



Chapter 2 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities outlines the duty of housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review and publish a homelessness strategy. Section 1(1) of the 2002 Act gives housing authorities the power to carry out a homelessness review and develop a homelessness strategy for their area based on the results of the review. Section 1(4) requires housing authorities to publish a new homelessness strategy every 5 years. This homelessness review fulfils this duty and underpins the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-30.

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A note on rounding:

Within the strategy, we have used data from a variety of sources, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Suffolk Office of Data & Analytics (SODA), our own internal databases, and many more. All the sources for the information provided in this document can be found in **Section 15. References** and all of the data tables produced can be found in **Section 14. Evidence**.

Sometimes, you may find that the percentages or numbers we have provided, either in the text or the data tables, do not add up to the total or to 100%. This is likely due to rounding, either by us or by the original source of the data. Rounding is often used to simplify the information being provided and does not affect the quality of the data in a significant way. For example, instead of saying "1,035 people" we might say "over 1,000 people". Similarly, instead of saying "14.4% of people" we might round this down to "14% of people".

For our own data, we will always try to provide an accurate number in the data table but may round the number up or down in the text to facilitate reading. Therefore, if you would like to find more accurate data, please consult the data tables provided in **Section 14. Evidence**. For data from external sources, we cannot control how this has been rounded or displayed, but we will always provide a source description or link so interested parties can scrutinise the original data source if they wish.



1. Housing and homelessness in Ipswich

1.1. Population

According to the 2021 Census the population in Ipswich was 139,642, with 19% of the population of Ipswich under the age of 15, 65% aged 15 – 64 years and 17% aged 65+¹⁸. The population is projected to be 135,816 by 2043. The age projections for the 2043 population are similar but with a decrease in those aged under 15 (18.2%) and 16 – 64 (59.8%) and an increase in those 65+ to 22%¹⁹. Life expectancy in Ipswich is 82.6 years for females and 78.6 years for males, which is comparable to the average for England¹⁵.

1.2. Households

The 2021 Census reported that in Ipswich 32.4% of the population live in one-person households, 61.6% in single family households and 6% in other household types⁹. Therefore, most of the population of Ipswich live in single family households (couple with or without children, single parents with child[ren]).

1.3. Employment and income

In December 2023, 85.9% of the population of working age (16-64 years) were employed. Of those employed and aged 16-64, 77% were employed full-time and 22% part-time⁶. As of May 2024, 20.2% of the population (aged 16-65) received Universal Credit¹⁷. In 2021/22, 23.7% of children in Ipswich were living in families with a low income².

1.4. Disability

According to the 2021 Census, 7.3% of the population of Ipswich report having a disability that limits them a lot, 10.7% a disability that limits them a little and 7.2% report having a long-term condition that does not limit their day-to-day activities⁴.

1.5. Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) official measure of relative deprivation and the Barrier to Housing and Services domain shows the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. This ranks smaller areas on deciles of most and least deprived (1 = most and 10 = least deprived)¹². This shows that most areas in Ipswich fall within the most deprived end of the index of multiple deprivation scale, however in relation to Housing and Services this is spread more evenly with most areas within Ipswich being towards the least deprived end of the scale¹².

Figure 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation for Ipswich.

Ipswich	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Index of multiple deprivation	14.1%	18.8%	12.9%	4.7%	10.6%	10.6%	11.8%	5.9%	9.4%	1.2%
Barriers to Housing and Services	1.2%	10.6%	3.5%	11.8%	10.6%	16.5%	9.4%	14.1%	18.8%	3.5%

Source: MHCLG / IMD AND Barriers to Housing and Services.



1.6. Asylum and resettlement

Ipswich is a Home Office dispersal area for asylum and resettlement. In 2023, 11% of those resettled within the East of England resettled within Ipswich⁸.

Figure 2: Home Office dispersal area for Asylum and resettlement in Ipswich.

	2021	2022	2023
Ipswich	38	15	12
East of England	1,225	469	113

Source: Immigration system statistics data tables - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

1.7. Dwelling numbers

In 2023, there were 62,080 properties in Ipswich. The table below shows estimates in relation to changes in housing supply in Ipswich between 2018 – 2023⁵.

Figure 3: Net additions in housing in Ipswich.

