

Southampton

Strategic Assessment

Homelessness Prevention Review

Last Updated September 2023



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1 Introduction

Local authorities have a responsibility to help households threatened by homelessness or experiencing homelessness. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, local authorities are required to develop a strategic review to better understand homelessness in the local area. With this information, the local authority can develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to address the needs and tackle homelessness in the area. This Strategic Assessment will inform Southampton’s statutory Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

The Assessment defines “homelessness” and “threatened with homelessness” as outlined in [Section 175 of the 1996 Housing Act](#). This is detailed in [Appendix 1](#).

1.1 Scope of Review

The purpose of this review is to better understand homelessness in Southampton and determine the extent to which the population is homeless or at risk of becoming homelessness.

The review will consider current and future levels of homelessness in Southampton based on analysis of:

- any legislation or local policy changes that are likely to impact on levels of homelessness for particular groups in the district;
- statutory homelessness applications and acceptance;
- demographic profile of those who are statutory homeless;
- reasons for statutory homelessness;
- accommodation outcomes;
- rough sleepers;
- wider determinants of homelessness - factors which make individuals more likely to experience or be at risk of homelessness.

1.2 Context

Since the previous [Homelessness review 2017/2018](#), external events to Southampton have impacted homelessness in the city. This includes the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, political events, the rising cost of living and new legislation. In general, there is a rising demand for homelessness and housing services, with increasingly limited options to provide support and relief.

1.2.1 Covid-19 pandemic

In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government implemented an ‘Everyone In’ policy. This policy equipped local authorities with the mandate and resources to provide temporary accommodation for all rough sleepers to keep them safe during the pandemic. Around 37,000 rough sleepers in England were housed in temporary accommodation. The data reflects that there were virtually no rough sleepers during this period. However, [Shelter’s](#) report estimated that of those 37,000 rough sleepers, more than 77% had not moved on into settled accommodation. This policy was a short-term solution, but it did not tackle the issue of limited affordable accommodation for people to move into.

1.2.2 Lack of affordable accommodation and the cost-of-living crisis

There is a UK-wide shortage of accommodation. There has been a [decline in national housebuilding](#), including social housing, halving in 50 years. In Southampton, there is a limited amount of space where new accommodation can be built. There is also a decline in the number of available social houses for rent due to many being purchased under the Right to Buy scheme. As a result, the demand for social housing in the city far exceeds the supply. The pool of private rented accommodation is also reducing as many landlords are selling up and exiting the sector due to various reasons, such as rising inflation.

The cost-of-living crisis with rising inflation and energy bills has made it much more challenging for residents to pay essential housing bills. Inflation has eroded the value of earnings. Unadjusted weekly earnings would need to increase by a further £56 for residents to negate the impact of inflation as of April 2023. The rise in interest rates has further impacted the affordability of mortgages for homeowners and prospective buyers. As well as this, welfare support, such as Universal Credit and the Local Housing Allowance, have not increased in line with rising costs.

As a result of tighter budgets, and limited affordable housing, many households in Southampton are increasingly at risk of becoming threatened with homelessness or experiencing homelessness.

1.2.3 New legislation

In April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced new homelessness duties (prevention duty and relief duty). This review has collected and analysed this new data.

The duties discussed in the strategic review are:

- **Prevention duty:** where a local authority must take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness within 56 days to secure accommodation.
- **Relief duty:** where a local authority must help an applicant who is already homeless secure accommodation for at least 6 months. The duty lasts 56 days and can only be extended if the household is not owed a main duty.
- **Main duty:** is provided where the relief duty has ended and the applicant has not been provided with accommodation for at least 6 months. A local authorities must provide an applicant with temporary or permanent accommodation. The applicant must be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need.

2 Assessment of Need

This section provides an overview of homelessness in Southampton, using nationally recorded data to benchmark against the national average and Office for National Statistics (ONS) Comparator Local Authorities. This section will also examine trends over time; however, these should be interpreted in light of legislation/policy changes and the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.1 Overview

Sections 2.1.1-2.1.4 outline data on statutory homelessness reported by local housing authorities to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) through quarterly Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) returns. H-CLIC returns were introduced in April 2018 and replaced previously collected P1E forms, to respond to changes caused by the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) of 2017¹. It records data on people who are threatened by homelessness in the next 56 days and (thus might be owed a duty of prevention), data on people who are actually homeless (including following the end of prevention duty) and might be owed a duty of relief, and data on people who following the end of relief duty are unintentionally homeless and in priority need (and thus might be owed a main duty). Demographic information, accommodation outcomes at the end of each type of duty, and temporary accommodation data are also included.

Section 2.1.5 analyses data collected by DLUHC from local authorities on rough sleeping, through the annual autumn counts and the monthly rough sleeping survey. Autumn counts offer a yearly snapshot of rough sleeping on a single night in autumn across England. The autumn counts are based on evidence-based estimations or actual count-based estimations of visible rough-sleeping carried out by each local authority on a date between the beginning of October and end of November.

DLUHC also collect and publish management information regarding the support offered to people who rough sleep or are at risk of rough sleeping, through the monthly rough sleeping survey. Using a similar methodology to the autumn count, the management information

¹ DLUHC 2023. Statutory Homelessness July to September (Q3) 2022: England Technical Notes , available at [Statutory homelessness: technical note \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) accessed March 29th 2023.

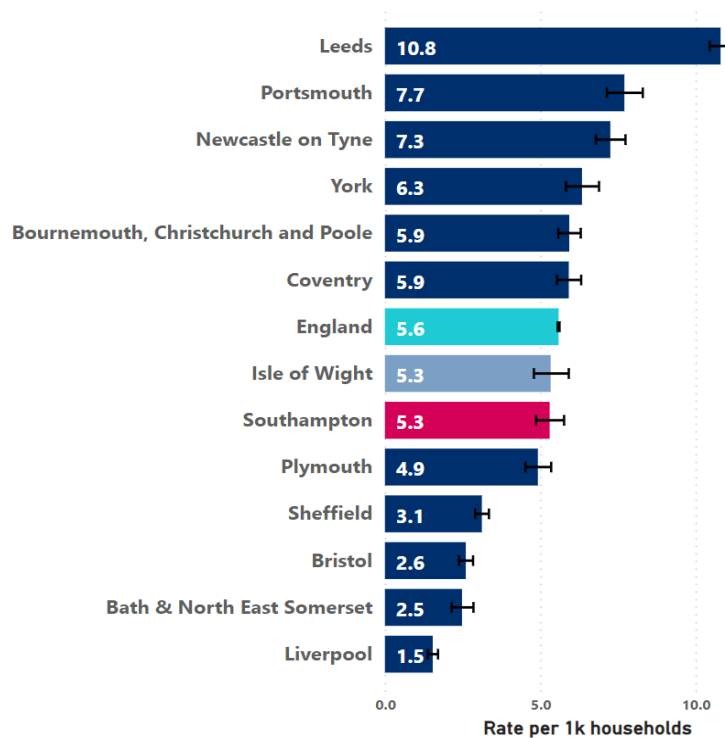
offers more timely data.² Data is published quarterly, with the most recent data available covering the period between June 2020 and December 2022.

2.1.1 Statutory Homeless Applications and Acceptance

Households threatened by homelessness

Southampton had an overall rate of 5.3 households threatened by homelessness per 1k households in 2021/22, which was similar to the national average (5.6 per 1k households) and 6th lowest among comparators. Notably, Southampton had a significantly lower rate of households threatened by homelessness compared to Portsmouth (7.7 per 1k households) (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Households assessed as threatened by homelessness (within the next 56 days) - Southampton and ONS Comparators (rate per 1k households): 2021/22



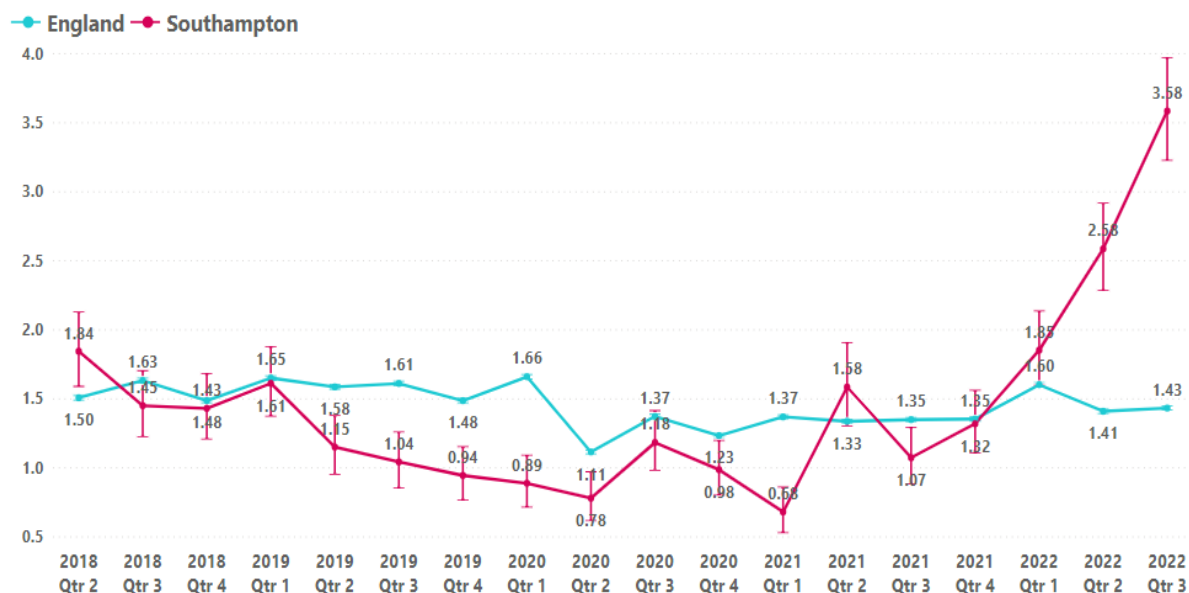
Source: DLUHC 2022 - Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

² DLUHC.2023. Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2022 -technical report, available at [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2022 - technical report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022-technical-report.pdf), accessed March 17th 2023.

Figure 2.2 shows the quarterly trend in households assessed as threatened by homelessness (rate per 1k households) between April-June 2018 and July-September 2022. It is important to note that numbers over a quarter are small, which explains the variability in the Southampton trend.

The Southampton rate experienced an overall decrease from April-June 2018 (1.84 per 1k households) to January-March 2021 (0.68 per 1k households). However, in the last four quarters (October-December 2021 to July-September 2022), Southampton has experienced a sustained increase in the rate of households threatened by homelessness, with the Southampton rate significantly higher than the national average for the most recent three quarters (Q1 to Q3 2022). During Covid-19, many people stayed with family and friends and tenants were protected from evictions due to the evictions ban. With an end to the pandemic and a lift of the evictions ban in 2021, family and friends have encouraged their guests to find other accommodation and more tenants have been issued with eviction notices by their landlords. This may be a reason for the increase in the rate of household threatened by homelessness since the end of 2021. Another reason may be due to the budget pressures of the cost-of-living crisis.

Figure 2.2: Households assessed as threatened by homelessness (within the next 56 days) - Southampton and England quarterly trend (rate per 1k households): 2018-2022



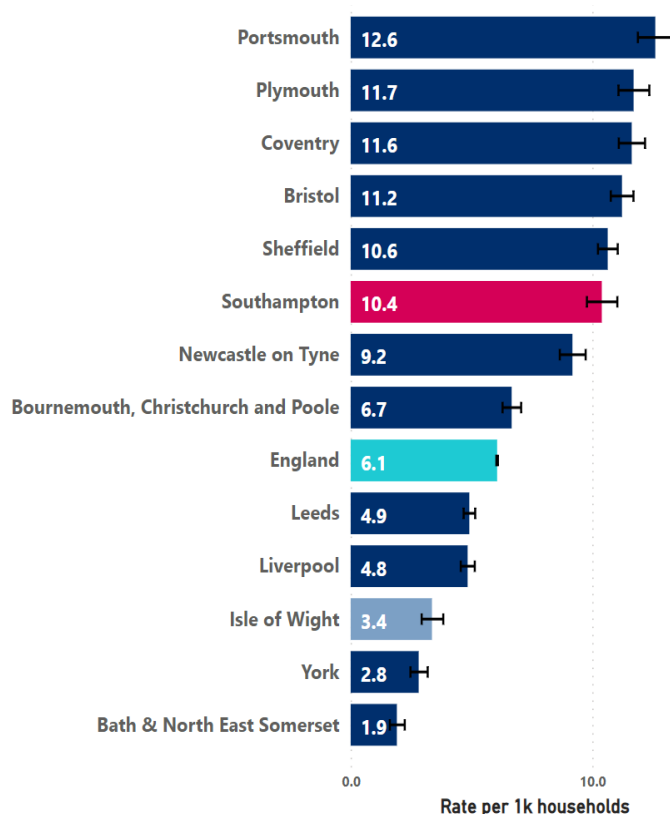
Source: DLUHC 2022 - Statutory homelessness in England: Quarterly data 2018-2022

*Quarterly trend since 2018 was examined to allow for more data points. Therefore, rates will appear smaller as annual data (above figure) is an aggregate of households assessed as threatened by homelessness over the financial year.

Households assessed as homeless

The rate of households in Southampton assessed as homeless (10.4 per 1k households) is significantly higher than the national average (6.1 per 1k households, 2021/22) and several comparators (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Households assessed as homeless (rate per 1k households) - Southampton and ONS Comparators: 2021/22

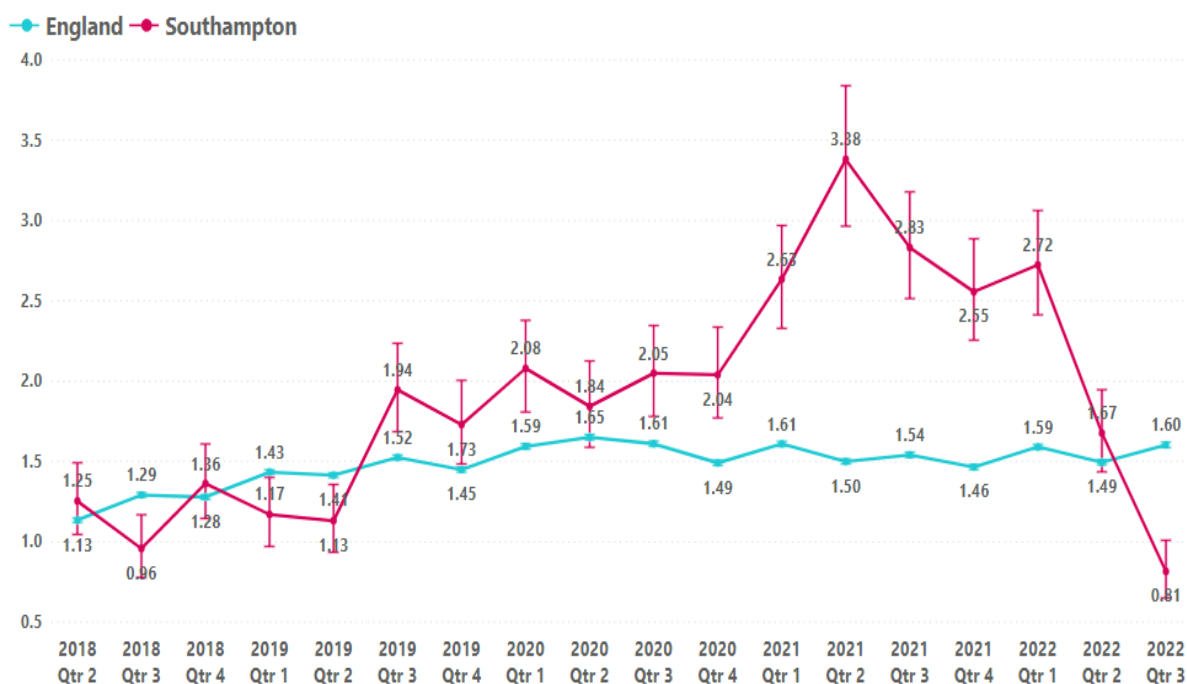


Source: DLUHC 2022 - Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

The rate of households assessed as homeless in Southampton experienced an overall increase between April-June 2018 (rate of 1.25 per 1k households) and April-June 2021 (3.38 per 1k households) (Figure 2.4). However, since April-June 2021, the Southampton trend has experienced an overall decline, falling to a low of 0.81 households assessed as homeless per 1k households in July-September 2022, which is significantly lower than the national average (1.6 per 1k households).

Whilst Southampton has seen an increase in the rate of households being threatened by homelessness in 2022, it has also seen a corresponding decrease in actual homelessness rates.

Figure 2.4: Households assessed as being homeless in Southampton and England (rate per 1k households): Quarterly data 2018-2022



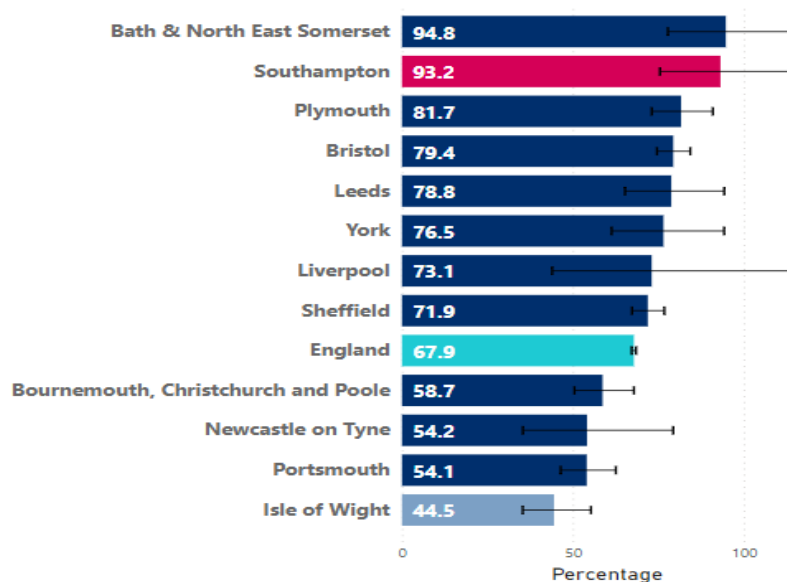
Source: DLUHC 2022 - Statutory homelessness in England: Quarterly data 2018-2022

*Quarterly trend since 2018 was examined to allow for more data points. Therefore, rates will appear smaller as annual data (above figure) is an aggregate of households assessed as homeless over the financial year.

