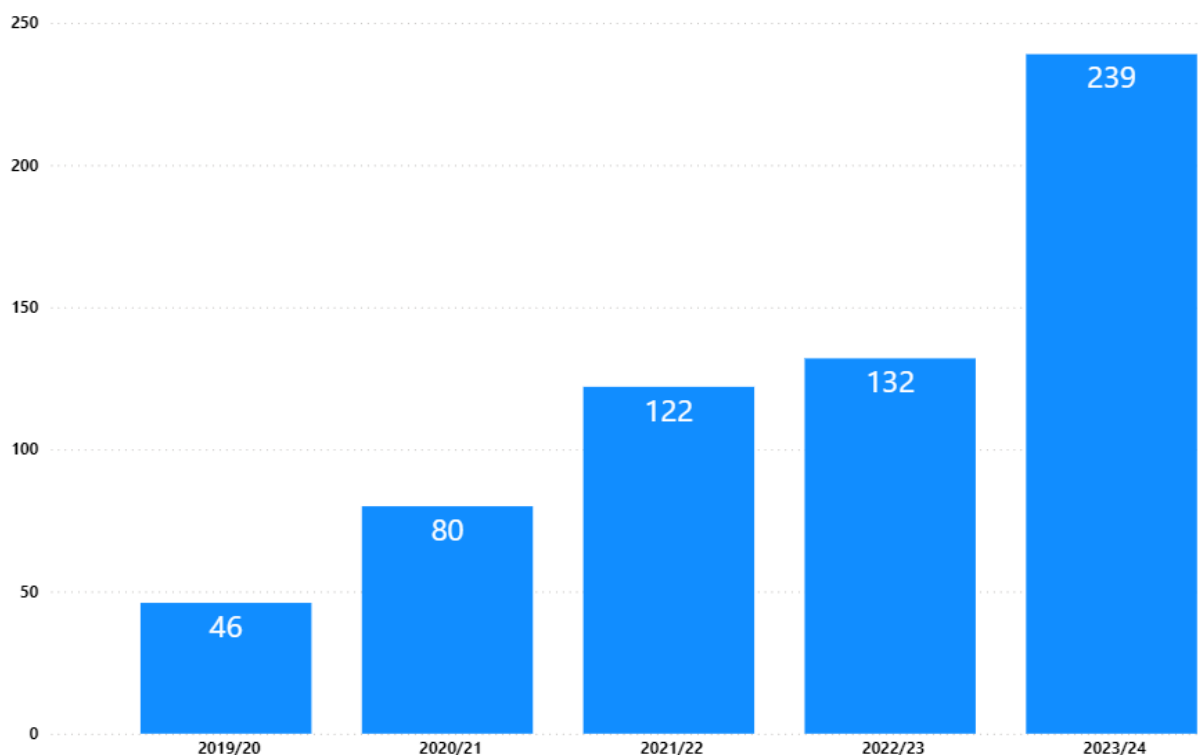


Fig. 6: Temporary Accommodation Placements

On average, we have witnessed a 54% increase, year on year, in interim placements with the biggest single spike of 81% from 132 placements in 2022/23 to 239 last year, 2023/24 and it is anticipated that this level will remain at this time.

Throughout the review period 205 out of area placements have been recorded all in neighbouring authority areas. This accounts for 33% of all interim placements

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-7-eligibility-for-assistance>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/section/188>

arranged within the last 5 years having to be made out of the borough due to availability and increased numbers requiring a TA placement.

## Prevention Duty

The 'prevention duty' set out in Section 195 of the 1996 Act was introduced through the amendments in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and requires councils to work with households who are threatened with homelessness within a minimum of 56 days to prevent them from becoming homeless, where possible.

Councils are permitted to support residents as early as possible and where they become aware of residents who are threatened with homelessness, but it is not within the minimum 56 days or within a specified time period they are encouraged to offer assistance under a prevention duty where possible, rather than delaying support which may prevent homelessness<sup>12</sup>.

South Tyneside Council saw 2,870 duties triggered under the prevention stage for the 5 years covered in this review. We have seen a reduction in the number of prevention cases taken annually when compared to pre-pandemic levels. There was a 43% fall in prevention duties being triggered from 2019/20 to the pandemic year of 2020/21. Although levels of prevention duties have begun to show an upward trend since, but remain 31% lower in 2023/23 than in 2019/20.