2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
223	421	243	171	209

Source: Net additions in housing supply DLUHC/Suffolk SODA.

1.8. Home ownership and tenancy type

The table shows that most of the population in Ipswich own their own homes, and the next most common tenure type is privately rented accommodation²³.

Figure 4: Home ownership and tenancy by type by % of households Ipswich (2021).

Owns outright	Owns with mortgage or loan	Shared ownership	Social rented	Private rented	Lives rent free
28.2%	27.2%	0.6%	20.8%	22.9%	0.2%

Source: ONS/Suffolk SODA.

1.9. Housing costs

Households in Ipswich who experienced rising private rents saw an average increase of £71 a month between 2022 and 2023 (2022: £760; 2023: £830), lower than the national average. Average rent rises were £48 for a one-bed property to £89 for a four-bed property. On average mortgages increased £188 a month (2022: £872; 2023: £1,060), higher than the national average¹¹.

The table shows the affordability ratio of median house price and median earnings for buying a house in 2022 and 2023, in Ipswich compared with Suffolk and England. The lower the ratio the more affordable properties are, meaning that properties are generally more affordable in Ipswich than in Suffolk and nationally¹⁰.

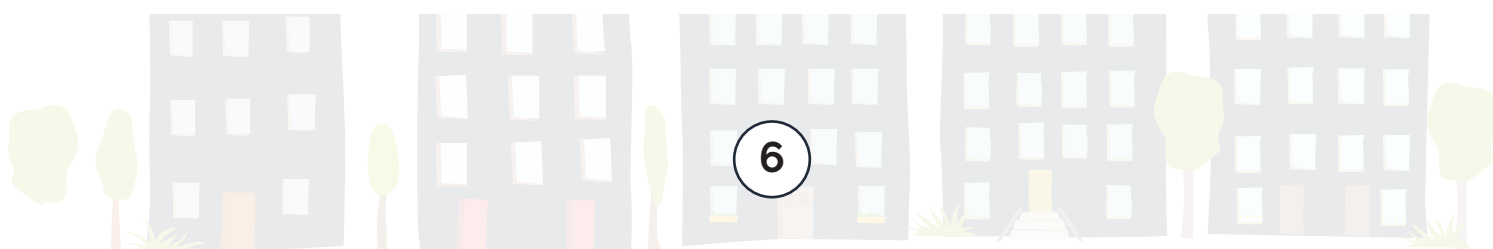


Figure 5: House price to work-place earnings ratio.

Area	Year (as of September)	Affordability Ratio	Median house price	Median earnings
Ipswich	2022	7.27	£232,500	£32,000
	2023	7.31	£243,750	£33,363
Suffolk	2022	9.22	£290,000	£31,446
	2023	8.52	£285,000	£33,463
England	2022	8.47	£282,000	£33,280
	2023	8.26	£290,000	£35,106

Source; House price to work-place earnings ratio – Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk).

1.10. Financial hardship

The cost of living in the UK increased significantly during 2021 – 2022, with inflation increasing to 11.1% in October 2022, a rate not seen in 41 years. Inflation has subsequently reduced at 2.3% in April 2024²¹. Since the end of 2021, UK residents have experienced a fall in their disposable income caused by higher inflation and low wage growth³. This negatively affects the ability of households to pay for goods, services, and essential bills such as food, heating and housing costs. This has been further impacted by the war in Ukraine and the increased cost of energy.

1.11. Benefit rates

Local Housing Allowances have been set at the 30th percentile of market rents from April 2024, resulting in 1.6m low-income households being around £800 a year better off. Additionally, benefits have been increased by 6.7% providing some support to households with general living costs.

1.12. Demand for social housing

The demand for social housing in Ipswich far exceeds supply, as evidenced within the Gateway to Homechoice annual reports. The percentage number of lets out of the total number of active applications remained similar on 1st April 2019/20 and 2023/24 (24% and 26%, respectively). In 2023/24, of those with an active application on the 1st of April on Ipswich's social housing register, 4% were in a band A, 20% were in a band B and 27% were in a band C. The shortest average wait time was for a one-bed property (10.6 months) and the longest was for a three-bed property (23.8 months). Between 2019 and 2024, over half the accommodation let were flats and around a quarter were houses. In 2023/24, Ipswich had no lets of new build social housing properties in contrast to other Local Authority areas⁷.