Households assessed as homeless, in priority need for which a main duty was accepted

Following the relief duty period, if households are still unintentionally homeless and in priority need, they might be owed a main duty. Most of the households (96, 93.2%) in 2021/22 (**Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.**) assessed for a main duty after relief duty ended were accepted. The rate of acceptance of main duty following the relief stage in Southampton is one of the highest among ONS comparators, being significantly higher than England (67.9%). This may be due to vulnerability, a lack of other accommodation, and a decrease in private rental market. The Southampton acceptance rate of main duties owed after relief duty has remained relatively stable over time and has remained consistently higher than the national average since 2018.

Figure 2.5: Percentage of households at the end of relief stage, assessed as unintentionally homeless and in priority need for which a main duty was accepted – Southampton and ONS comparators: 2021/22

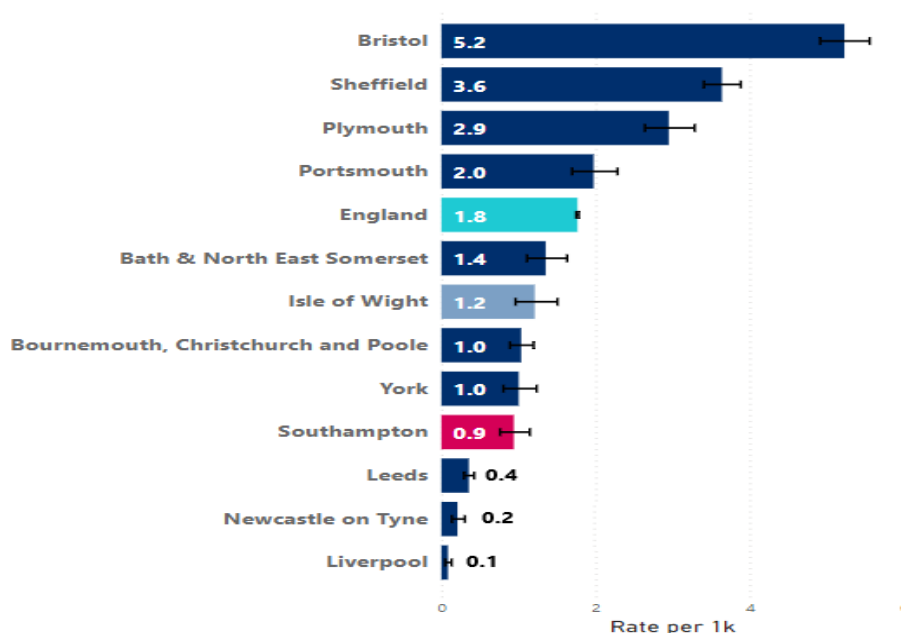


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

* Expressed as a percentage of total number of eligible households for which a main duty decision has been made at the end of relief duty.

The overall rate of households within Southampton owed a main duty was relatively low (0.9 per 1k households) in comparison to a number of ONS comparators in 2021/2022 (Figure 2.6). Rates were notably lower in Southampton compared to Bristol (5.2 per 1k households), Sheffield (3.6), Plymouth (2.9) and Portsmouth (2.0), with the national rate (1.8) double the Southampton rate (0.9). Smaller main duty rates in comparison to Southampton could be found only in Leeds (0.4 per 1k households), Newcastle on Tyne (0.2) and Liverpool (0.1).

Figure 2.6: Households assessed as homeless, in priority need and unintentionally homeless for which a main duty had been accepted per 1k households in Southampton and ONS comparators: 2021/22

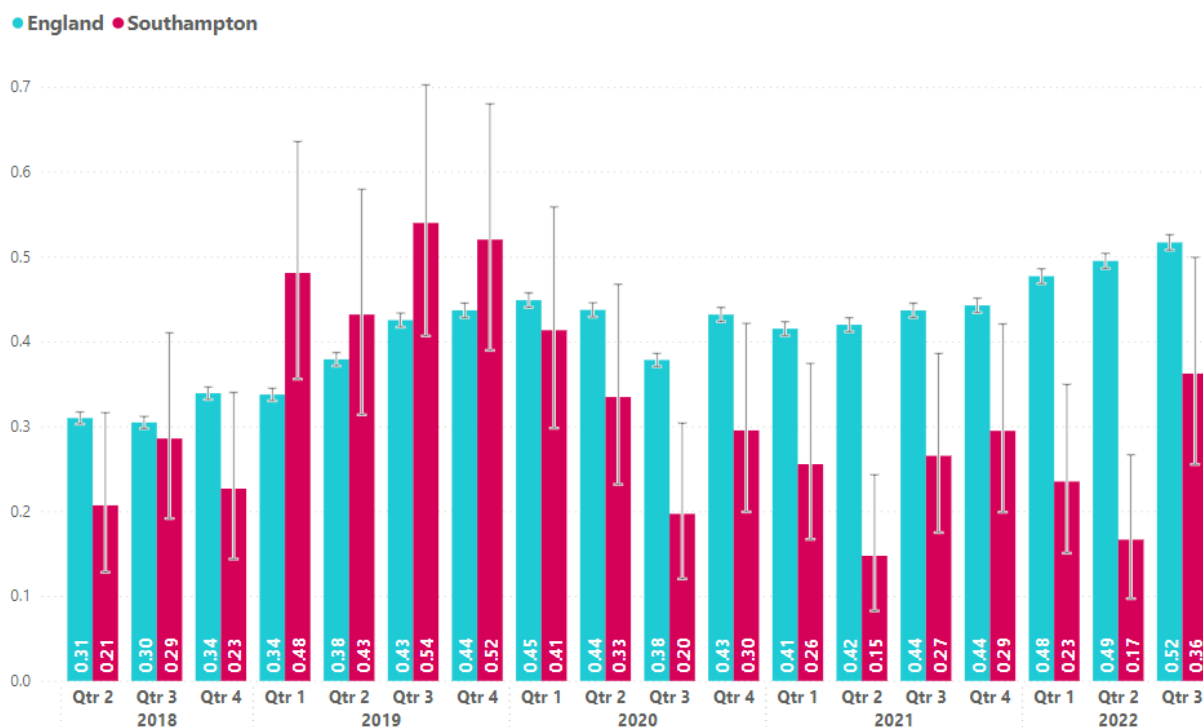


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Overall, the rate of households assessed as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and as such accepted as being owed a main duty, has remained relatively low both in Southampton and nationally (

Figure 2.7) between 2018 and 2022. Despite some variation, Southampton's rate has remained consistently lower than the national level since mid-2020.

Figure 2.7: Households assessed as homeless, in priority need and unintentionally homeless for which a main duty had been accepted per 1k households in Southampton and England: Quarterly data 2018-2022



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Quarterly data 2018-2022

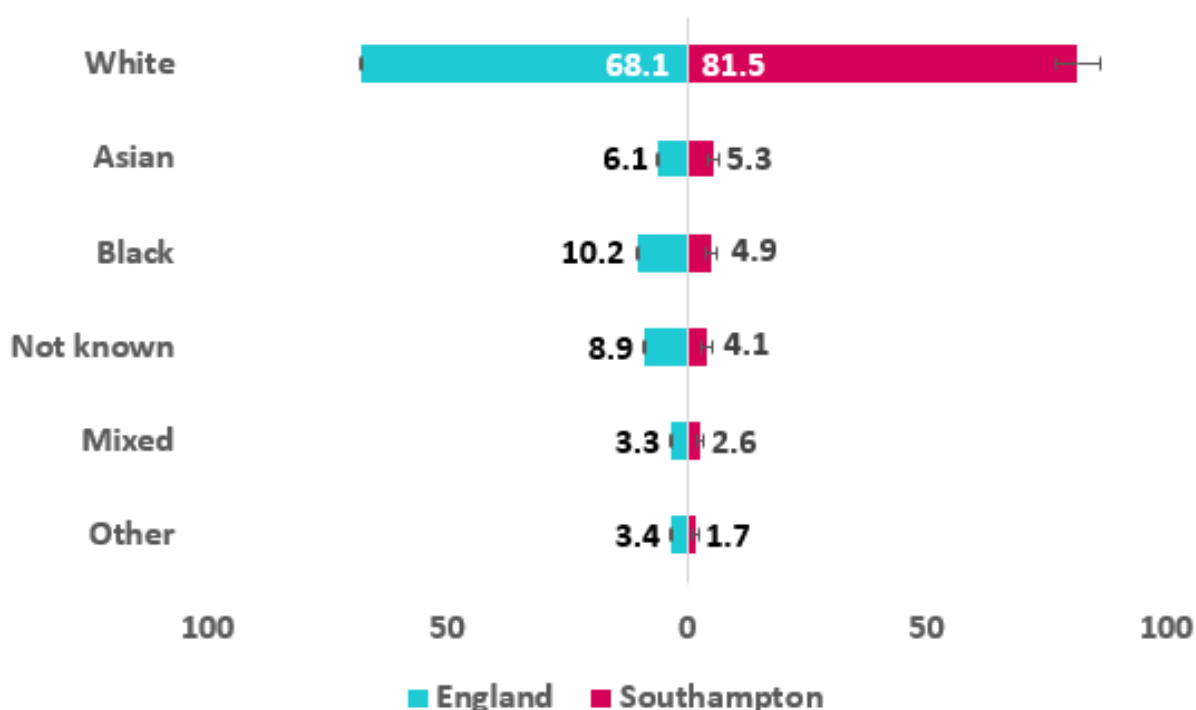
*Quarterly trend since 2018 was examined to allow for more data points. Therefore, rates will appear smaller as annual data (above figure) is an aggregate of households for which a main duty had been accepted over the financial year.

The main duty is only owed if the household is not provided with accommodation during the relief stage, remains unintentionally homeless and has a priority need. Therefore, the fact that the overall rate of households owed a main duty is relatively low shows that Southampton has been relatively successful in providing accommodation for people within 56 days during the relief stage.

2.1.2 Demographic Profile for those who are Statutory Homeless

Most of the people who have either been assessed as being threatened by homelessness in the next 56 days or as homeless in Southampton during the financial year 2021/22 (Figure 2.8) were white (1,307, 81.5%). The profile of Southampton applicants is in line with the local demographic profile, with 80.7% of the Southampton population classed as white in the 2021 Census.

Figure 2.8: Ethnicity profile of the main applicant of households assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22

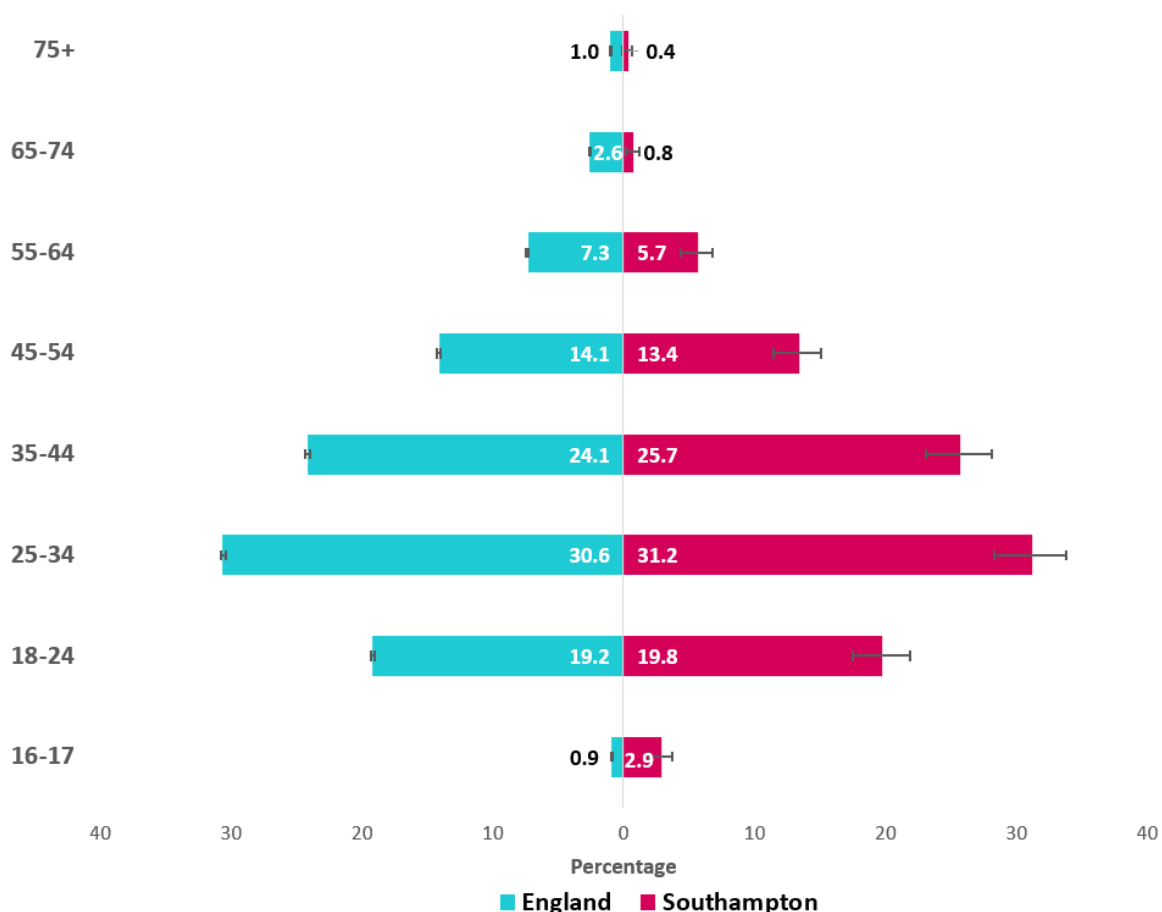


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Most people threatened by homelessness or homeless in Southampton during 2021/22 were relatively young, belonging to the 18-24 (318, 19.8%) 25-34 (501, 31.2%), 35-44 (412, 25.7%) and 45-54 (215, 13.4%) age groups (

Figure 2.9). The age profile of people threatened by homelessness or who were homeless in Southampton during 2021/22 was similar to the national profile, except for those aged 16-17 years and above 55 years where there are slight differences. 16-17 years olds made up a higher percentage of the homeless and threatened by homeless population in Southampton (46, 2.9%) compared to England (0.9%). However, it is important to highlight that numbers are small and therefore differences should be interpreted with caution. Southampton had a smaller proportion of those aged 55-64, 65-74 and 75 and over (92, 5.7% | 13, 0.8% and 7, 0.4% respectively), in comparison to England (7.3%, 2.6%, and 1% respectively).

Figure 2.9: Age profile of main applicant of households assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22

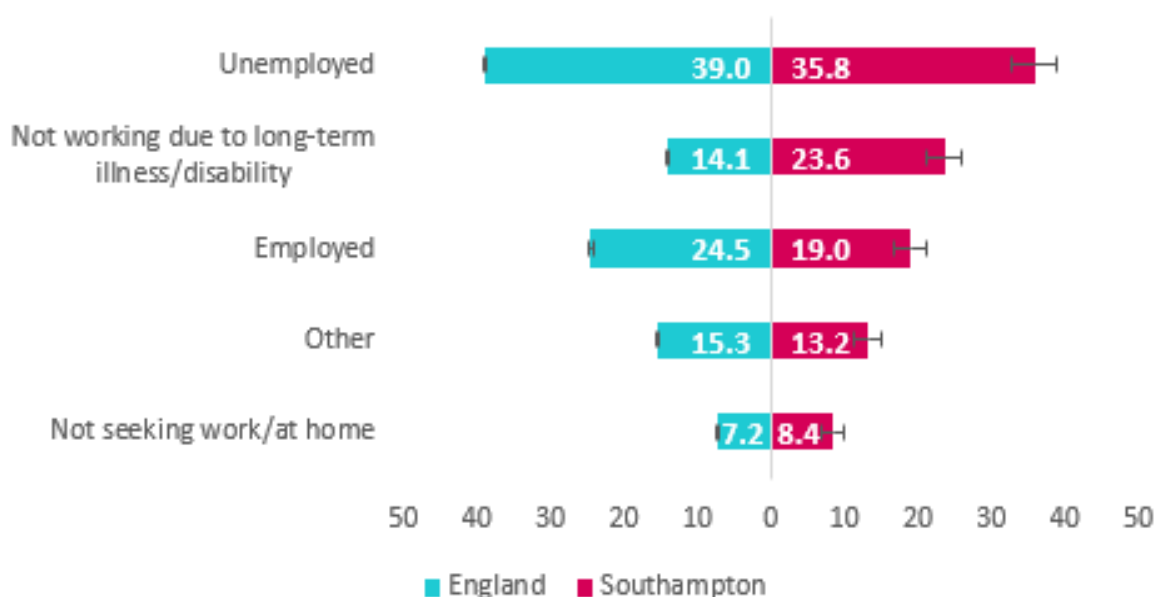


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

35.8% (575) of the people assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness in Southampton for the 2021/22 financial year were unemployed, 23.6% (378) were not working due to long-term illness or disability, 19% (304) were employed, 13.2% (212) fell in the “Other” category and 8.4% (135) were not seeking work or at home (Figure 2.10). Southampton’s profile is similar to national, except for the “not working due to long-term illness or disability” category where the percentage in Southampton (23.6%) is significantly higher than the national average (14.1%) and for the “Employed” category, where the percentage for Southampton is 19%, significantly lower than the national level of 24.5%.