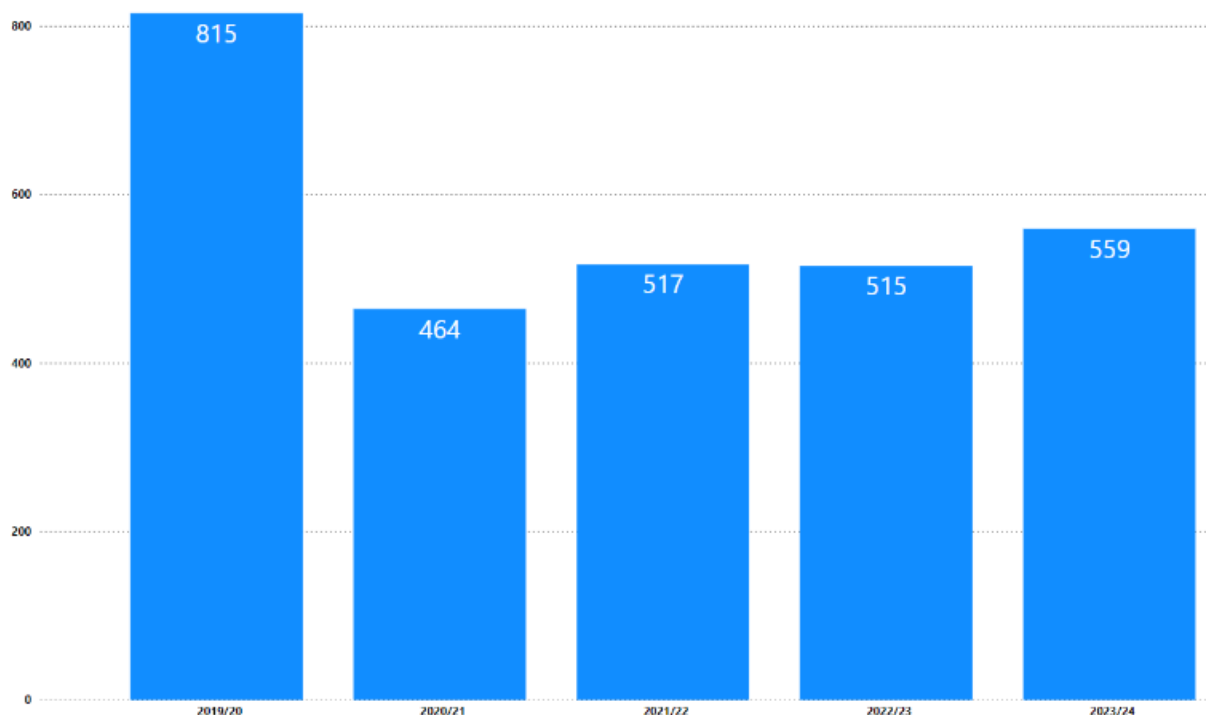


Fig. 7: Prevention Duties Accepted

The most prevalent causes of homelessness for applicants owed a prevention duty remained consistent each year covered by this review. The most common cause

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-12-duty-in-cases-of-threatened-homelessness-the-prevention-duty>

overall was due the termination of a private sector tenancy which accounts for 21.9% (627) of all duties triggered. Households threatened with homeless due to Domestic Abuse\* follows with 561 (19.5%) duties owed and Family no longer willing or able to accommodate completes the top 3 causes of homelessness for those owed the prevention duty with 428 (15.3%) applicants.

Table 2: Reasons for homelessness (prevention duty)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Total	
	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Num	%
<b>End of assured shorthold tenancy</b>	98	3.4	78	2.7	114	4.0	147	5.1	190	6.6	<b>627</b>	<b>21.9</b>
<b>Asked to leave by family</b>	165	5.8	77	2.7	55	1.9	62	2.2	79	2.8	<b>438</b>	<b>15.3</b>
<b>Domestic abuse</b>	157	5.5	99	3.5	100	3.5					<b>356</b>	<b>12.4</b>
<b>Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)</b>	81	2.8	41	1.4	42	1.5	50	1.7	58	2.0	<b>272</b>	<b>9.5</b>
<b>Eviction from supported housing</b>	35	1.2	42	1.5	62	2.6	14	0.5	36	1.3	<b>189</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Other</b>	114	4.0	47	1.6	24	0.8					<b>185</b>	<b>6.5</b>

## Relief Duty

The 'relief duty' set out in Section 189B of the 1996 Act was also introduced through the 2017 Act to help households who are already homeless to secure accommodation.

The relief duty applies when the council are satisfied that the household is homeless and eligible for assistance. The council must take reasonable steps to help the household secure suitable accommodation that will be available to them for at least 6 months.