1.13. Empty homes

Long-term empty homes are a wasted resource and can have negative impacts on neighbourhoods and communities due to issues such as anti-social behaviour²⁰. The table below shows the numbers of empty homes within the Ipswich Borough Council area. During 2023/24, the Private Sector Housing team at Ipswich Borough Council returned 20 empty properties to use.



Figure 6: Empty homes within Ipswich.

	All Vacant Dwellings (Specified date in Oct/Nov)	All Long-Term Vacant Dwellings (Specified date in Oct/Nov)	Local Authority Vacant Dwellings	PRP Vacant General Needs Dwellings	PRP Long Term Vacant General Needs Dwellings
2019	1,371	344	39	40	28
2020	1,553	574	79	32	13
2021	1,539	495	157	44	28
2022	1,511	414	366	83	71
2023	1,703	356	95	61	45

Source: GOV.UK. Data set: Live tables on dwelling stock.

2. Household characteristics

Of the 900 households who presented as homeless to Ipswich Borough Council in 2022/23 and were owed a prevention duty, 46% were single/one-person male households, and of the 336 households who were owed a relief duty, 54% were single/one-person male households (100% response rate). The majority of the 1,236 main applicants who were owed a prevention or relief duty (100% response rate) were in the 25-34 age range (32%), and 48% were unemployed (99% response rate). Out of the 1,236 applicants whose ethnicity was recorded, 35% were white (50% response rate), 46% were UK nationals (57% response rate) and 26% identified as heterosexual (46% response rate). In Ipswich, 2.3% reported not being able to speak English well, which is something that must be considered when designing homelessness advice services in Ipswich¹⁴.

2.1. Single / one-person homeless households.

The table below evidences the high percentage of single households we assisted in 2018/19 and 2023/24, compared with other household types. As can be seen the number of single male households was particularly high.

Figure 7: Household type by approach or duty owed.

Total approaches:		2018/2019: 1,242		Prevention Duty				Relief Duty	
		2023/2024: 1,883		2018/19		2023/24		2018/19	
Single adult	Male	206	30.1%	335	42.7%	241	52.5%	174	52.3%
	Female	143	20.9%	166	21.1%	94	20.5%	69	20.7%
	Other / not known	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	7	2.1%
Single parent with dependent children	Male	17	2.5%	14	1.8%	10	2.2%	7	2.1%
	Female	148	21.6%	123	15.7%	67	14.6%	48	14.4%
	Other / not known	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Couple / two adults without dependent children	With dependent children	122	17.8%	90	11.5%	30	6.5%	14	4.2%
	Without dependent children	30	4.4%	30	3.8%	14	3.1%	12	3.6%
Three or more adults	With dependent children	8	1.2%	14	1.8%	2	0.4%	2	0.6%
	Without dependent children	9	1.3%	11	1.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
TOTAL		684	100%	785	100%	459	100%	333	100%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website

2.2. Age group of single/one-person male households owed a prevention and relief duty.

The table below shows the age at approach of single male households during 2022/23. As can be seen, we accepted the most prevention duties for individuals within the 25-34 age ranges and the most relief duties for those between 35 and 44.

Figure 8: Age of single / one-person male households 2022/23.

	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
Prevention	7%	13%	17%	16%	15%	8%	8%	5%	4%	5%	2%
Relief	10%	13%	11%	10%	16%	14%	8%	8%	7%	1%	2%

Source: Housing Business Support

2.3. Sexual orientation.

The table below shows that the sexual orientation of applicants is under recorded, as 54% of responses were recorded as not known, 19% prefer not to say and 1% as homosexual (whereas nationally the figure is believed to be around 4%²²). This has been identified as an area where recording processes need to be adjusted to ensure that this is captured accurately. Research has shown that LGBTIQ+ people are disproportionately more likely to be homeless or insecurely housed than someone who is not LGBTIQ+²².

Figure 9: Sexual orientation of lead applicant 2022/23 owed a prevention or relief duty.

Number of households owed a homelessness duty by sexual orientation of lead applicant					
Total households	Response rate	Not known	Heterosexual / Straight	Prefer not to say	Homosexual (Gay/Lesbian)
1236	46%	54%	26%	19%	1%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

3. Support needs

In 2022/23, of those households owed a prevention or relief duty, 25% had identified support needs. Of households with support needs owed a prevention or relief duty in 22/23, the most common support need was a history of mental health problems (15%).