In Southampton, 56.6% (172) of the “Employed” category were full-time workers, while 43.4% (132) were part-time workers. Most of the people in the “Unemployed” category were registered unemployed (550, 95.7%), while a small number were unregistered unemployed that were looking for work (25, 4.3%). The “Other” category includes “Student/training” (28, 13.2%), “Retired” (17, 8%), “Other” (145, 68.4%) and “Unknown” (22, 10.4%).

Figure 2.10: Employment status of main applicant of households assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

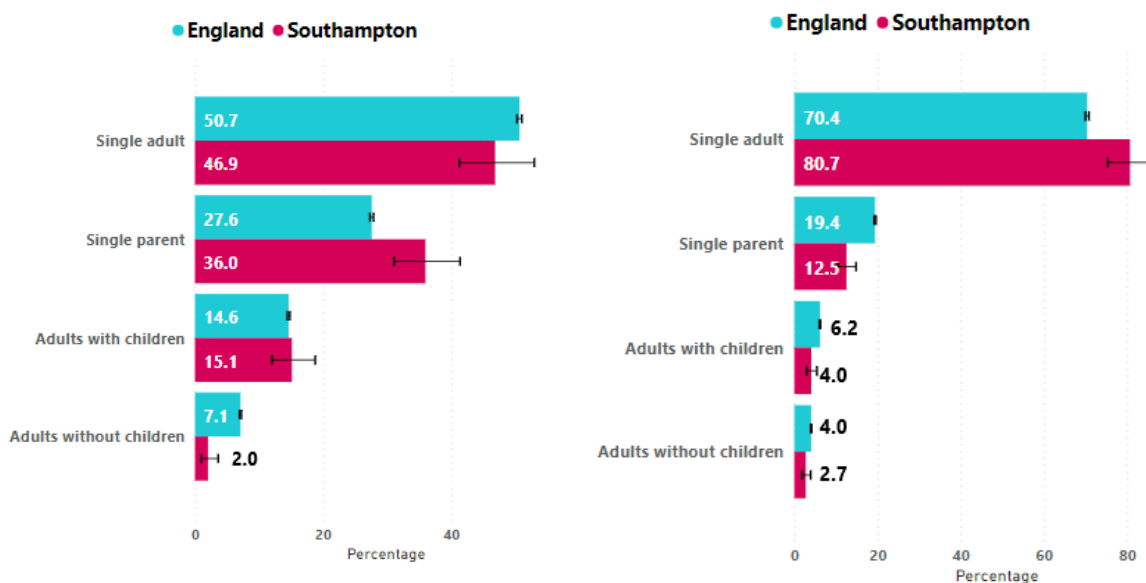
Most people who were assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness in 2021/22, were single people (Figure 2.11), with single applicants accounting for 46.9% (254) of people threatened by homelessness and 80.7% (857) of those assessed as homeless in Southampton. While men made up 54.7% (139) of single people threatened by homelessness, they made up 75.1% (644) of those assessed as homeless. Single parents were the second most frequent category among both homeless (12.5%, 133) and threatened by homelessness (36%, 195). In both cases, women made up most single parents (88% (117) of homeless single parents and 92.3% (180) of those threatened by homelessness). The third most frequent category were couples or two or more adults with dependent children; representing 15.1% (82) of those threatened by homelessness and 4% (43) of those assessed as homeless. In both cases, the rest was made up of adults without dependent children (2% (11) of those threatened by homelessness and 2.7% (29) of those assessed as homeless).

Compared to the national average, the percentage of single parents threatened by homelessness in Southampton (36%) was higher (27.6% in England) and so was the percentage of single homeless adults in Southampton (80.7% compared to only 70.4% in England). However, there was a slightly lower percentage of homeless single parents in Southampton (12.5%) in comparison to England (19.4%).

Figure 2.11: Composition of households assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22

a. Threatened by homelessness

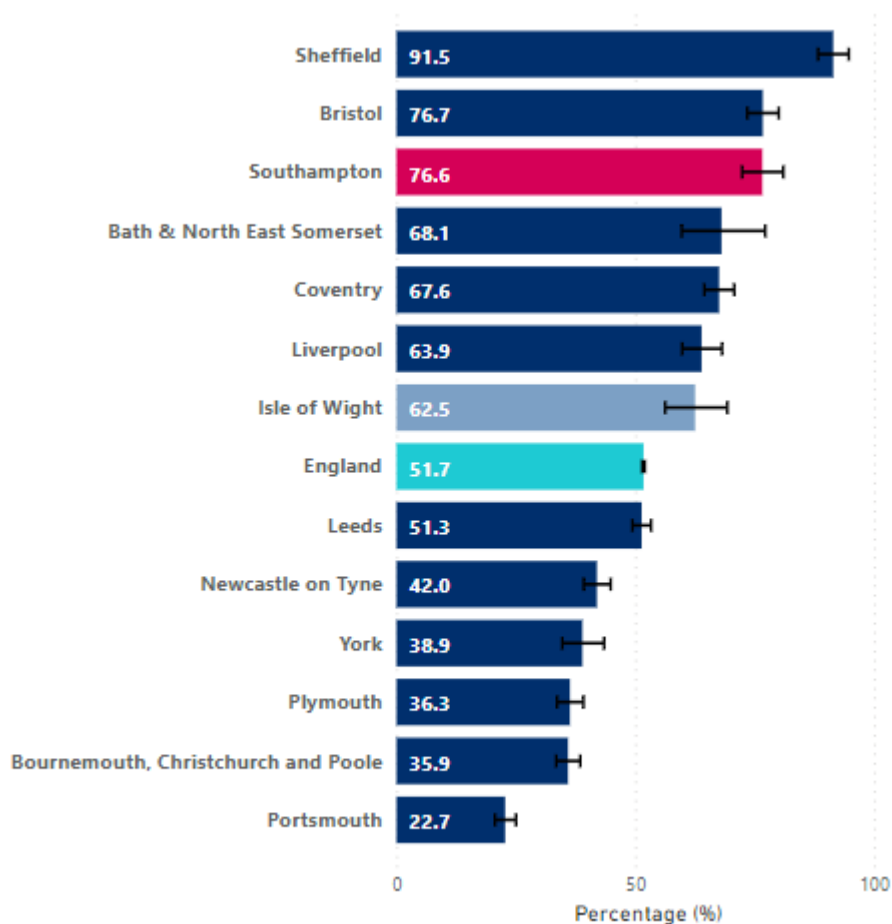
b. Homeless



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Southampton had one of the highest percentages of households with additional support needs (1,229, 76.6%) (out of those households for which a duty of prevention or relief of homelessness was accepted) in 2021/22 (Figure 2.12), highlighting the complexity of Southampton’s homeless cohort. The rate of households with additional support needs in Southampton was similar to Bristol (76.7%) and to Bath & Northeast Somerset (68.1%), but significantly higher than in England (51.7%).

Figure 2.12: Percentage of households with support needs out of the total households for which a duty of prevention or relief has been accepted (%) in Southampton and ONS comparators: 2021/22

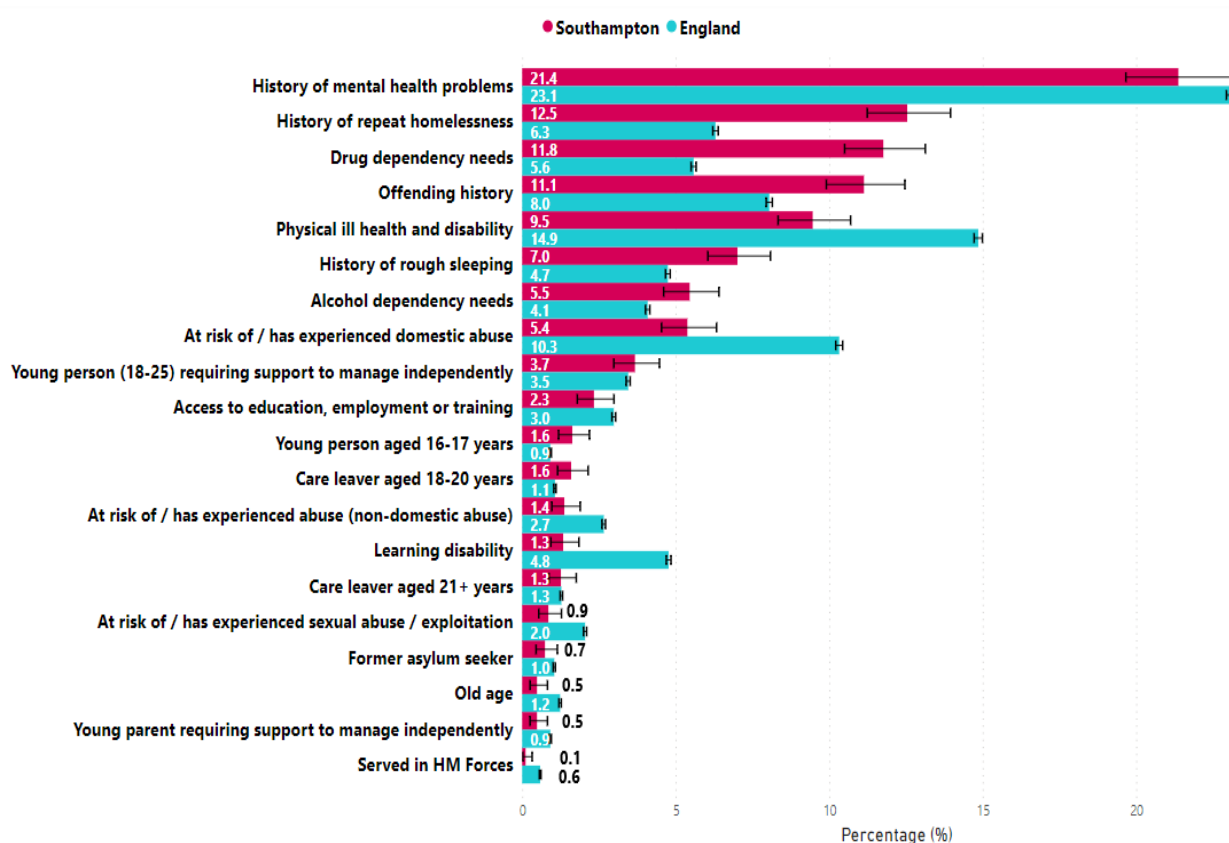


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Figure 2.13 shows the frequency (%) of each support need in Southampton and England. It is important to note that each household can have more than one support need and the percentage below is expressed as the number of support needs by category divided by the total number of support needs, rather than the number of households with support needs. The top five support needs of households owed a prevention or relief duty in Southampton, making up 66.3% of all needs, were a history of mental health problems (21.4% of needs), a history of repeat homelessness (12.5% of needs), drug dependency needs (11.8%), having a history of offending (11.1%) and having physically ill health or a disability (9.5%). Among these, Southampton had significantly higher levels of needs in comparison to the national level when it came to a history of repeat homelessness (12.5% compared to 6.3% in England), drug dependency needs (11.8% compared to 5.6%) and a history of offending (11.1%

compared to 8%), and a significantly lower rate when it came to physically ill health or disability (9.5% compared to 14.9%).

Figure 2.13: Breakdown by type of support need (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22

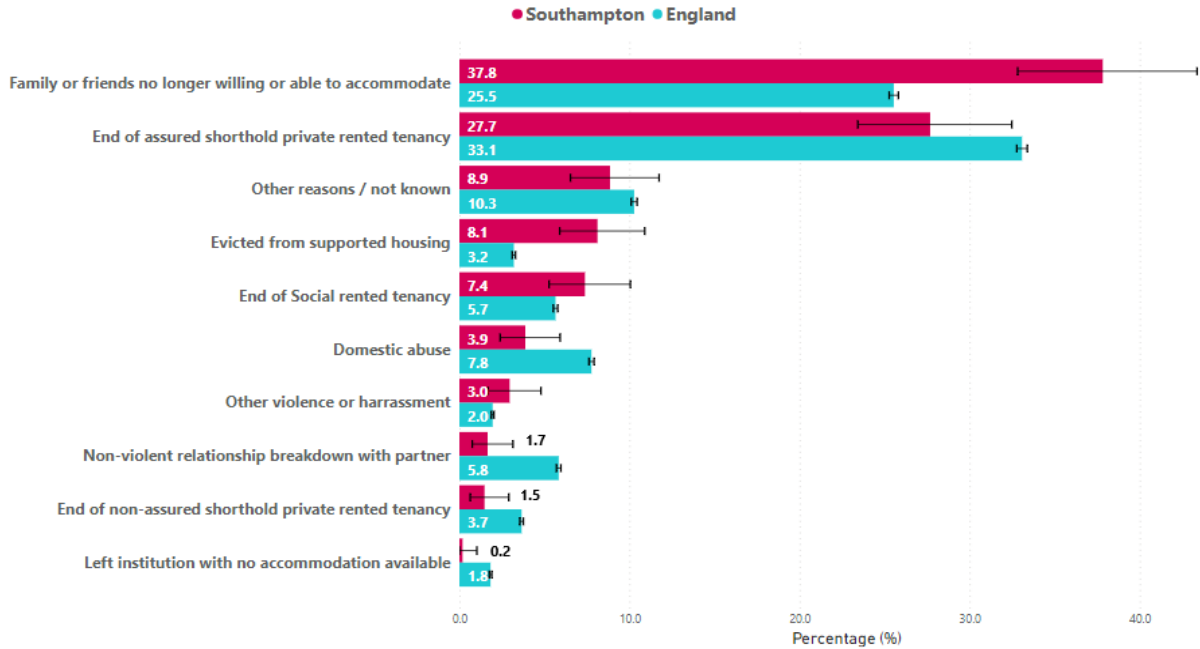


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

2.1.3 Reasons for Statutory Homelessness

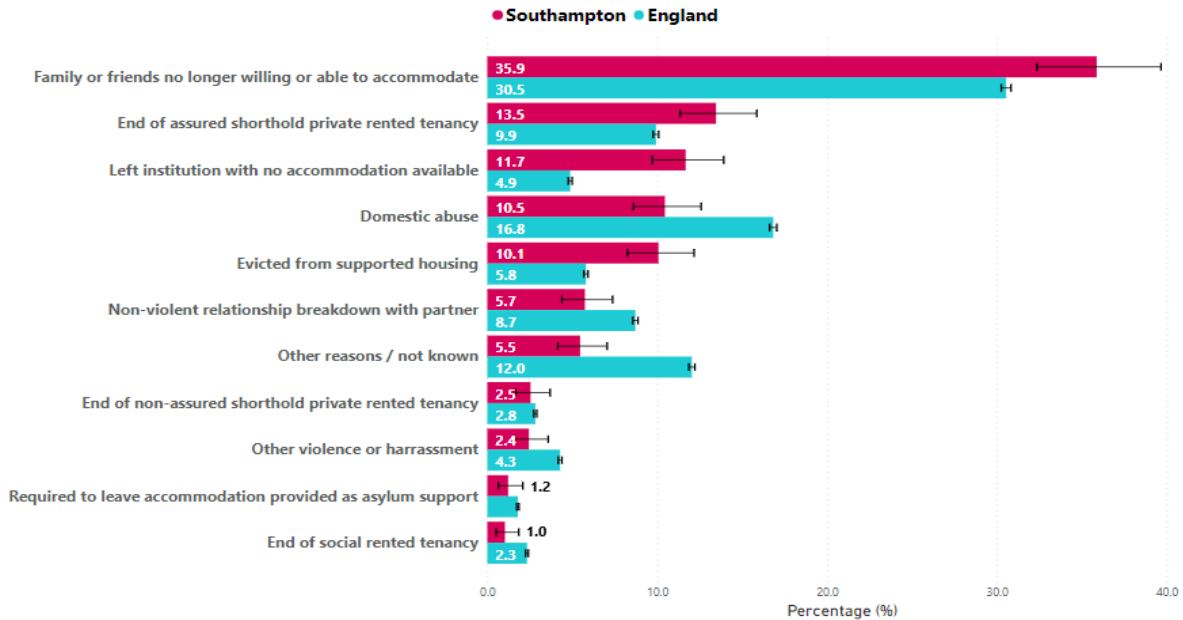
The most frequent reason for households being threatened by homelessness in Southampton during 2021/22 (Figure 2.14) was family and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (205, 37.8%), which is significantly higher compared to England (25.5%). The second most frequent reason was the end of assured shorthold privately rented tenancy (150, 27.7%). Similar patterns are also observed for households assessed as homeless (Figure 2.15), with family and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (381, 35.9%) and the end of assured shorthold privately rented tenancy (143, 13.5%) top for Southampton in 2021/22. It is important to note that counts are small at a Southampton level and only present the cohort over one year.