South Tyneside Council accepted 3,497 duties under the relief stage for the 5 years covered in this review. We have seen a 24% increase in the number of relief duties accepted annually when compared to pre-pandemic levels. There was a 21% fall in relief duties being triggered from 2019/20 to the pandemic year of 2020/21. The level of relief duties returned to pre pandemic levels in 2022/23 and has since exceed it in 2023/24 having risen a further 23%.

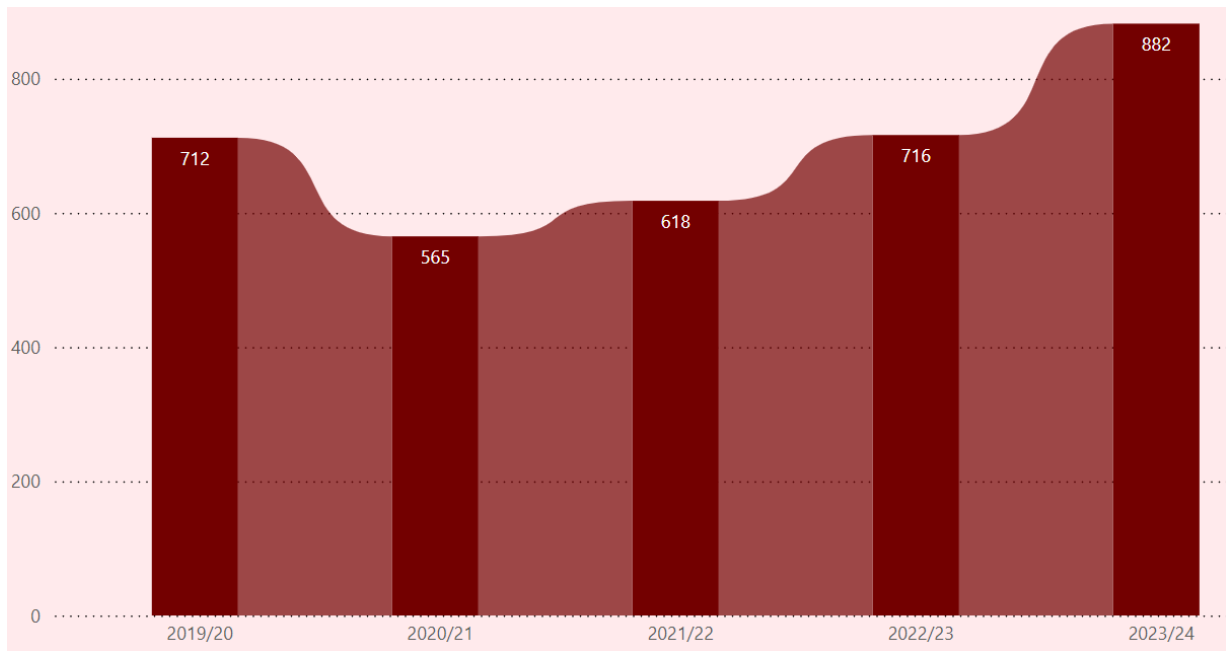


Fig. 8: Relief Duties Accepted

As with the prevention cases the most prevalent causes of homelessness for applicants owed a relief duty also remained consistent each year covered by this review. The most common cause of crisis homelessness in South Tyneside was due to “family no longer willing or able to accommodate”.

Being asked to leave by family accounts for 30.68% (1,073) of all relief duties triggered. Non-violent relationship breakdown follows with 511 (14.61%) duties owed and eviction from supported housing completes the top 3 causes of homelessness for those owed the relief duty with 379 (10.84%) applicants.

Table. 3: Reasons for homelessness (relief duty)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Total	
	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Num	%
<b>Asked to leave by family</b>	225	6.4	197	5.6	193	5.5	231	6.6	227	6.5	<b>1,073</b>	<b>30.7</b>
<b>Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)</b>	91	2.6	97	2.8	103	3.0	94	2.7	126	3.6	<b>511</b>	<b>14.6</b>
<b>Eviction from supported housing</b>	73	2.1	62	1.8	79	2.3	73	2.1	92	2.3	<b>379</b>	<b>10.8</b>
<b>End of assured shorthold tenancy</b>	42	1.2	31	0.9	49	1.4	66	1.9	99	2.8	<b>287</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>Asked to leave by friends</b>	44	1.3	34	1.0	45	1.3	65	1.9	62	1.8	<b>250</b>	<b>7.2</b>

# Rough Sleeping

## South Tyneside

South Tyneside continue to work hard to ensure that rough sleeping is rare, brief, and non-recurring and have maintained a low figure of people sleeping rough. Only 4 individuals were found sleeping rough during our Autumn snapshot count. This figure was maintained for the second consecutive year and remains 69% lower than our peak in 2012.