3.1. Care leavers.

During 2023/24, 61 care leavers presented as homeless to Ipswich Borough Council and needed emergency temporary accommodation. This is significantly more than in previous years, as can be seen from the table to the right.

Figure 10: Care leavers who presented as homeless to the Council.

Year	Care leaver aged 18-20 years	Care leaver aged 21+ years
19/20	42	16
20/21	43	13
21/22	27	11
22/23	20	9

Source: Housing Business Support.

3.2. Armed forces.

We have a generally low number of applicants that have served within the armed forces approaching Ipswich for homelessness assistance. The Gateway to Homechoice allocations policy includes a priority provision for armed forces personnel in certain circumstances.

Figure 11: Approaches from those who have served within the armed forces.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Number of approaches from those that served in the armed forces 2019-2024	3	11	4	3	6	27

Source: Housing Business Support.

Figure 12: Applicants on Gateway with armed forced priority.

Verified armed forces applications on Gateway to Homechoice (2019 - 2024)		Of which,		
		Prevention Duty was owed	Relief Duty was owed	Main Duty was owed
2019	8	0	0	0
2020	6	0	0	0
2021	5	0	0	1
2022	3	0	1	0
2023	8	2	0	0
Mid-2024	4	0	0	1
TOTAL	37	2	1	2

Source: Civica Report. Copy of Housing Register Armed Forces Analysis (ID 7405). Generated 25th July 2024.



3.3. Refugees.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The scheme allows UK residents to sponsor Ukrainian nationals and their families and provide them with refuge from the war. The scheme provides three-year visas with full access to public services, benefits, and support. As of 2023, 131,000 people had arrived in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. By September 2023, the government had provided £2.1 billion to fund the scheme. Between March 2022 and August 2023, 4,890 households had become homeless or at risk of homelessness¹³.

The UK opened the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) in January 2022 to assist those who supported the UK's efforts in Afghanistan and to assist vulnerable people, including women and girls at risk. The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme assists qualifying Afghan nationals and their families who have worked with the UK government to relocate to the UK. As of June 2023, around 21,500 people received settlement in the UK under these schemes, with 70% having arrived due to the evacuation of Kabul. This picture is mirrored across Europe and at the end of 2022, 9.3 million Afghans were displaced across the world. As of June 2023, 11,000 people under these schemes were residing within settled accommodation and 6,600 were resident within "bridging" accommodation¹.

Approaches from refugees to Housing Options have remained low. Between 2022 – 2024, the Housing Options team received 22 approaches from Ukrainian refugees and 6 from Afghan refugees. As can be seen from the table, prevention and relief duties accepted have remained low for all refugees in general. However, there has been a sharp increase in relief duties accepted for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) during 2024.

Figure 13; Duties owed to refugees.

YEAR	Ukrainian		Afghan		Dispersal		UASC	
	Prevent	Relief	Prevent	Relief	Prevent	Relief	Prevent	Relief
2022	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	4	0	0	1	1	1	3	2
2024	0	1	1	1	3	4	2	22
Total	5	2	1	2	4	5	5	24

Source: Housing Business Support.

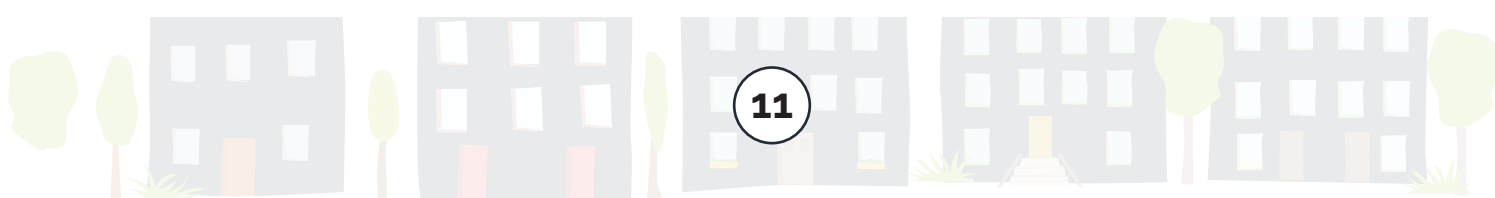
4. Homelessness duties

4.1. Eligibility.

In Ipswich, in 2022/23, 84% of households who were owed a homelessness duty were eligible for assistance because they were a British citizen and habitually resident, and 7% were EEA nationals possessing permanent residence. According to the population characteristics data for Ipswich, 82% of the population were born in the UK and 78% own a passport for the European region¹⁶.