Figure 2.14: Reasons for homelessness of households assessed as threatened by homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Figure 2.15: Reasons for homelessness among households assessed as homeless (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22



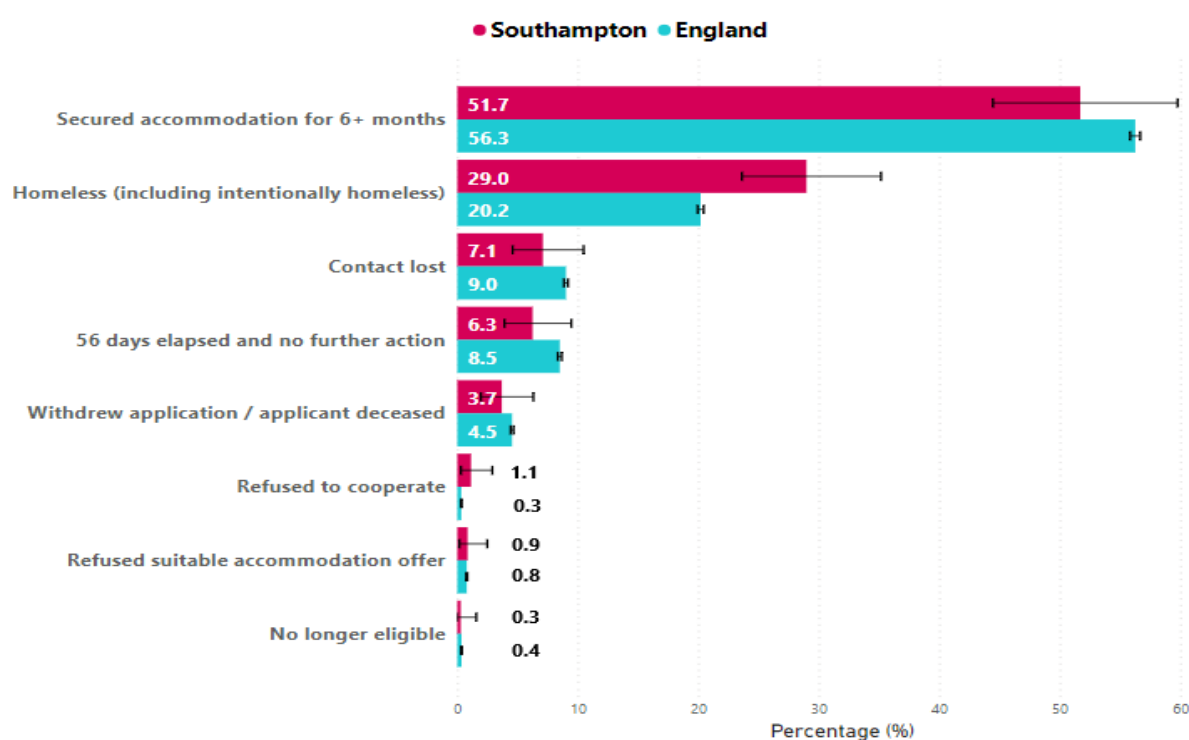
Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

2.1.4 Accommodation Outcomes

This subsection looks at outcomes at each stage of the process of preventing and/or relieving homelessness, highlighting the percentage of people that have been supported in securing temporary and long-term accommodation.

Figure 2.16 shows the outcomes at the end of the prevention duty for people threatened by homelessness within 56 days. For the financial year 2021/22, just over half of the households threatened by homelessness in Southampton (182, 51.7%) secured accommodation for six months or more. This is lower, but not significantly, than the national average (56.3%). The second most common outcome at the end of prevention duty was households became homeless (102, 29%). This was a significantly higher proportion of households compared to the national average (20.2%). The third and fourth most frequent outcomes in Southampton were either to have lost contact with the household (25, 7.1%) or that 56 days elapsed, and no further action was taken (22, 6.3%), with these proportions lower, but not significantly compared to the national average (9% and 8.5% respectively).

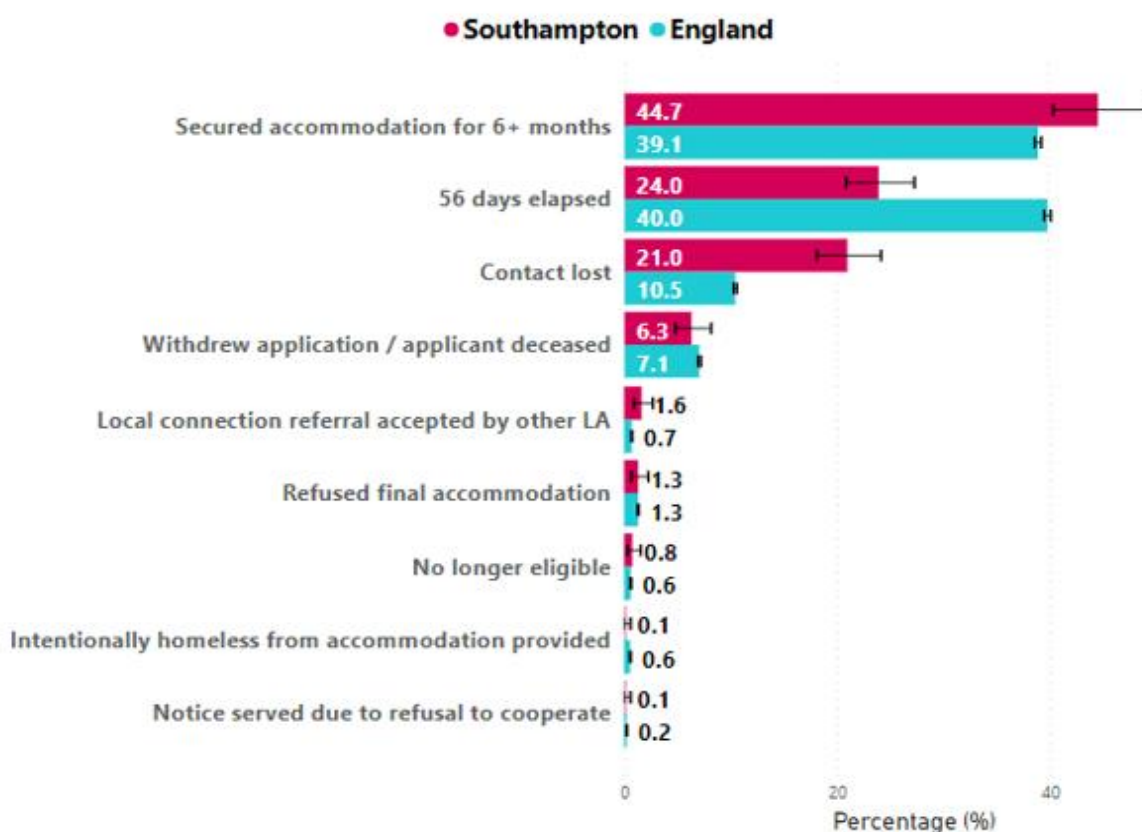
Figure 2.16: Outcomes at the end of duty to prevent homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Figure 2.17 shows the outcomes for households at the end of the duty to relieve homelessness. The most frequent outcome in Southampton during 2021/22 was having secured accommodation for six months or more; occurring in 44.7% (410) of the cases, which is significantly higher than at the national average (39.1%). The second most frequent outcome in Southampton was that duty ended due to 56 days having elapsed (220, 24%), which is significantly lower compared to the national average (40%). The third most frequent outcome was having lost contact, occurring in 21% (193) of the cases in Southampton, significantly higher and more than double the national rate (10.5%).

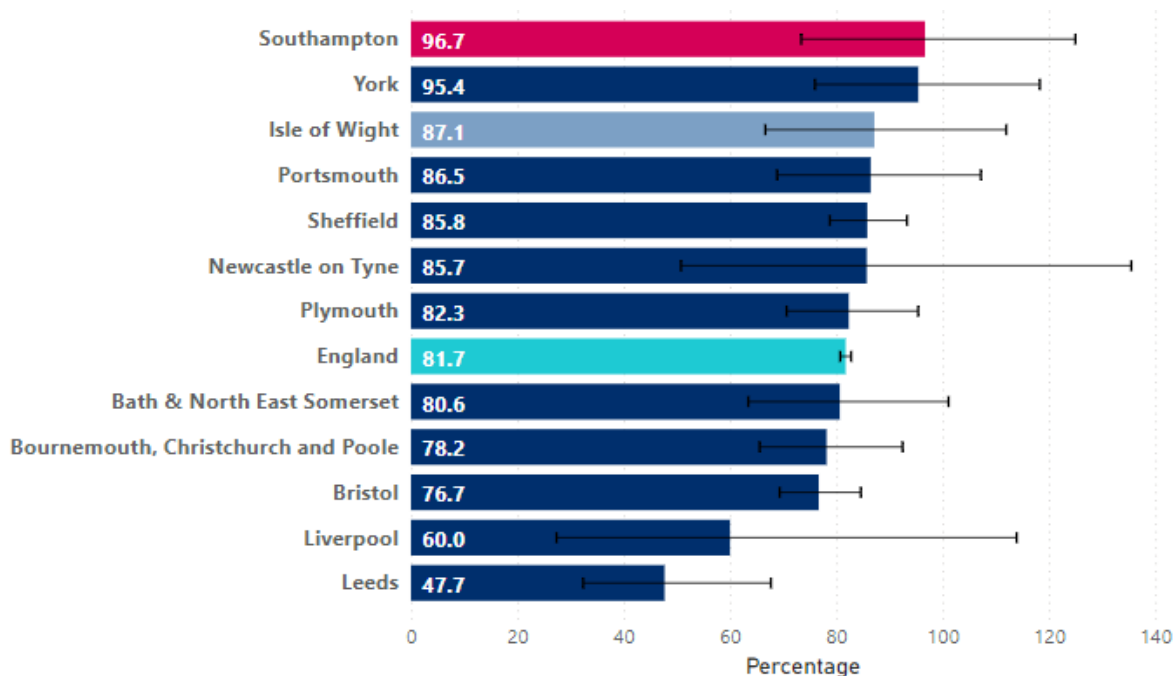
Figure 2.17: Outcomes at the end of duty to relieve homelessness (%) in Southampton and England: 2021/22



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

Most households finding themselves at the end of main duty were offered socially or privately rented accommodation in Southampton during 2021/22 (Figure 2.18). The percentage of households offered accommodation in Southampton (58, 96.7%) and therefore, ending the main duty, was the highest among its ONS comparators. Although, the difference is not statistically significant, except from Leeds (31, 47.7%).

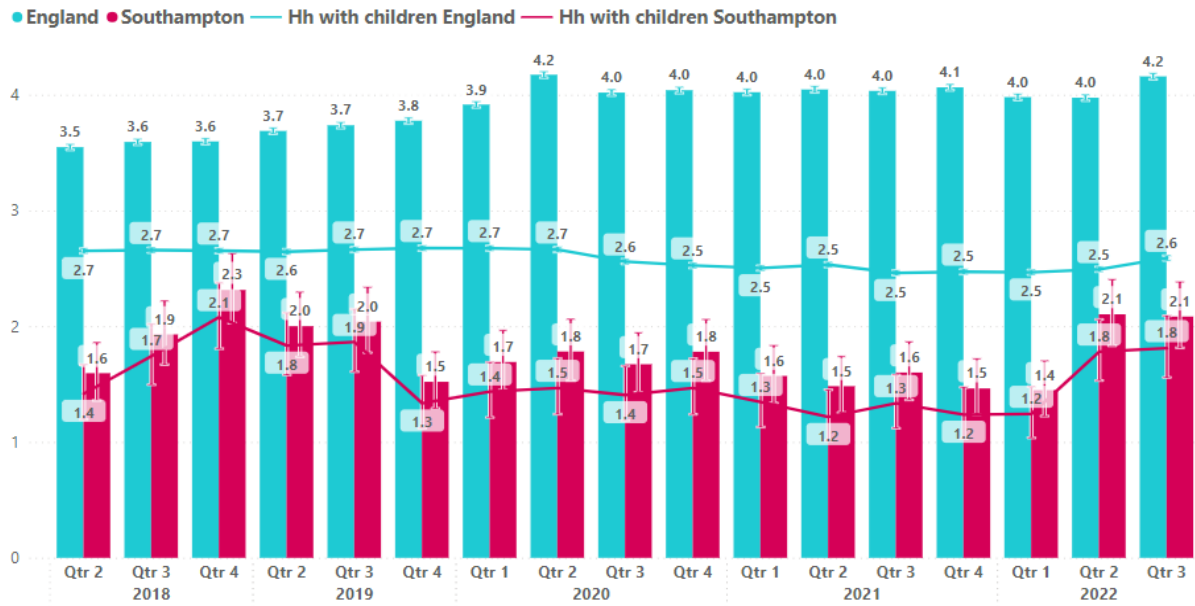
Figure 2.18: Percentage of household offered social or privately rented accommodation out of the total number of households whose main duty ended in Southampton and ONS comparators: 2021/22



Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2021/22

To prevent or relieve homelessness, local authorities can also offer households temporary accommodation. Snapshot figures from the end of each quarter between 2018 and 2022 (Figure 2.19) shows that the rate of all households in temporary accommodation per 1k households in Southampton varied from 1.6 (162 households) in the second quarter in 2018 to 2.1 (213 households) in the third quarter of 2022. Compared to Southampton, England had significantly higher rates both for all households and households with children and rates have been relatively stable over time.

Figure 2.19: All households and households with children in temporary accommodation (rate per 1k households) in Southampton and England: Quarterly data 2018-2022

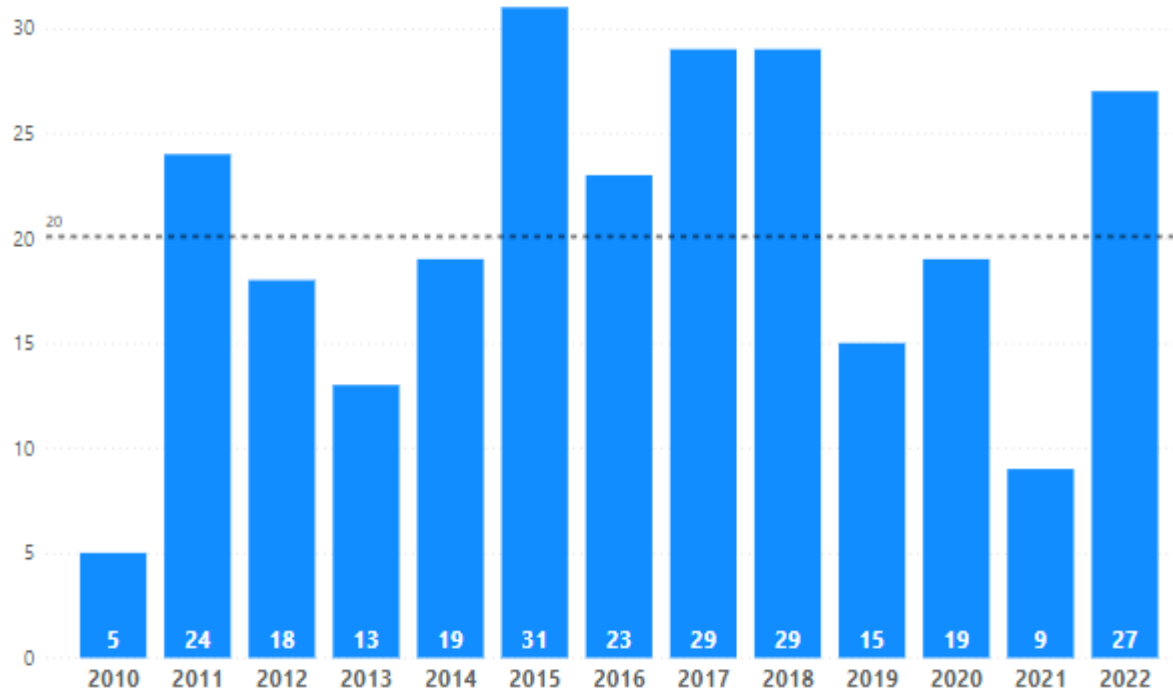


Source: DLUHC 2022 – Statutory homelessness in England: Quarterly data 2018-2022

2.1.5 People who are Rough Sleeping

Based on Autumn count data the number of people rough sleeping on a single night in Southampton was three times higher in 2022 (27 people) compared to 2021 (9 people). Looking at trends over time, the average count between 2010 and 2022 was 20 people a year, with the 2022 count (27 people) above this average (Figure 2.20).