The most recent data for South Tyneside shows that our outreach service found 12 people over the course of July 2024 with only 3 being found at the end of the month. This was a reduction from 21 people found in June 2024 but such fluctuations in numbers is often seen over certain periods (warmer or colder weather for example). Half of those sleeping rough (6) in July 2024 were found on more than one night.

We continue to improve our recording of people sleeping rough to provide more insight beyond the limited information provided by the annual snapshot recording to improve services and responses.

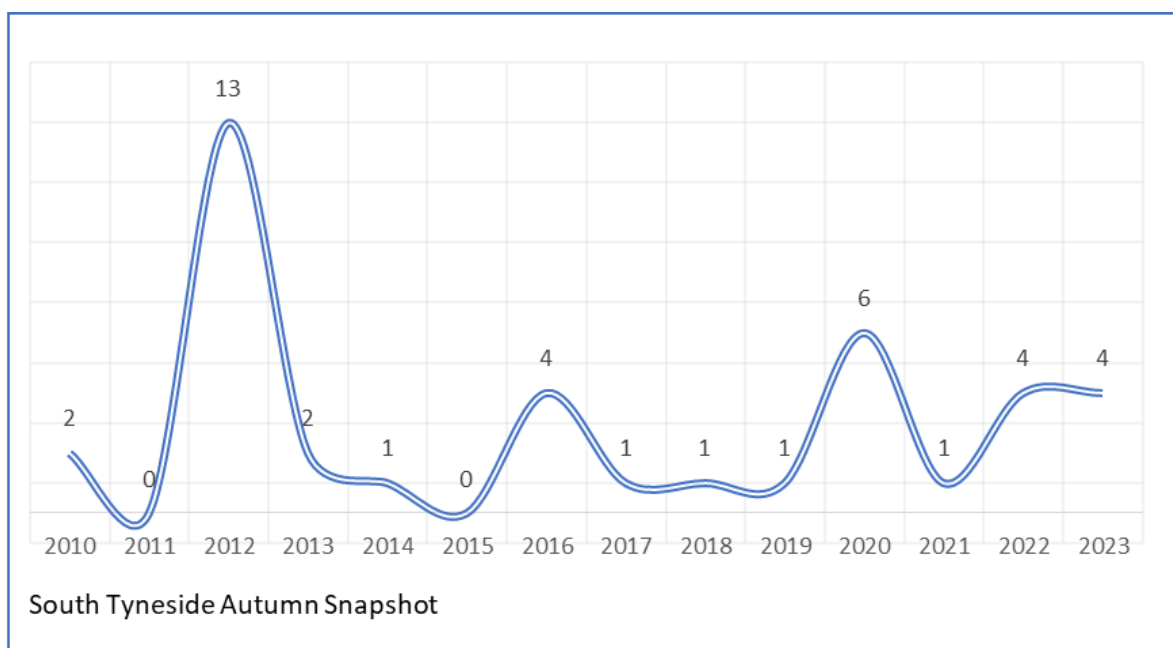


Fig. 9: South Tyneside Rough Sleeping Snapshot

## Regional Picture

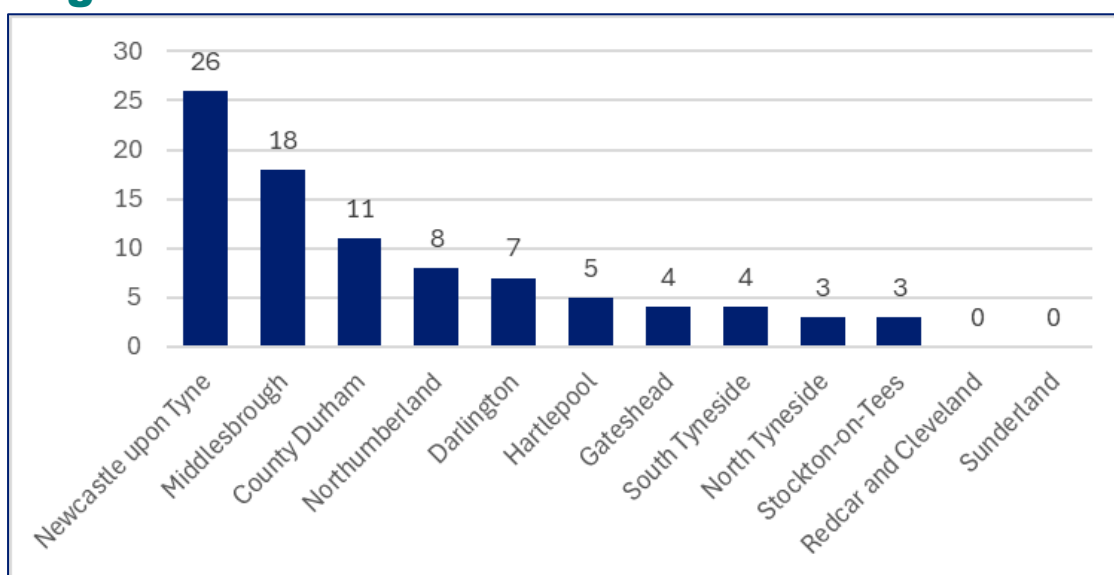


Fig. 10: Regional Rough Sleeping Snapshot 2023

In comparison to our neighbouring authorities in the North East region we rank equal 7<sup>th</sup> for people sleeping rough during the autumn snapshot. Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Durham all recorded double figures with the most, Newcastle, reporting 8 times more rough sleepers when compared to South Tyneside.

Comparatively, Middlesbrough are the closest in terms of geographical and demographic comparison but found 4 ½ times more sleeping rough. Newcastle had the highest number of people sleeping rough with 26 but are not considered the best direct comparison due to larger geographical and population sizes.

Sunderland and Redcar and Cleveland were the only 2 to report nobody on their streets.

We work closely with colleagues in neighbouring authorities to ensure that a more holistic response to people sleeping rough can be achieved and seeks to find solutions for those who often move between areas within the region. Continuation of involvement and representation within the region will be important to reduce and maintain low levels of rough sleeping.