4.2. Priority need.

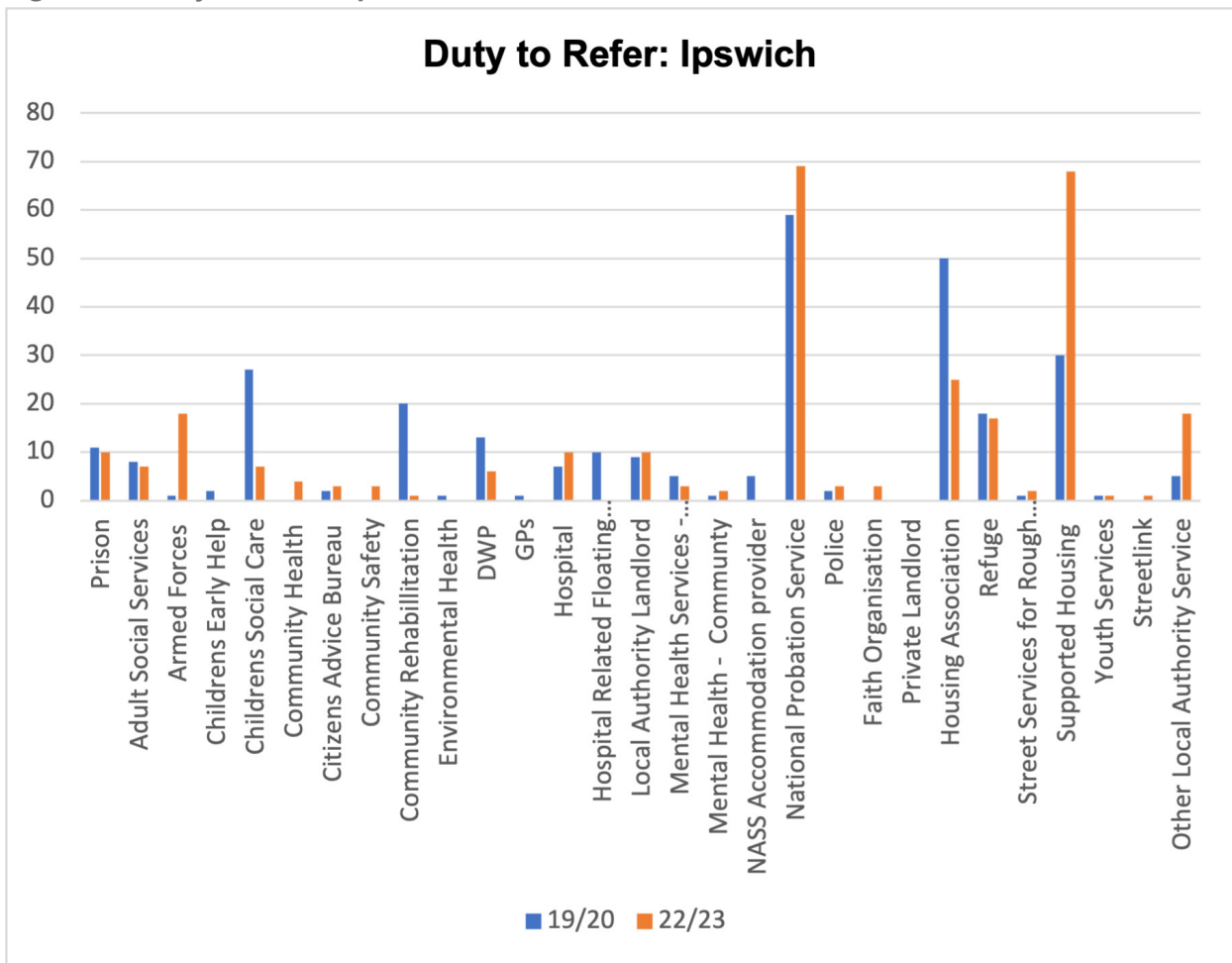
In 2022/23, of those owed a main duty in Ipswich, 58% had a priority need due to having dependent children, and 13% due to being vulnerable because of physical ill health or disability. These figures are consistent with those for the East of England as a whole.