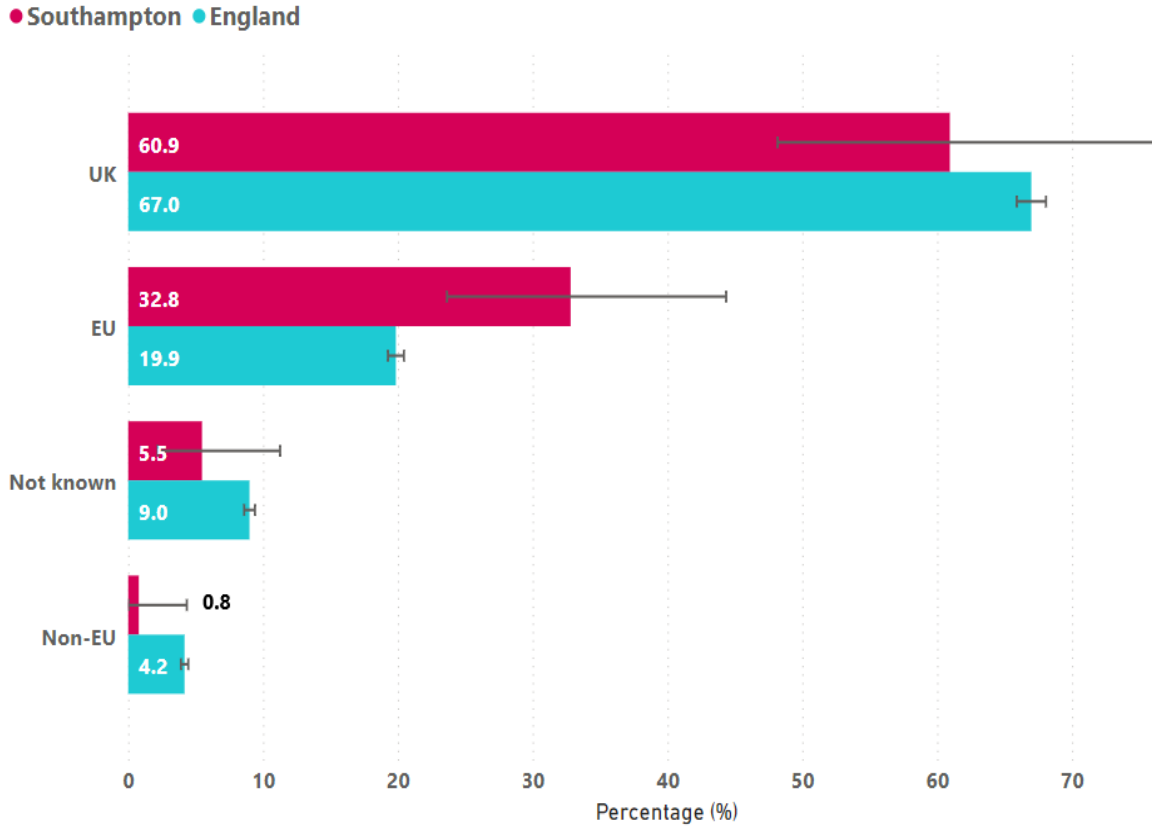
Figure 2.20: Number of people rough sleeping (autumn count) in Southampton: 2010 – 2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Rough sleeping in England: Autumn count 2010-2022

The demographic profile of rough sleepers in Southampton is similar to that of rough sleepers at the national level. 107 (83.6%) of the 128 people rough sleeping between 2017 and 2022 on a single night in autumn in Southampton have been men, compared to 83.7% at the national level. 78 (60.9%) of the 128 rough sleepers in Southampton were UK nationals in Southampton (Figure 2.21); similar to national (67%). However, EU nationals represent a significantly higher percentage in Southampton (42, 32.8%) than in England (19.9%), but it is important to note that overall counts are small.

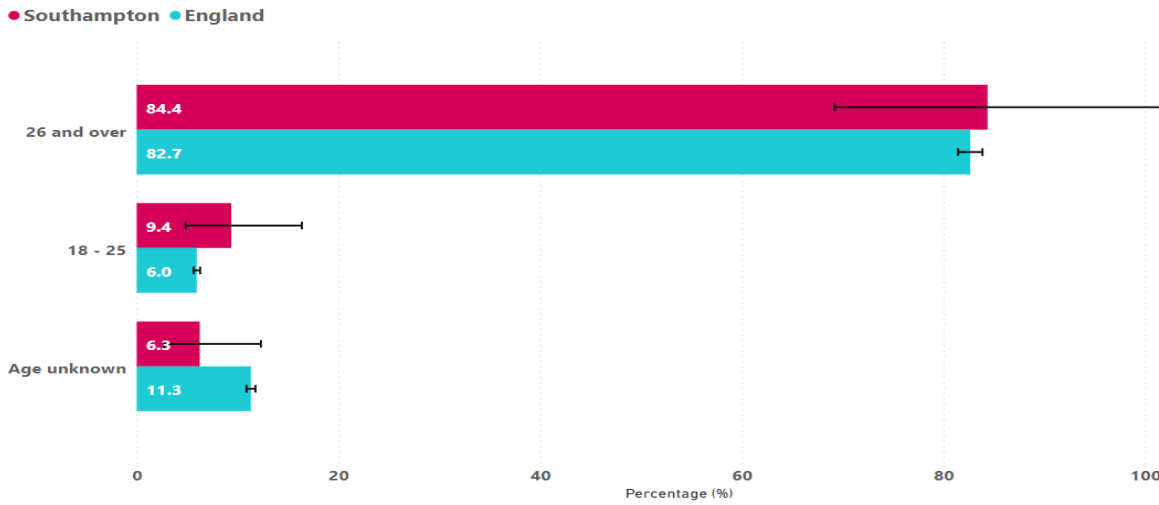
Figure 2.21: Aggregate ethnic composition of people sleeping rough (autumn count) in Southampton and England: 2017-2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Rough sleeping in England: Autumn count 2017-2022

The age distribution of rough sleepers in Southampton is similar to the national profile, with most rough sleepers included in autumn counts between 2017 and 2022 in Southampton (108, 84.4%) and in England (82.7%) being adults aged 26 and over (Figure 2.22).

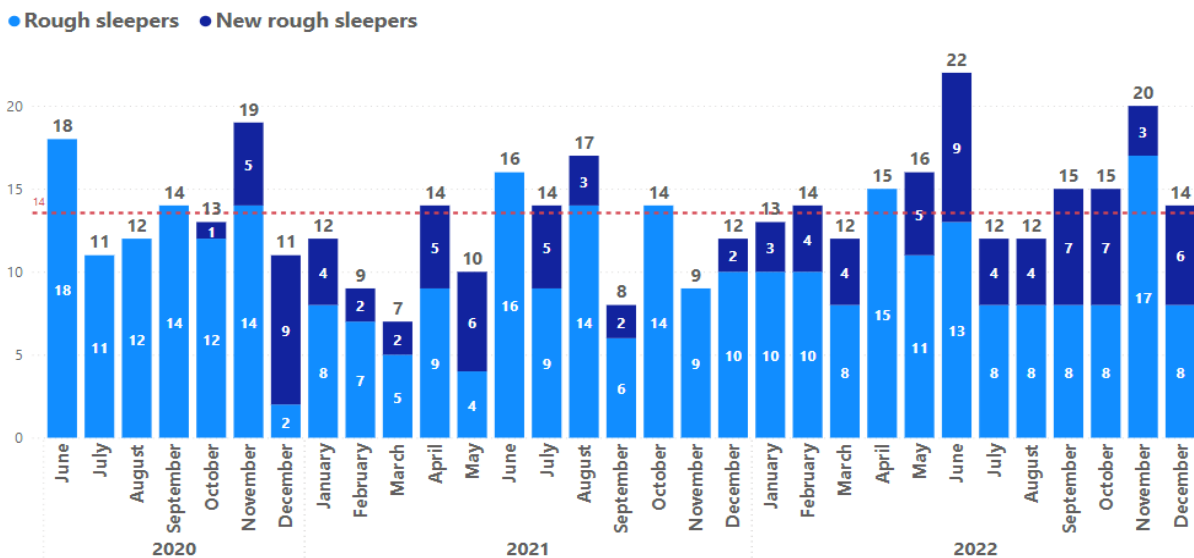
Figure 2.22: Overall age composition of people sleeping rough (autumn count) in Southampton and England: 2017-2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Rough sleeping in England: Autumn count 2017-2022

According to data from the monthly report on rough sleeping, there were on average 14 people rough sleeping on a single night in Southampton between 2020 and 2022 (Figure 2.23). On average, 4 of the people rough sleeping on a single night were new to rough sleeping. More recent data seems to indicate that there has been an increase to rough sleeping, including a large cohort of people with restricted eligibility and people with no local connection.

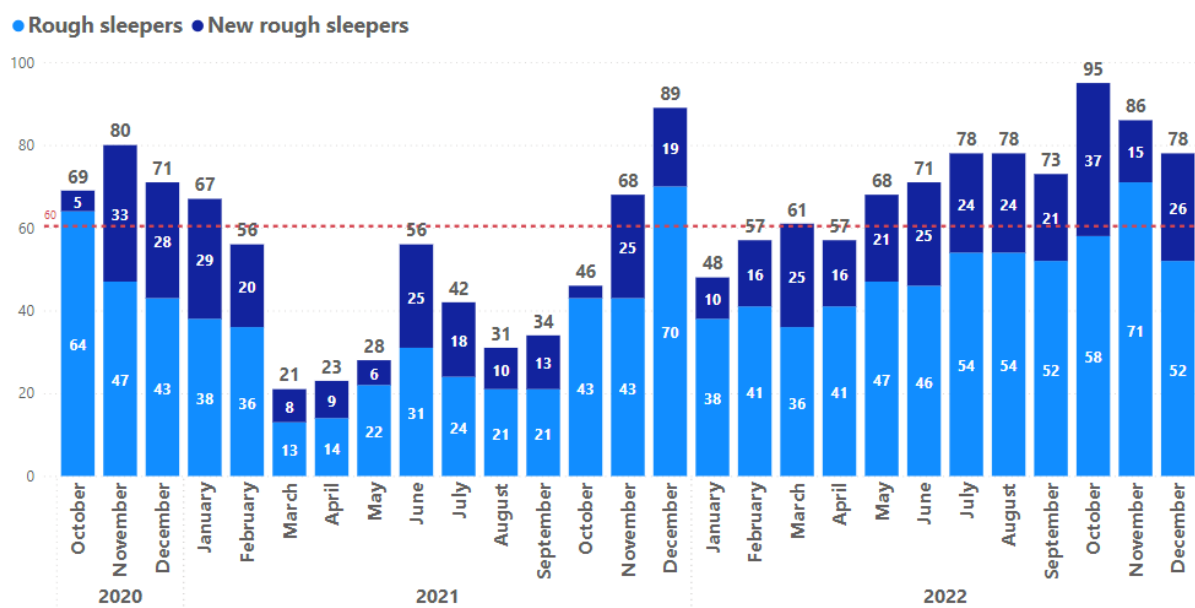
Figure 2.23: Number of people rough sleeping on a single night in Southampton: June 2020-December 2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Support for people sleeping rough in England June 2020 – December 2022

On average 60 people rough slept over the course of the month, out of which 19 were new to rough sleeping. Figure 2.24 shows the trend over time between October 2020 and December 2022. Recent data highlights that the number of people rough sleeping throughout the month has remained above the average of 60 since May 2022.

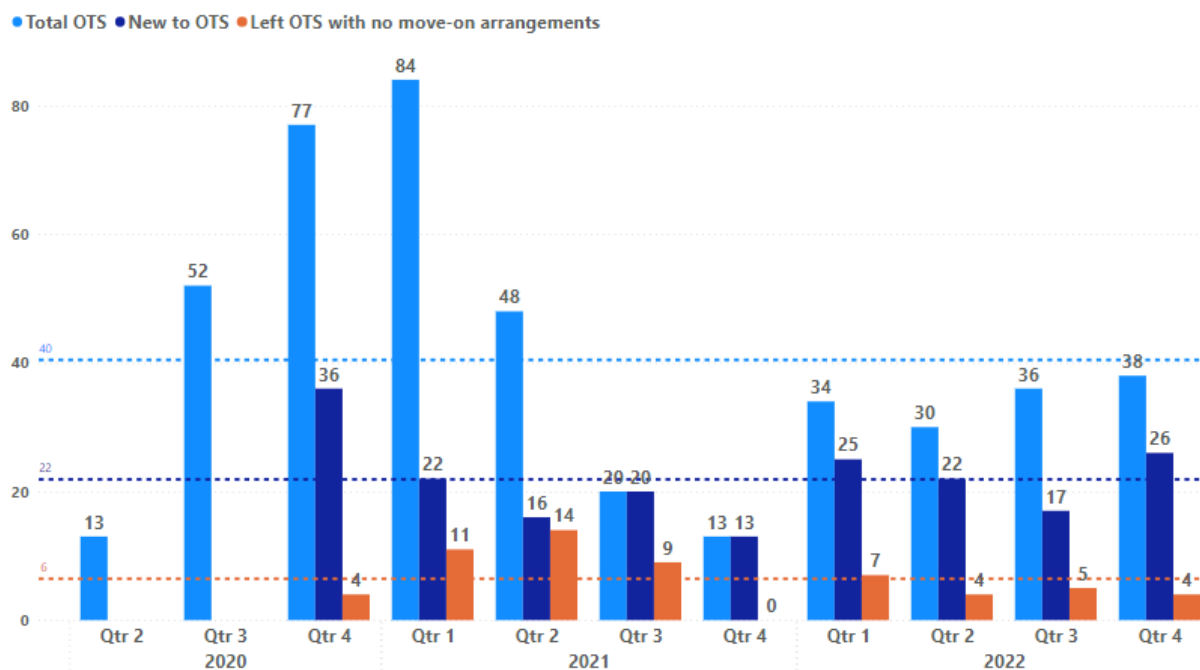
Figure 2.24: Number of people rough sleeping over the course of the month in Southampton: October 2020-December 2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Support for people sleeping rough in England June 2020 – December 2022

Monthly data regarding movement into and out of off-the-street accommodation (definition in [Appendix 1](#)) between June 2020 and December 2022 (Figure 2.25) highlights several changes post Covid-19 in Southampton. Firstly, the total number of people moving into off-the-street accommodation had a decreasing trend throughout 2021, falling from 84 in the first quarter to 13 in the last. At the beginning of 2022, numbers increased, reaching 34 and remained stable. Secondly, people new to off-the-street accommodation have become a larger proportion of all people offered off-the-street accommodation. For example, in the last quarter of 2022, 26 out of the 38 people in off-the-street accommodation were new. Finally, there is still a small number of people leaving off-the-street accommodation with no move-on arrangements. However, their number has remained in the single digits during 2022 in Southampton.

Figure 2.25: People rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping moving into and out off-the-street accommodation in Southampton: June 2020-December 2022



Source: DLUHC 2023 – Support for people sleeping rough in England June 2020 – December 2022

2.1.6 Key Findings

- For 2021/22, Southampton had a rate of 5.3 (per 1k) households assessed as threatened by homelessness in the next 56 days and a rate of 10.4 households assessed as homeless per 1k households.
- Trend data shows that the rate of people being threatened by homelessness has been increasing since the 3rd quarter of 2021, while the rate of homelessness has been decreasing since the 1st quarter of 2022.
- The demographic profile of those who are statutory homeless or threatened by homelessness was generally in keeping with the national profile, with the majority of applicants in Southampton being white (81.5%) and skewed towards younger age groups; 35.8% of those assessed as homeless or threatened by homelessness in Southampton were unemployed and 23.6% were not working due to a long-term illness or disability, which is significantly higher than the national average (14.1%);
- Single applicants made up the largest portion of applicants that are threatened by homelessness (46.9%) and homeless (80.7%) in Southampton during 2021/22, which is in line with the national average.

- Southampton had one of the highest percentages of households with additional support needs (1229, 76.6%) (out of those households for which a duty of prevention or relief of homelessness was accepted) among comparators in 2021/22, highlighting the complexity of Southampton's homeless cohort.
- The top five support needs of those assessed as homeless in Southampton during 2021/22 were: history of mental health (21.4%), history of repeat homelessness (12.5%) and drug dependency needs (11.8%), offending history (11.1%) and physical ill health and disability (9.5%). Southampton had a significantly higher proportion of repeat homelessness, drug dependency and history of offending support needs compared to national averages.
- Family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate people, was the most frequent reason for being threatened by homelessness (37.8%) or homeless (35.9%) in Southampton during 2021/22. The rates are significantly higher than the national level (25.5% and 30.5%, respectively).
- Just over half of the households threatened by homelessness in Southampton (182, 51.7%) secured accommodation for six months or more, similar to the national average (56.3%);
- The second most common outcome at the end of prevention duty was households became homeless (102, 29%). A significantly higher proportion of households at the end of prevention duty in Southampton (102, 29%) became homeless compared to the national average (20.2%).

2.2 Wider Determinants of Homelessness

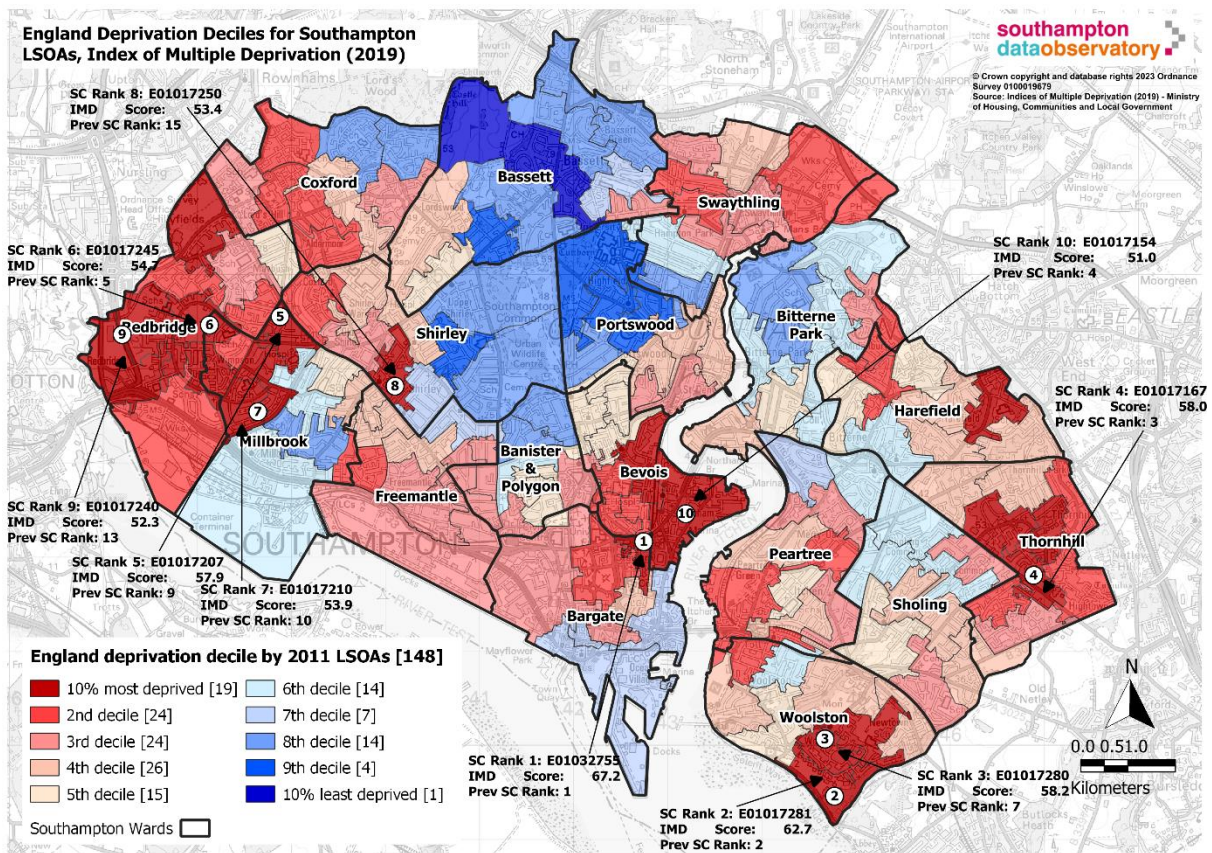
It is not only important to consider statutory homeless statistics, but also the factors that make individuals more or less likely to experience homelessness; known as wider determinants. Wider determinants such as poverty and deprivation are linked to a wide range of outcomes. Examining the wider determinants provides an opportunity to understand and address some of the underlying causes of homelessness to try and prevent individuals from becoming homeless in the first place.