# What we're doing

## Prevention Outcomes

### Activity

Councils must record the primary “activity”, which is the main thing a council tries to support the applicant with during their duty, whether this is successful or not. In South Tyneside the main activity carried out under the prevention duty for duties ended for the review period was accommodation secured by the local authority at 1,717 (60.25%).

This is followed by 779 (27.33%) cases closed after applicants were provided advice and information only, and in turn accounts for 9.5% of all successfully ended duties.

Negotiation or mediation completes the top 3 activities undertaken for ended duties but sits significantly lower proportionately at only 2.67% or 76 applicants.

### Outcomes

Between 2019/20 and 2023/24 South Tyneside Council concluded 2,850 prevention duties in the review period of which 1,915 (67%) were ended with a what can be considered a successful outcome.

Under the prevention duty there are 4 “end reasons” councils can record for cases that we consider “successful”. These are:

- Secured existing accommodation for 6 months
- Secured existing accommodation for 12 or more months
- Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months
- Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months

The number of prevention duties coming to an end dropped significantly during the pandemic (v46%) but correlates with the number of prevention cases triggered, noted earlier, due to the changes brought in to help people during the pandemic.

An upward trend since 2020/21 is evident and again mirrors the rise in duties taken, an average rise per year of 6.6% since the COVID-19 pandemic has emerged.

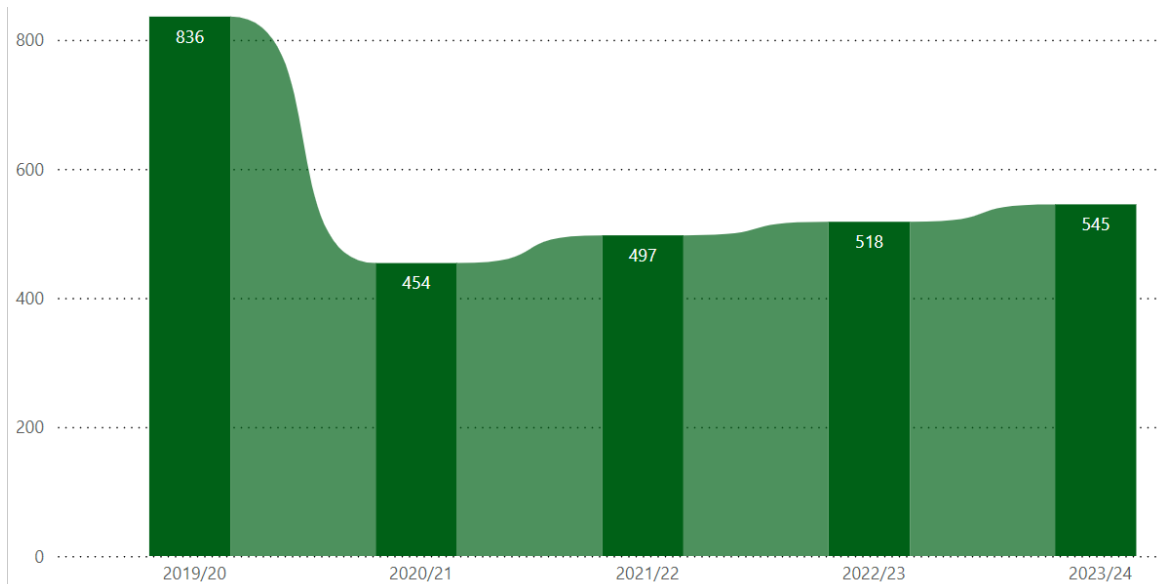


Fig. 11: Prevention Duties ended

The main outcome recorded for all ended duties for the review period is “Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months” with 1,182 (41.47%) of all closed cases falling into this category. This is followed by “Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months” which accounts for 528 (18.53%) applications.

Just over 16% however were closed due to “contact lost”.

Table. 4: Reasons for duty ending (prevention duty)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Total	
	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Num	%
<b>Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months</b>	337	11.8	224	7.9	232	8.1	215	7.5	174	6.1	<b>1,182</b>	<b>41.5</b>
<b>Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months</b>	93	3.3	95	3.3	112	3.9	87	3.1	141	5.0	<b>528</b>	<b>18.5</b>
<b>Contact lost</b>	226	7.9	24	0.8	47	1.7	69	2.4	91	3.2	<b>457</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Secured existing accommodation for 6 months</b>	28	0.9	32	1.1	27	1.0	52	1.8	31	1.1	<b>170</b>	<b>6.0</b>
<b>Homeless</b>	33	1.2	17	0.6	20	0.7	36	1.3	61	2.1	<b>167</b>	<b>5.9</b>

# Relief Outcomes

## Activity

The main activity carried out under the relief duty for duties ended for the review period was also accommodation secured by the local authority with 1,829 (54.02%).

This is followed by 1,050 (31.01%) cases closed with “no activity” being undertaken.

Provision of supported housing completes the top 3 activities undertaken for ended duties, and as with the prevention duties sits significantly lower than the top 2 proportionately at only 8.45% for 286 applicants.

## Outcomes

Overall, we have ended 3,386 relief duties between the review period of 2019/20 and 2023/24.

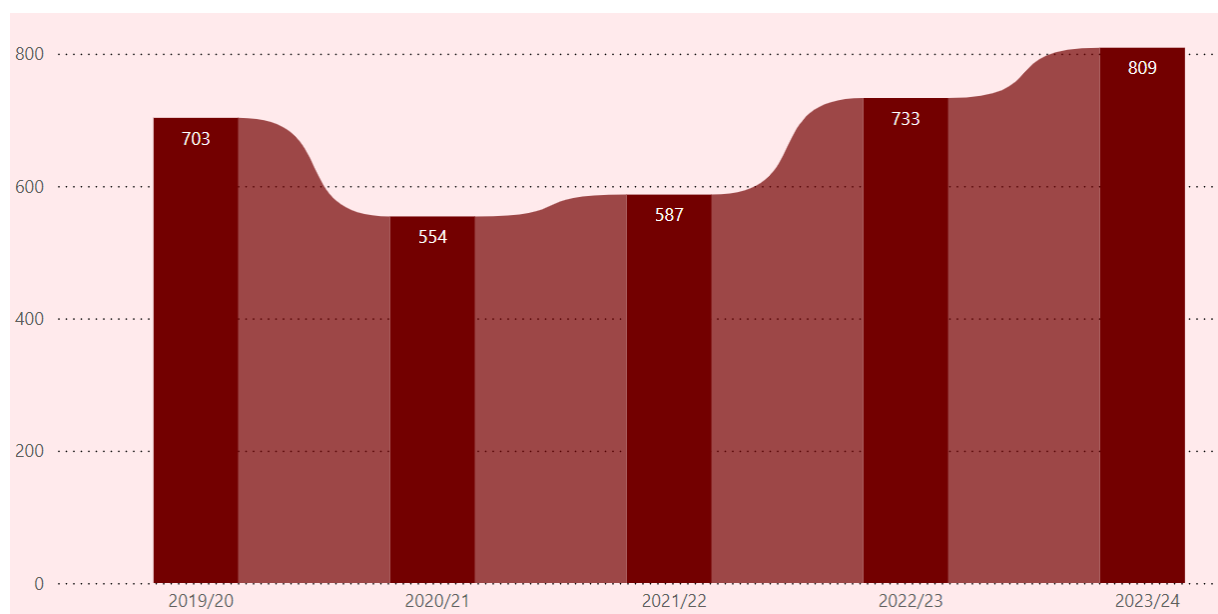


Fig. 12: Relief Duties ended

Unlike the prevention duty, there are only 2 recording outcomes that can be used to demonstrate “successful” outcomes as at this stage it is no longer possible to prevent the household from losing their accommodation or being homeless. We consider the duty outcome as successful if it is either of the following:

- Secured accommodation for 6 months
- Secured accommodation for 12 months

Our information shows that our successful relief rate for both categories over the 5-year review period stands at 62.81% (2,127 applicants). A further 147 applicants (4.34%) were offered but refused final or suitable accommodation and a small

proportion (0.18%, 6 applicants) were accommodated but became homeless intentionally from that accommodation before the duty was closed.