More information on wider determinants can be found on the [Southampton Data Observatory](#).

2.2.1 Deprivation and Poverty

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) illustrates how Southampton continues to be a relatively deprived city. Based on average deprivation rank of its neighbourhoods (LSOAs), Southampton is ranked 55th (where 1st is the most deprived) out of 317 local authorities: more deprived than the comparator cities of Bristol (82nd), Leeds (92nd) and Sheffield (93rd). Southampton has 19 Lower Super Output Areas within the 10% most deprived in England and one in the 10% least deprived.

Figure 2.26: Map showing overall England deprivation deciles in Southampton (IMD 2019)



Source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019) -Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100019679

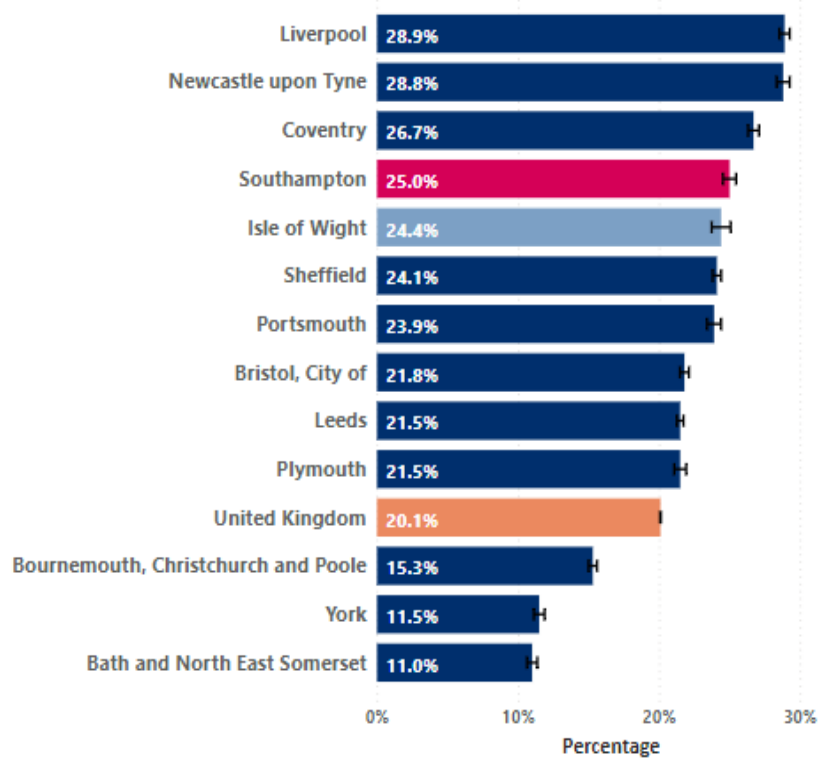
Southampton is ranked 3rd worst in the country for crime deprivation and is in the worst 20% of local authorities for 5 other deprivation domains. Additionally, around 12% of Southampton’s population live in neighbourhoods within the 10% most deprived nationally; this rises to 18% for the under 18 population, suggesting deprivation disproportionately impacts upon young people in the city.

25% of children aged under 16 were living in relative low-income families in Southampton during 2021/22 (Figure 2.27), which is significantly higher than several ONS comparators and the UK average (20.1%).

Southampton has experienced an overall increase in the proportion of children living in relative low-income families since 2014/15 (16.4%) (Figure 2.28). This trend is also seen nationally, although rates nationally have remained significantly lower compared to Southampton.

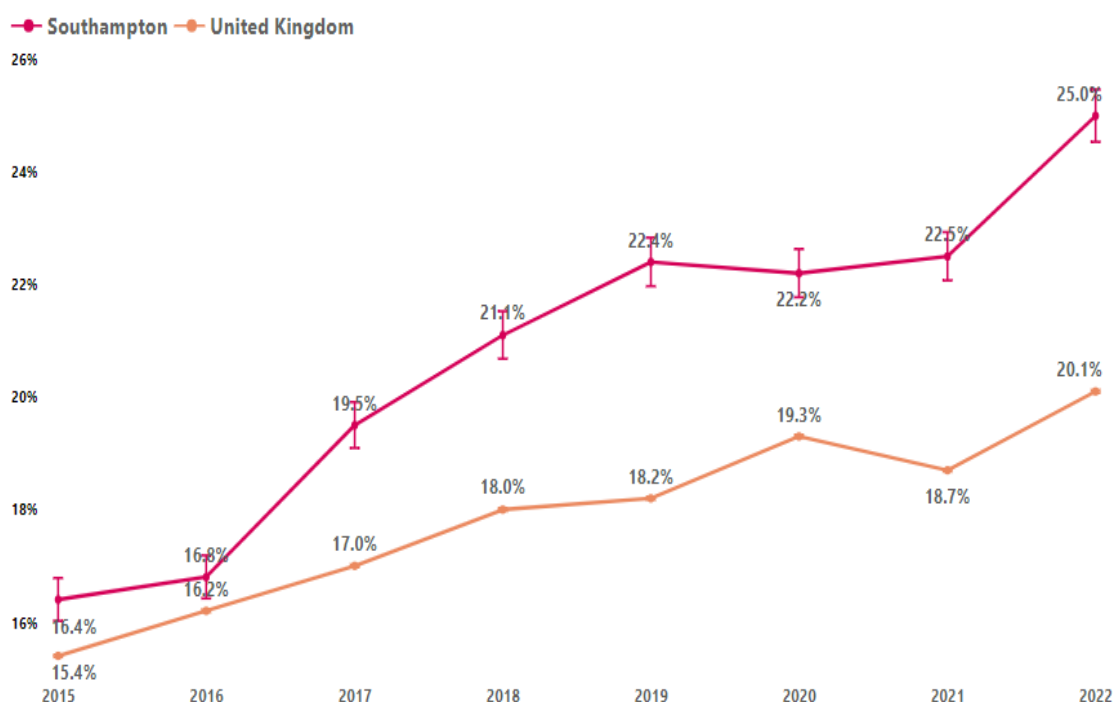
More information on Deprivation and Poverty can be found on the [Southampton Data Observatory](#).

Figure 2.27: Percentage of children (aged under 16) living in relative low-income families: Southampton and ONS comparators in the 2021/22 financial year.



Source: DWP 2023 – Children in low-income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2022

Figure 2.28: Percentage of children (aged under 16) living in relative low-income families in Southampton and the UK: 2014/15-2021/22



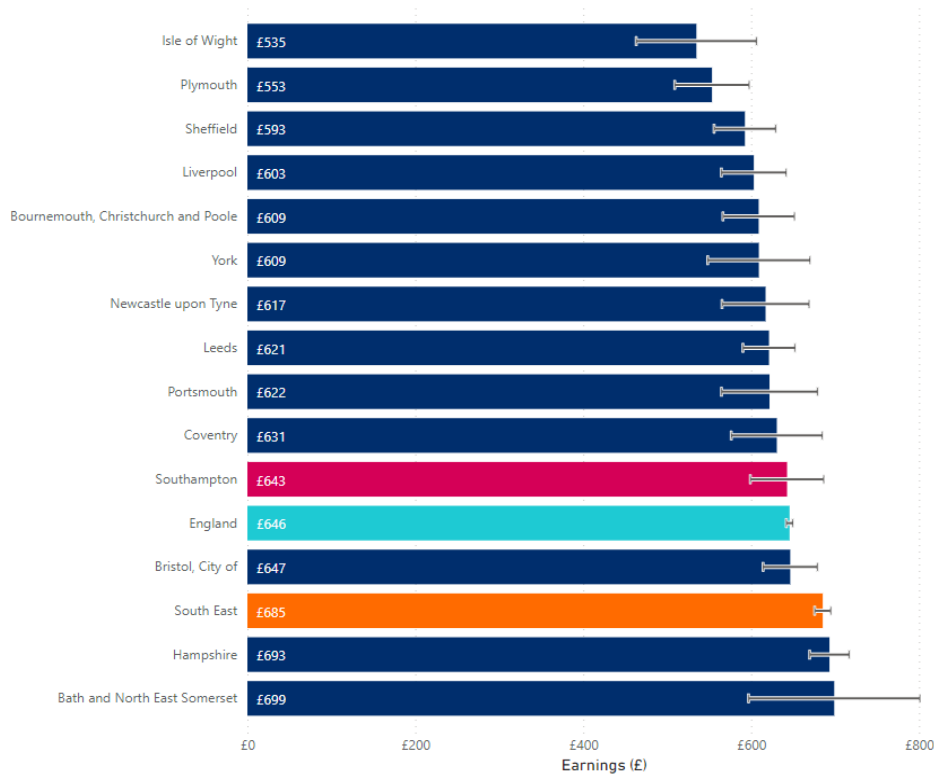
Source: DWP 2023 – Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2022
*Please note x-axis displays the financial year end: e.g. 2015 for the 2014/2015 financial year

2.2.2 Earnings and Benefits

Earnings data can be broken down into two main categories: earnings for ‘residents’ who *live* in the city and earnings for ‘workers’ who *work* in the city, but live outside it. During 2022, the median gross weekly pay for full-time workers *resident* in Southampton was £643 per week (Figure 2.29), which is similar to the national level (£646) but remains lower compared to those who *work* in the city but live outside it (£680 per week).

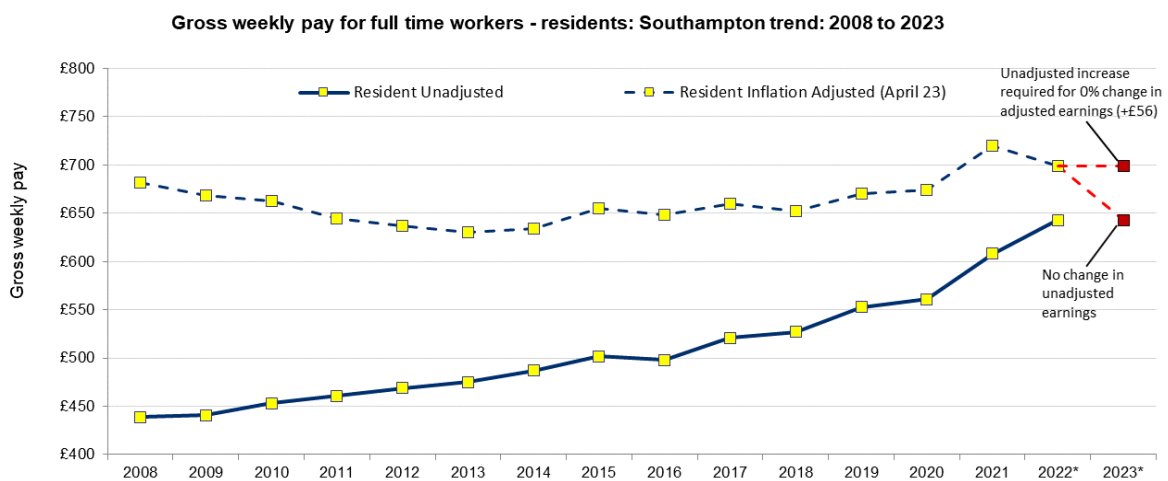
After adjusting for inflation, pay declined in ‘real’ terms between 2008 and 2013. Yet since 2013, weekly pay has generally increased in ‘real’ terms for both residents and workers in Southampton. Adjusted for inflation, weekly earnings declined between 2021 and 2022 for residents who live in the city (-£21, -3.0%) and for people who work in the city (-£24, -3.1%). This decline is a result of unprecedented inflation experienced since late 2021. Unadjusted weekly earnings would need to increase by a further £56 for residents and £59 for workers who live outside the city to negate the impact of inflation as of April 2023 (130.4 CPI all items) (Figure 2.30).

Figure 2.29. Gross weekly pay for full time workers residents of Southampton and ONS comparators: 2022



Source: ONS – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2022

Figure 2.30. Gross weekly pay (inflation adjusted and unadjusted) for full time workers (residents) in Southampton: 2008 to 2023

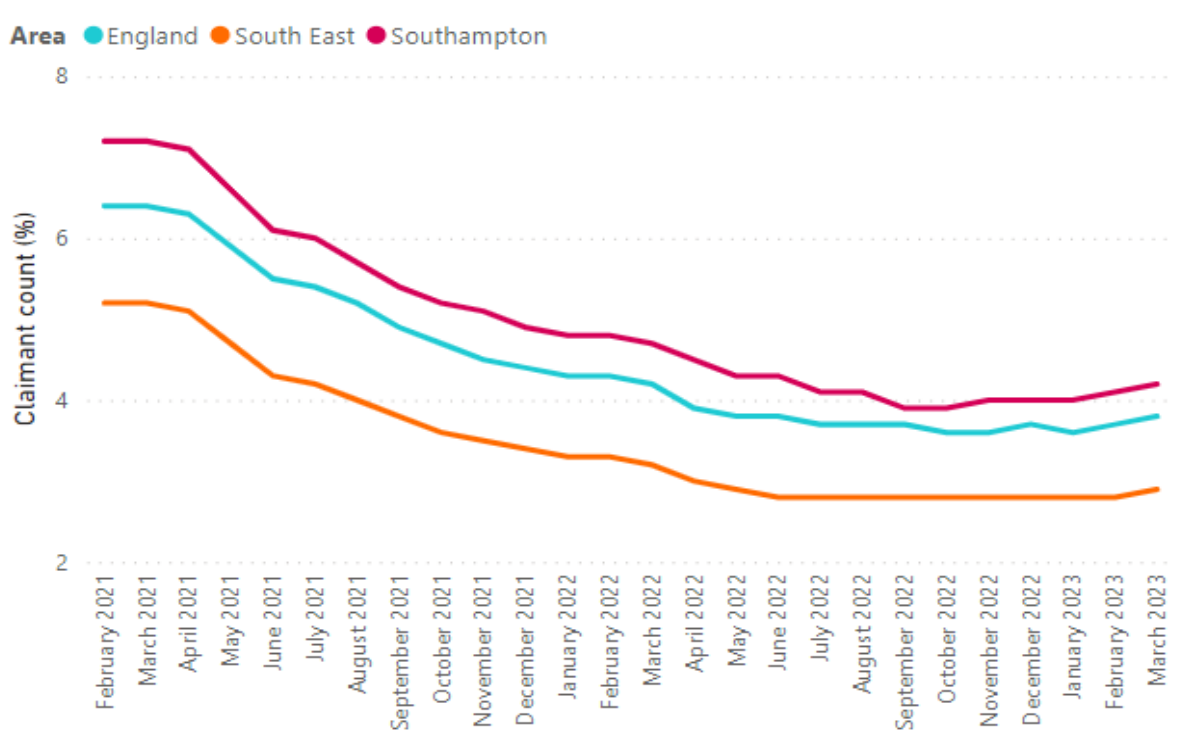


Source: ONS - Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings & Consumer Price Inflation. *Data for the latest year is provisional.

Source: ONS – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2008-2023 (2023 is an estimate based on April 2023 CPI)

Claimant count data is published monthly and allows for the proportion of adults claiming out of work benefit to be monitored in detail. Locally and nationally the number of adults claiming out of work benefits has significantly decreased over the last year. As of March 2023, 4.2% (7,060) of the working age population were claiming out of work benefits in Southampton; a decline of -4,940 (-41%) since April 2021 (7.1%) (Figure 2.31). This highlights the progress that has been made in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Southampton is yet to return to the pre-pandemic baseline (less than 3.5% in January to March 2020). The claimant count also appears to have slowly increased in recent months, which is possibly linked to recent financial pressures and growing economic uncertainty .

Figure 2.31: Claimant count – claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 in Southampton, England and South East: February 2021 – March 2023



Source: DWP 2023

In addition to examining data on unemployment, it is also important to examine those in receipt of housing related benefits: Housing Benefit (HB) and Universal Credit (UC).