Cumulatively, 67.33% of relief duties ended were offered or provided accommodation as part of the council's duties.

Loss of contact with applicants remains high with 21.26% (720 applicants) disengaging from the homelessness service.

Table 5: Reasons for duty ending (relief duty)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Total	
	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Num	%
<b>Secured accommodation for 6 months</b>	207	6.1	338	9.9	262	7.7	217	6.4	299	8.8	<b>1,323</b>	<b>39.1</b>
<b>Secured accommodation for 12 months or more</b>	198	5.9	113	3.3	109	3.2	207	6.1	177	5.2	<b>804</b>	<b>23.7</b>
<b>Contact lost</b>	243	7.2	57	1.7	109	3.2	166	4.9	145	4.3	<b>720</b>	<b>21.3</b>
<b>56 days elapsed</b>	1				7	0.2	61	1.8	134	4.0	<b>203</b>	<b>6.00</b>

## Full Duty

The full or “main” homeless duty is the last step in a homeless application and comes into consideration once the relief duty has been concluded. Councils are required to support applicants for a minimum of 56 days, but can be longer if there is a realistic prospect of homelessness being relieved, regardless of whether they are priority need or intentionally homeless and can use their discretion to refer applicants to another Local Authority if no connection with the approached council is present.

Councils cannot however extend the relief duty of any applicant who would be Homeless, eligible for assistance, and in priority need. Decisions as to what duty is owed, if any, can be made before day 56 of the relief duty but do not come into effect until the relief duty has ended.

Data shows that 90.28% of all South Tyneside main duty decisions are that no priority need is present and is the most prevalent outcome for cases at this stage. Intentionally homeless decisions follows but at the much lower rate of 4.17% proportionally (9 applicants).

Acceptance of the main duty for priority household is low and accounts for only 3 (1.39%) main duty decisions in the last 5 years.

It is acknowledged that no main duty decisions were made during the pandemic and is attributed to the increased support and resources available under government measures at the time.

Table. 6: Main duty decisions

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Homeless + no priority need	2		5	57	131	195
Homeless + priority need + intentionally homeless	3		2	4		9
Homeless + priority need + unintentionally homeless – refused to cooperate (s193C(4) duty owed)					1	1
Homeless + priority need + unintentionally homeless – s193(2) duty	3					3
Homeless + priority need + unintentionally homeless + no local connection – referred to another Local Authority				1		1
Not eligible for assistance			2	1	3	6
Not homeless					1	1

# Services

## Homelessness Assessment and Prevention Team (Housing Options Team)

The council employ a team of 7 staff on a full-time basis as part of their statutory requirements under the Housing Act 1996 to assess and determine duties owed and to advise on prevention and relief opportunities. This was increased by 2 temporary full-time posts in April 2023 due to demands on the service. This team have supported 8,039 households over the last 5 years and prevented or relieved homelessness on 4,077 occasions. The team also consists of a dedicated TA Coordinator, Housing Options Coordinator, Armed Forces officer and Young Persons Support Officer (funded by Children Services).

## Statutory Temporary Accommodation

South Tyneside Council provide accommodation from their own stock for the provision of the Statutory interim accommodation duties under s.188. There are currently 33 units overall spread over 3 main project areas. 21 units are used for general households requiring interim accommodation, 3 units are reserved for those who are veterans and require housing with support and 9 units are transitional accommodation for young people as part of our Staying Close programme with Children Services.

Households in these units have regular contact and support from their Homelessness Case Officer as well as weekly welfare and support visits from a dedicated Temporary Accommodation Coordinator.

## Commissioned Homelessness Accommodation

South Tyneside Council has had housing-related support contracts in place with a number of third sector providers since 2005. Contracts are split across need/age and supported accommodation accessible for homeless applicants who require additional support with their needs and are aged 16+. Accommodation is provided by partner organisations across the borough and includes specialist Domestic Abuse and Mental Health provision. There are currently 182 units commissioned and a further 49 non-commissioned units are available to us from providers in the borough.