Housing Benefit (HB) provides people with help in paying their rents if they are unemployed, on a low income or in receipt of another qualifying income related benefit. HB is being replaced by Universal Credit (UC) for Working Age claimants. Therefore, this makes it difficult to examine trends over time and it is not appropriate to compare HB and UC with housing

entitlement. As of February 2023, there were 10,379 housing benefit claimants in Southampton. As of February 2023, there were 23,950 households on universal credit in Southampton, of these 16,344 (68%) included housing entitlement.³ It should also be recognised that as of April 2023 there has been 10% uplift in several benefits in line with inflation.

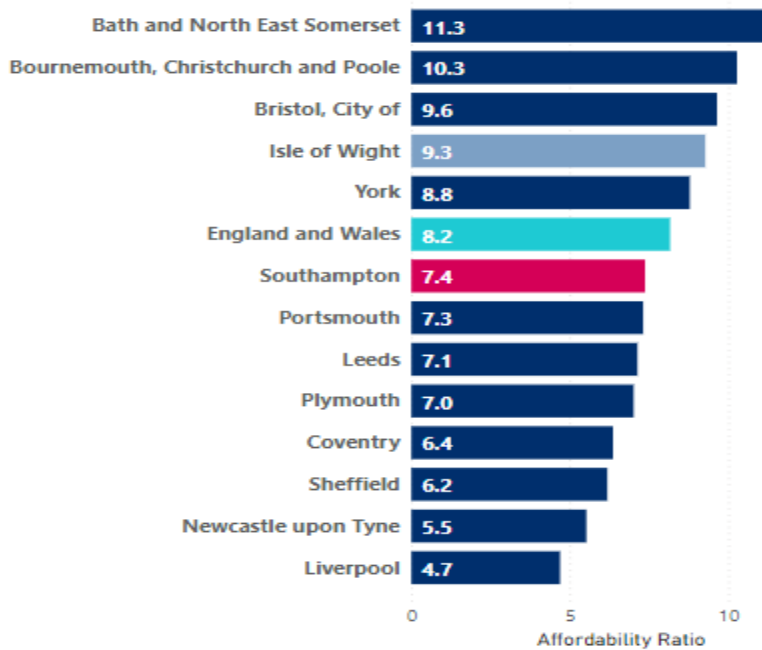
More information on the economy can be found on the [Southampton Data Observatory](https://data.southampton.gov.uk).

2.2.3 Affordability and Availability of Housing

Another key wider determinant is the affordability and availability of housing in Southampton. Affordability is measured by the ONS through a ratio between the median house prices and median workplace earnings for the 12-month period ending in September of each year. In 2022, the ratio for Southampton was 7.4, suggesting that full-time employees in Southampton who wished to buy a home would have had to spend around 7.4 times their annual earnings to buy one (Figure 2.32).

³ Please note most recent data is provisional and subject to revisions – source: Department of Work and Pensions 2023

Figure 2.32: Housing Affordability Ratio in Southampton and ONS Comparators: 2022

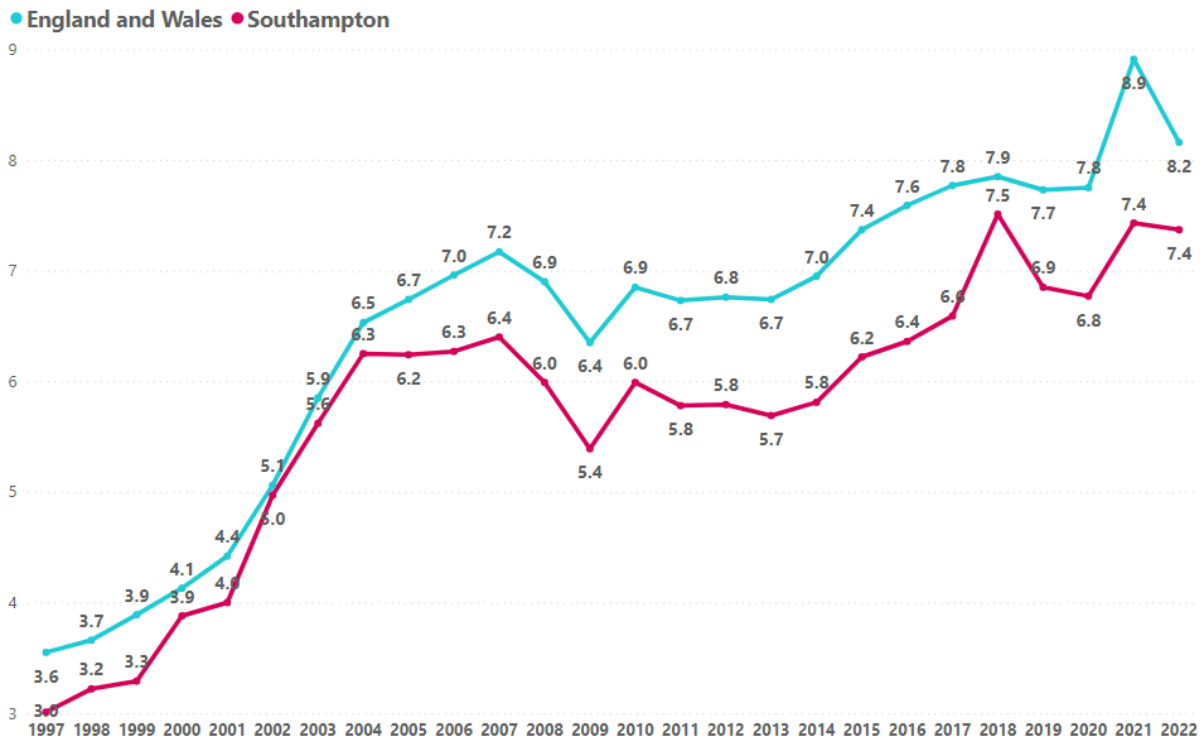


Source: Office of National Statistics 2023

Over time, the ratio has increased both in Southampton (from 3 in 1997 to 7.4 in 2022) and nationally (from 3.6 in 1997 to 8.2 in 2022), meaning houses have become considerably less affordable, both locally and nationally (Figure 2.33). The recent cost of living crisis and increased interest rates also make housing affordability more challenging.⁴

⁴ Office for National Statistics (2022) – Housing affordability bulletin, online available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2022#affordability-and-the-cost-of-living>

Figure 2.33: Housing Affordability Ratio in Southampton and England and Wales: 1997-2022

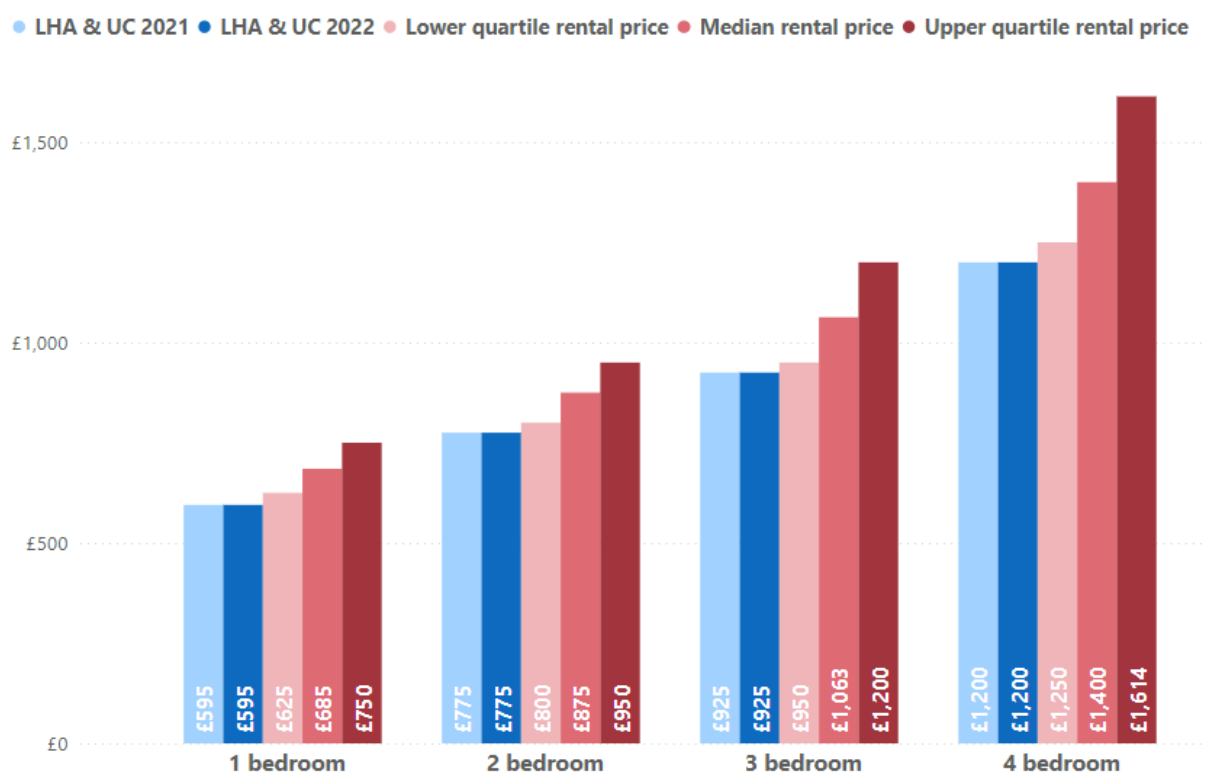


Source: Office of National Statistics 2023

Data from the Valuation Office Agency between October 2021 and September 2022 shows that a one-bedroom property rented on average for £685 a month, while Universal Credit (UC) and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) only covered £595. A two-bedroom property rented for £875 a month, of which up to £775 were covered by UC and LHA. A three-bedroom rented for £1,063 a month, of which up to £925 could be covered and finally, a four plus bedroom rented for £1,400 of which up to £1,200 could be covered. Thus, on average, there is a £100 deficit between UC and LHA combined, and monthly private rent for a one to three-bedroom property, and a £200 deficit for a four plus bedroom property (Figure 2.34).

However, it is important to stress that with increased interest rates, the cost of privately renting a property has also increased alongside mortgages for homeowners.⁵ Across England private rental prices paid by tenants in the UK rose by 4.8% in the 12 months to April 2023.⁶

Figure 2.34: Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance in April 2021 and April 2022, compared to private rental prices in Southampton for October 2021- September 2022



Source: DWP 2022 & 2023 & Valuation Office Agency 2023

Data from the yearly return of Local Authority Housing Statistics, can inform on the quantity of social housing in Southampton (Figure 2.35). Of the 108,518 dwellings in Southampton on March 31st 2022, 84,236 (77.6%) belonged to the private sector. 16,381 (15.1%) dwellings

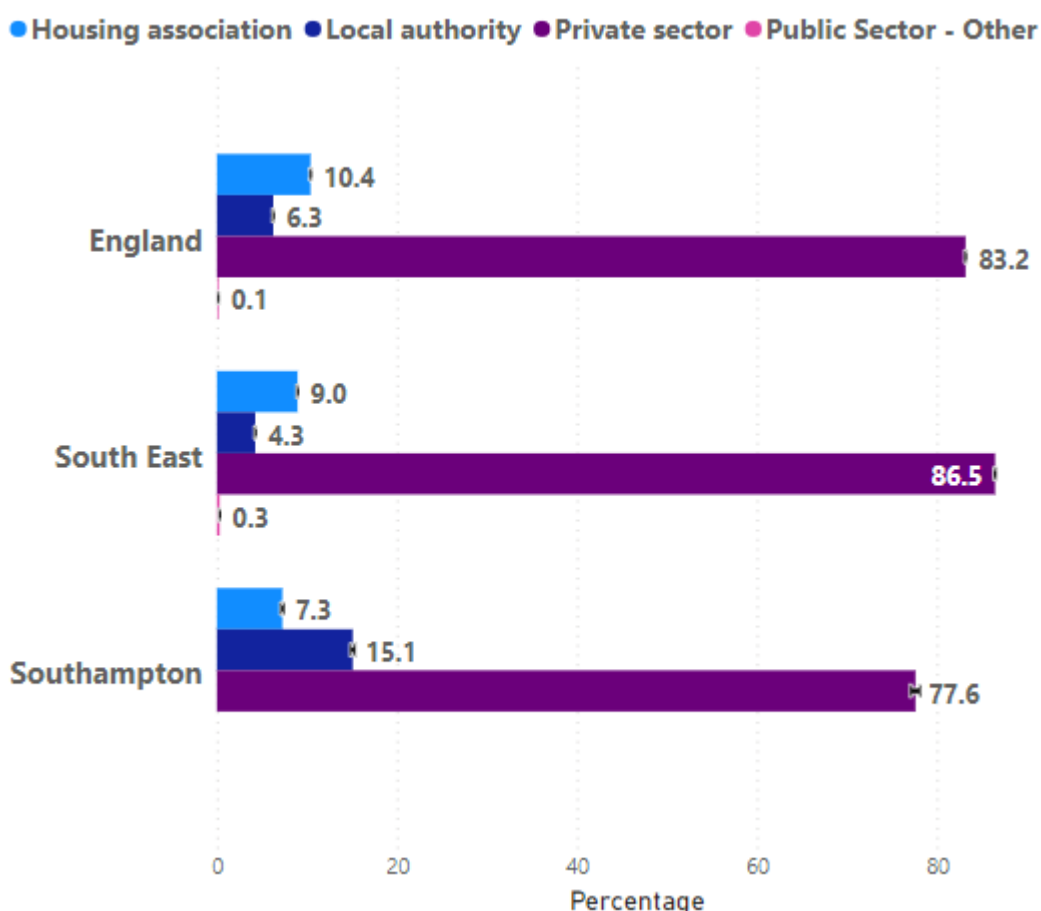
⁵ Office for National Statistics (2023) – impact of increasing housing costs on households. Online available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/howincreasesinhousingcostsimpacthouseholds/2023-01-09>

⁶ Office for National Statistics (April 2023) – index of private housing rental prices. Online available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/indexofprivatehousingrentalprices/april2023>

were owned by the Local Authority. A further 7,901 (7.3%) dwellings were owned by housing associations in Southampton.

1024 social lettings were made in Southampton during 2021/22 (Table 2.1). Of these, 543 (53%) were let to new social tenants, 358 (35%) to existing social tenants and 123 (12%) were mutual exchanges. Of the 1024 total lettings, most were made within general housing needs (649, 63.4%), while the rest (375, 36.6%) were in supported housing.

Figure 2.35: Housing Stock in Southampton, South East and England: March 31st 2022



Source: DLUHC 2023: Local Authority Housing Statistics 2021/22

There were 7,379 people on the waiting list for social housing in Southampton on March 31st, 2022 (Table 2.1) but only 1024 social houses let in the same year. The limited number of lettings is due to various reasons, such as a lack of vacancies in social housing and the incompatibility between what applicants require for a suitable household and what housing is available. In essence, the demand for social housing in the city far exceeds supply. Most people on the waiting list were waiting for a one-bedroom property (4,150, 56.2%), followed

by households waiting for three-bedroom (1,493, 20.2%) and two-bedroom properties (1,416, 19.2%). A much smaller number (320, 4.3%) were waiting for properties with four bedrooms or more.

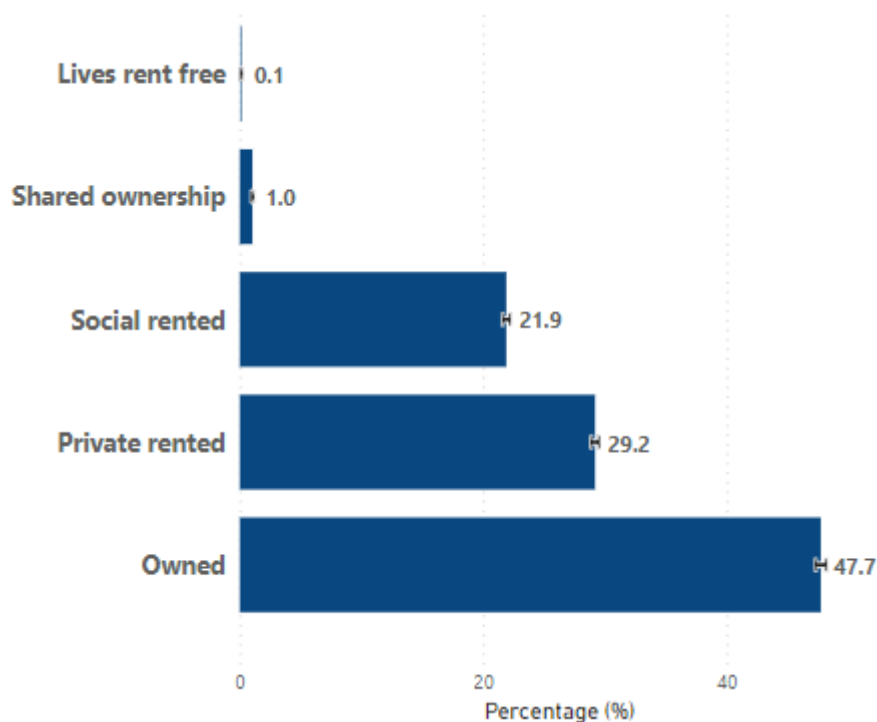
Table 2.1: Southampton Social Housing Lettings and Waiting List: 2021/22

Social Housing Waiting List on March 31 st 2022			Social Housing Lettings 2021/22		
Number of bedrooms	Number of households	Percentage of households	Type of Letting	Number of dwellings	Percentage of dwellings
One-bedroom	4,150	56.2%	Let to existing social tenants	358	35%
Two-bedroom	1,416	19.2%	Let to new social tenants	543	53%
Three-bedroom	1,493	20.2%	Let through mutual exchanges	123	12%
Four-bedroom and more	320	4.3%	Total lettings	1,024	100%
Total	7,379	100%	Of total: Lettings within General needs housing	649	63.4%
			Of total: Lettings within Supported housing	375	36.6%

Source: DLUHC 2023: Local Authority Housing Statistics 2021/22

In 2021, 48,838 (47.7%) of households owned their home in Southampton (23,049 owned outright and 25,789 with a mortgage or loan), whereas 29,860 (29.2%) rented their home privately. 22,397 (21.9%) lived in social rented homes, 1,061 (1%) lived in shared ownership homes 134 (0.1%) lived rent free (Figure 2.36). This illustrates that the majority of households in Southampton are vulnerable to changes in mortgage interest rates or changes in rent prices.

Figure 2.36. Household tenure in Southampton: Census 2021

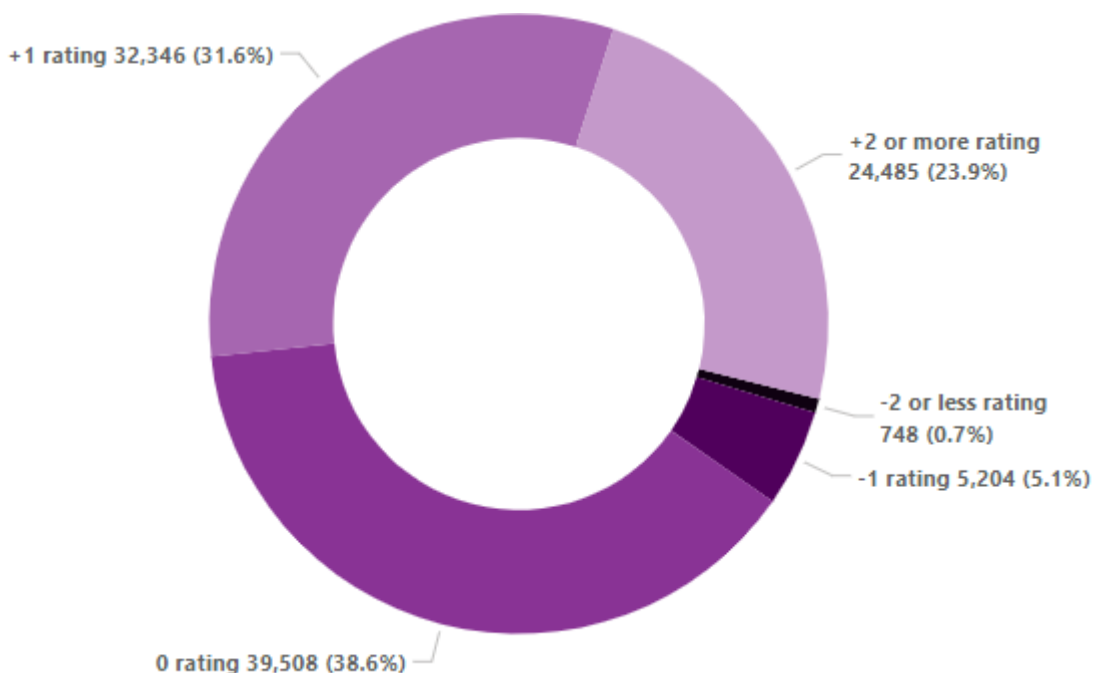


Source: Office of National Statistics

Occupancy ratings use the difference between the number of bedrooms in a household and the legally required number of bedrooms based on the size of the household to determine overcrowding. Overcrowding is indicated by having a negative occupancy rating (of “-1” or “-2 or less”). 2021 Census data shows that bedroom overcrowding is a concern for 5,952 (5.8%) households in Southampton. Of those that are overcrowded, most households require one more room (5,204, 5.1%) and 748 (0.7%) households require two or more rooms (Figure 2.37).

It is important to consider occupancy ratings as the top reason for people being threatened by homelessness (**Error! Reference source not found.**) and of being homeless (**Error! Reference source not found.**) is family unwilling or unable to accommodate.

Figure 2.37. Bedroom occupancy ratings in Southampton: Census 2021



Source: Office of National Statistics

2.2.4 Key Findings

- Southampton often ranks poorly against the national average and against comparators for a wide range of wider determinants, particularly those relating to poverty and deprivation.
- Southampton is ranked 55th (where 1 is the most deprived) out of 317 local authorities on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019).
- Approximately 12% of Southampton's population live in neighbourhoods within the 10% most deprived nationally; this rises to 18% for the under 18 population, suggesting deprivation disproportionately impacts upon young people in the city.
- 25% of children under the age of 16 lived in relative low-income families in Southampton during 2021/2022.
- Adjusted for inflation, weekly resident (-£21, -3.0%) and workplace (-£24, -3.1%) earnings for full time workers both declined between 2021 and 2022.
- Unadjusted weekly earnings would need to increase by a further £56 for residents and £59 for workers to negate the impact of inflation as of April 2023 (130.4 CPI all items).

- As of March 2023, 4.2% (7,060) of the working age population were claiming out of work benefits in Southampton.
- Full-time employees in Southampton who wish to buy a home would have to spend around 7.4 times their annual earnings to buy a home (2022). The affordability ratio in Southampton has increased from 3 in 1997 to 7.4 in 2022, meaning houses have become considerably less affordable, both locally and nationally.
- High levels of inflation and increases in interest rates have affected the affordability of rents and mortgages, with private rental prices increasing by 4.8% across the UK (12 months to April 2023).
- There is a gap between Universal Credit (UC) and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) combined and rental prices, with rental prices recently increasing due to rises in interest rates.
- Demand for social housing in the city exceeds supply, with 7,379 households on the social housing waiting list in Southampton at the end of March 2022.

3 Homelessness Prevention and Support

3.1 Homelessness Preventions

We recognise that there is high demand for all types of accommodation in Southampton and if households are homeless or at risk of being homeless, it is extremely important that they seek advice immediately. The sooner households make contact with the team the more likely we will be able to help them.

We will always try to prevent homelessness first and we do this in the following ways:

- direct prevention, intervention, and mediation work to prevent households from becoming homeless;
- intervening and mediating between tenants and landlords to reduce the number of people being made homeless due to the ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies;
- helping households to access the private rented sector through providing deposits, rent in advance;
- providing guidance and information around budgeting to help maintain tenancies.

3.2 Homelessness Support

We have a number of teams within the Homelessness unit that provide support to those that are 'at risk' or Homeless.

Homelessness Outreach Mediation Officers – These officers are based in the community. They focus on prevention work to families and those that are considered 'priority need'. Their main aim is to keep people where they are, or preparing planned move on accommodation, removing the need for emergency appointments.

Family Engagement Workers – These posts are seconded from Children's services and focus on families that are affected by welfare reform, specifically the benefit cap. This team is prevention focused.

Statutory Homeless Team – When prevention has been unsuccessful and the relief duty is owed to families and those considered 'priority need', this team conduct investigations into the cause of homelessness and plan to relieve it. They also source emergency accommodation when necessary and continue to support those that are owed the main housing duty.

Street Homeless Prevention Team – This team focuses on single homelessness, working under both our prevention and relief duties and includes those that are rough sleeping. The team also includes dedicated Rough Sleeper Initiative Outreach officer who solely supports those that are rough sleeping.

Homeseekers Letting service – This team manages all our temporary accommodation in the city and focuses on moving families into longer term housing options such as social housing or privately rented accommodation.

3.3 The Navigator Service

The Navigator service is provided by Two Saints Limited. This team provide tailored and intensive support to rough sleepers. This support aims to reduce the incidence of homelessness, support people to access and maintain accommodation, improve health and wellbeing, intervene effectively, coordinate multi agency involvement, facilitate access and engagement to support and encourage and support individuals to access primary care.

The Navigators Service will:

- work flexibly, have a variety of skills to work with clients who may struggle to engage with services, over an extended period;
- provide intensive support and engagement, including regular outreach sessions;
- enable the individual to make changes through a personalised approach, working in an inclusive and empowering way and acting as a single point of contact;
- develop a relationship with the individual, offering personalised, creative, innovative and effective support;
- manage risk;
- establish partnership agreements with other providers and services;
- provide a psychologically informed service;
- work in close partnership with the Rough Sleeper Initiative outreach workers within the Street Homeless Prevention Team (SHPT);
- help people who sleep rough to access appropriate local services, get off the streets and into settled accommodation.

Core Outcomes for all interventions:

- provide personalised solutions to reduce and prevent rough sleeping;
- reduce the impact of homelessness on individuals;
- reduce the incidence of homelessness;
- reduce begging behaviours in this cohort;
- facilitate engagement in primary care;
- improve health and wellbeing;
- agreeing and managing personalised support plans and flexible personalisation resources;

- coordinating training for specialist and non-specialist staff working with people experiencing homelessness;
- coordinating teams and interventions.

Eligible individuals will be identified and referred to the Service by Southampton City Council's Street Homeless Prevention Team (SHPT) and via the Outreach Coordination meeting. Navigators will ensure that any individuals noted rough sleeping are raised with the SHPT/RSI outreach teams and provide details where possible. The multi skilled workforce will participate in city outreach. All team members will deliver accessible, person centred, confidential, non-judgmental engagement, care planning and support.

3.4 Severe Weather Emergency Provision

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) describes Southampton's arrangements for responding to people who are sleeping rough, and the additional arrangements that will be put in place to protect people when there are severe weather conditions. Severe weather includes weather warnings, freezing temperatures, rain, snow, wind chill, gales or heat.

SWEP includes arrangements for a single offer of a safe place to stay for people sleeping rough, including those without recourse to public funds. The SWEP is an extension of Southampton's offer of Somewhere Safe to Stay (delivered by The Salvation Army) and Low Threshold Beds (delivered by Society of St James).

SWEP will be accessible to every person sleeping rough, including those who may otherwise be excluded from services, for example people with no recourse to public funds, and those with no local connection. Services will be offered based on need. We are currently refreshing our SWEP offer to ensure it is robust to meet the needs of the city both during cold and hot weather.

During cold weather in partnership with City Life Church, Southampton City Council may choose to implement a Winter Beds provision for a sleeping space within a local church hall for those rough sleeping. The service will be supported by volunteers and collaboration with local churches.

During hot weather, Homelessness services (including but not limited to the Street Homeless Prevention Team, Navigators Team and Southampton Day Centre) will offer rough sleepers' water, suncream, hats, sunglasses and loose-fitting clothing.

4 Conclusions

4.1 Overview

Section 2.1 provided an overview of homelessness in Southampton, using nationally recorded data to benchmark against the national average as well as examining trends over time. Southampton, alongside a number of other comparators face substantial challenges when it comes to homelessness and rough sleeping, with key findings highlighted in [section 2.1.6](#).

It is also important to consider the wider determinants of homelessness. If these worsen, we may see subsequent increases in homelessness. Southampton often ranks poorly against the national average for several wider determinants, particularly those relating to poverty and deprivation. Recent economic uncertainty should also be acknowledged, with increased mortgage rates and rents likely to put households and families under further pressure and potentially at risk of homelessness.

The above highlights that it is important for Southampton City Council and partners to continue to focus on ways to prevent homelessness and support people who are threatened by, or experiencing homeless, to secure accommodation.

4.2 Homelessness Duties

The Council has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless under the prevention duty. However, a significantly higher number of households at the end of prevention duty (29%) were **not** provided with accommodation and became homeless in 2021/2022, compared to the national average (20.2%). With an increase in the number of people threatened by homelessness since the end of 2021, there needs to be a focus on preventing the onset of need, ensuring fewer people are at risk of being threatened by homelessness.

The Council also has a responsibility to support a household experiencing homelessness to secure accommodation for 6 months, under the relief duty. The duty lasts 56 days and can only be extended if the household is not owed a main duty. In comparison to the national average, Southampton was relatively successful with the outcomes of the relief duty in 2021/2022. The most frequent outcome (occurring in 44.7% or 410 of the cases) in 2021/2022 was that households secured accommodation for six months or more. This is significantly higher than the national average (39.1%). Of the households that were not provided with accommodation at the end of relief stage, the majority (96.93.2% in 2021/2022), were provided with a main duty. This means that they were deemed unintentionally homeless and had a priority need.

Under the main duty, the Council has the responsibility to provide the eligible household with temporary or permanent accommodation. In Southampton, the overall rate of households owed a main duty (0.9 per 1k) was relatively low in comparison to a number of ONS comparators in 2021/2022.

4.3 Who is Accessing Services?

The Strategic Assessment provides a better understanding of who is accessing homelessness services, and homeless and/or threatened by homelessness in Southampton.

Most people threatened by homelessness or homelessness in 2021/2022 were relatively young with 19.8% aged 18-24 years old and 31.2% who were 25-34 years old. There is also a large proportion of households who were categorised as “not working due to long-term illness and disability” and homeless or threatened by homelessness (23.6%). This was significantly higher than the national average (14.1%). The proportion of people who were “employed” was also significantly lower (19%) than the national level of 24.5%. This highlights that there is a need to support people into employment in Southampton, including people with a disability and long-term illness. For people who are unable to work, there is a need to ensure that their support is adequate to prevent them from being threatened by, or experiencing homelessness.

The Strategic Assessment also highlighted that there are a significant number of **complex cases**, where people require additional support than housing support, such as mental health support. 76.6% of households threatened by homelessness or presented as homeless for which a prevention or relief duty was accepted had additional needs. These cases require a time-intensive and person-centred approach with multi-agency solutions. To ensure that these households receive a range of support required to be successful and maintain a tenancy, there is a need for effective partnership working and referral pathways.

4.4 Causes of Homelessness

One of the most frequent reasons for being threatened by homelessness (37.8%) or homeless (35.9%) in Southampton during 2021/22 was due to family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate people. The rates are significantly higher than the national level (25.5% and 30.5%, respectively). This may reflect the impact of the cost of living on families and friends who have less disposable income and resources to provide for extra individuals. This also may reflect the lack of affordable housing for these individuals to move into.

There are also several wider determinants that impact the likelihood of households experiencing homelessness. Southampton has a high rate of households in **deprivation and**

poverty and is ranked 55th most deprived of the 317 Local Authorities in England. With a lack of income and resources to pay for housing bills and related costs, many households can become homeless or at risk of homelessness. Moreover, around 12% of Southampton's population live in neighbourhoods within the 10% most deprived nationally; this rises to 18% for the under-18 population. 25% of children aged under 16 were living in relative low-income families in Southampton during 2021/22 (Figure 2.27). This data highlights that children and **young people** are disproportionately impacted by deprivation and poverty. So, there is a growing generation at risk of homelessness. This is reinforced by the data above outlining that most households threatened by homelessness or homeless in 2021/2022 were relatively young.

The Strategic Assessment highlights that the cost-of-living crisis, with an unprecedented increase in inflation since 2021, has eroded the value of **earnings**. Adjusted for inflation, weekly earnings for full-time workers who are resident in the city, declined by £21 or 3.0%. Although the number of people claiming out of work benefits has significantly decreased over the last year, Southampton is yet to return to pre-pandemic baseline. This has resulted in many households facing limited resources and income.

There is also a lack of **affordable housing options** for people. The social housing in the city far exceeds the supply. The increase in inflation and interest rates have affected the affordability of private rentals and mortgages. Moreover, there is a gap between Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance benefits (which aim to support paying household costs) and the increasing rental prices due to high interest rates. With fewer affordable housing options, there is a challenge to provide people in temporary accommodation with adequate move-on solutions.

The Strategic Assessment highlights that there is a rising demand for homelessness and housing services, with increasingly limited options to provide support and relief. The reasons for homelessness are complex, and therefore, there will be a variety of actions needed to help tackle homelessness. The information in this Strategic Assessment has been used to inform the development of the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 to address the housing and homelessness needs in Southampton.

5 Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1: Definitions

5.1.1 Homelessness and threatened by homelessness

Homelessness ([Section 175 of the 1996 Housing Act](#)).

Someone is homeless if:

- they have no accommodation they are legally entitled to occupy, either in the UK or overseas;
- they have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it;
- they have accommodation designed or adapted to be lived in that consists of a 'moveable structure' (such as a caravan, mobile home, or canal boat) but they have nowhere to put it;
- they have accommodation but it is not reasonable or suitable to continue living there.

Threatened with homelessness ([Section 175 of the 1996 Housing Act](#)).

Somebody is threatened with homelessness if:

- they are likely to become homeless within 28 days;
- they have been given a valid notice (known as a 'Section 21 notice') to leave a property, and that notice will expire within 56 days.

5.1.2 Homelessness Duties

- **Prevention duty:** where a local authority must take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness within 56 days to secure accommodation.
- **Relief duty:** where a local authority must help an applicant who is already homeless secure accommodation for at least 6 months. The duty lasts 56 days and can only be extended if the household is not owed a main duty.
- **Main duty:** is provided where the relief duty has ended and the applicant has not been provided with accommodation for at least 6 months. A local authorities must provide an applicant with temporary or permanent accommodation. The applicant must be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need.

5.1.3 Autumn Counts

Autumn counts offer a yearly snapshot of people rough sleeping on a single night in autumn across England. The autumn counts are based on evidence-based estimations or actual count-based estimations of visible rough-sleeping carried out by each local authority on a date between the beginning of October and end of November.

5.1.4 Off-the Street Accommodation

Off-the-street accommodation includes any placement for rough sleepers for six months or less, such as: hostels, temporary accommodation placements, severe weather emergency protocol placements, specific winter provision, short term options, hotels for respite and assessment, other assessment bed settings, no second night out beds and night beds. Prior to April 1st, 2022, only people in emergency and short-term accommodation were counted, excluding people in hostels or in supported housing services, unless awarded on exceptional basis to those ineligible for homeless support (DLUHC 2023).