## Support for people sleeping rough

Through commissioned arrangements the council also utilise its allocation of Rough Sleeping Initiative funding to ensure that there is a 5 day a week outreach service provided by Oasis to support individuals who are sleeping rough or engaged in other street activity. It is acknowledged that people who sleep rough do so for a variety of reasons and in many cases require intensive and bespoke approaches to help them off the street and to enter or return to accommodation. Often the provision of accommodation is only part of a wider package of support the individual needs to prevent rough sleeping.

In addition to our commissioned outreach, we have used funding provided by Government to deliver the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) in South Tyneside. Funding was announced in 2020 for the first programmes and government committed £150m to deliver projects nationwide. South Tyneside Council (STC) were successful with a bid to the RSAP in 2021 and received funding to purchase an initial 6 properties with attached floating support designed to target individuals who are at risk of, have a history of or are currently sleeping rough in the borough. In 2023 an additional property was purchased increasing capacity to the current 7 properties.

All properties are located within the STC administrative area and are supported by x2 part-time Housing Support Officers (HSO) providing a total of 44hr per week of tenancy and move on support to some of the most vulnerable residents.

As of 31 March 2024, 89% of residents supported by the RSAP team moved into independent or supported accommodation and did not return to rough sleeping.

South Tyneside Council also chair a multi-agency Rough Sleeper Action Group (RSAG) to ensure that the services available to support those who are sleeping on the street can work together to find solutions for some of the most challenging people, many of whom have multiple or complex needs beyond housing. The RSAG meet every 2 weeks to discuss people who are or are at risk of sleeping rough.

## Tenancy Support

The council have a dedicated tenancy sustainment service to support tenants of council housing and is available to all 16,000+ council tenants. The team provide short-long term, intensive support to customers with multiple needs, who are at serious risk of losing their council tenancy if intervention is not provided. We work alongside existing services offered by South Tyneside Council and external agencies to ensure customers receive a holistic approach to their needs. Interventions are more preventative, supportive, and proactive in nature and very much based on the customers assessed vulnerability and identified need.

In addition to tenancy sustainment team for council tenants there are 2 dedicated officers to support tenants of other organisations or private sector landlords. As of 31 March 2024 this team have supported 41 people in the borough with housing issues.

## **Welfare Assistance**

South Tyneside Council provide a Welfare Support Team which consists of 25 full time staff. The team support residents to access a range of financial initiatives and advisory services to help maximise income and promote financial inclusion. They also administer the council's provision under the Community Care Grant process to provide support to set up home after an unsettled period or to enable them to remain in the community and prevent homelessness.

Between 2019/20 and 2023/24 this team has helped our residents to maximise their income through securing unclaimed benefits and writing off excess debt of more than £28.5m.

## **Asylum, Refugee and Migrant Community Integration Team**

The Asylum Refugee Community Integration Team receives notification of service users moving into area on various resettlement routes. The team provides early intervention and prevention along with relevant information to support service users with practical assistance, navigating systems and processes, we also support with integration and community links for all. They provide ongoing resettlement support for those asylums seeking, those placed here under the Afghan relocation scheme and those placed in South Tyneside under the homes for Ukraine scheme along with refugees new to the area.

The team of 5 support workers, will work with service users to ensure they have access to education, or ESOL opportunities for adults. We also ensure service users have access to health, have the correct benefits in place and have suitable accommodation.

We also support when service users receive a positive decision from the home office and require support with move on, out of home office accommodation into long term resettlement accommodation.

2023

Supported 27 Families supported into long term accommodation preventing homelessness

2023/24

Supported 5 large ARAP families to resettle – 2025/26 we are expecting 14 further ARAP families.



# Annex 1 - Glossary

**Homelessness:** Being homeless is often seen as those sleeping on the street but the law states that a household is considered homeless when they do not have a legal right to occupy or do not have any accommodation available to them. This means that the accommodation must be accessible, and it must also be reasonable for them to continue to live in it.

**Rough Sleeping:** Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness. Someone who has no accommodation, either with friends, relatives or a legal right to a tenancy or property and sleeps outside is considered a rough sleeper. Not all individuals sleeping rough are homeless and may do so for other reasons.

**Temporary Accommodation:** Temporary or interim accommodation within this review refers to the short-term accommodation offered to applicants as part of their homelessness application and is a duty of the council to provide under homelessness legislation.

**H-CLIC:** The Homelessness-Case Level Information Collection, referred to by its initials, was introduced in 2018 with the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This replaced the P1E data returns that Local Authorities provided and was aimed at giving government a much deeper understanding of the levels and causes of homelessness. This implemented a standardised collection of measures for all councils and data is published on a quarterly basis by central government<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>