4.3. Duty to Refer.

Although all agencies are encouraged to use the Duty to Refer mechanism to refer individuals to us who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, specified public authorities are legally required to do so. This includes prisons, youth offending teams, probation, job centres, child and adult social care, emergency departments, hospitals, and the secretary of state for defence. The chart shows Duty to Refer referrals received during 2019/20 and 2022/23. As can be seen, referrals from agencies such as the police, citizens advice bureau, and social care, particularly adult social care, were lower than expected. Comparing referrals received between 2019/20 and 2022/23, there appears to have been a significant increase from the armed forces, probation service, supported housing and other Local Authority services but a decrease from children's social care, community rehabilitation, DWP and housing associations.

Figure 14: Duty to refer – Ipswich.



Source: Business Support Unit, Housing Services, Ipswich Borough Council.

4.4. "Nearest neighbour" data.

This report compares some of the data for Ipswich with other Local Authorities, who are our "nearest neighbours" for comparison, based on the similarity of the Local Authority area rather than geographical location. Various factors are taken into consideration when calculating this, including population, gender proportions, percentage working age, percentage unemployed and numbers from ethnic minority groups. Based on these calculations, the "nearest neighbours" for comparison with Ipswich are Derby, Lincoln, Redditch, and Basildon. Some data has therefore been compared with Derby and Basildon as well as with the East of England and England for the purpose of this review.



4.5. Homeless approaches and duties accepted.

The table below shows the total number of approaches, as well as relief and prevention duties by household type between 2018/19 and 2023/24. This shows that between 2018/19 and 2023/24, approaches have increased by 52%, however relief duties have decreased by 19% and prevention duties have decreased by 13%. However, prevention duties for single/one-person male households seem to be increasing (30% in 2018/2019 to 43% in 2023/24). There also seems to be a decrease in prevention duties for households with dependent children. This appears to support the need for more one-bed housing both for single one-person households and couples without children.

Figure 15: Approaches, prevention and relief by household type.

Total approaches: 2018/2019: 1,242 2023/2024: 1,883		Prevention Duty				Relief Duty			
		2018/19		2023/24		2018/19		2023/24	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single adult	Male	206	30.1%	335	42.7%	241	52.5%	174	52.3%
	Female	143	20.9%	166	21.1%	94	20.5%	69	20.7%
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	Female	148	21.6%	123	15.7%	67	14.6%	48	14.4%
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Couple / two adults without dependent children	With dependent children	122	17.8%	90	11.5%	30	6.5%	14	4.2%
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	Without dependent children	9	1.3%	11	1.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
TOTAL		684	100%	785	100%	459	100%	333	100%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

4.6. Number of households with successful outcome by type of duty.

The table below shows the percentage of households in Ipswich with a successful outcome by duty type. This shows that between 2019/20 and 2022/23, the number of successful preventions has fallen slightly since 2021/22. The number of successful relief duties has decreased, and main duty acceptances have increased. The picture across the East of England and England as whole appears similar to Ipswich. This reflects the difficulties faced by homeless households in securing accommodation, which may be further impacted in Ipswich by its small geographical area and increased competition for accommodation.

Figure 16: Successful outcomes in Ipswich by duty type.

Year	% Prevention duty ended with accommodation secured	% Relief duty ended with accommodation secured	% Homeless + priority need + unintentionally homeless (acceptance)
2019/20	52%	33%	87%
2020/21	52%	39%	81%
2021/22	55%	35%	84%
2022/23	54%	31%	90%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

4.7. Prevention and relief duties - reason for loss of settled home.

In Ipswich between financial years of 2019 and 2023, the most common reason for a prevention duty being accepted was family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate (27-34%). Comparing the data for 2019/20 and 2022/23 with Ipswich, Basildon and Derby, family and friends being no longer willing or able to accommodate was also the primary reason (32-44%), followed by the landlord wishing to sell or relet the property (22-37%).

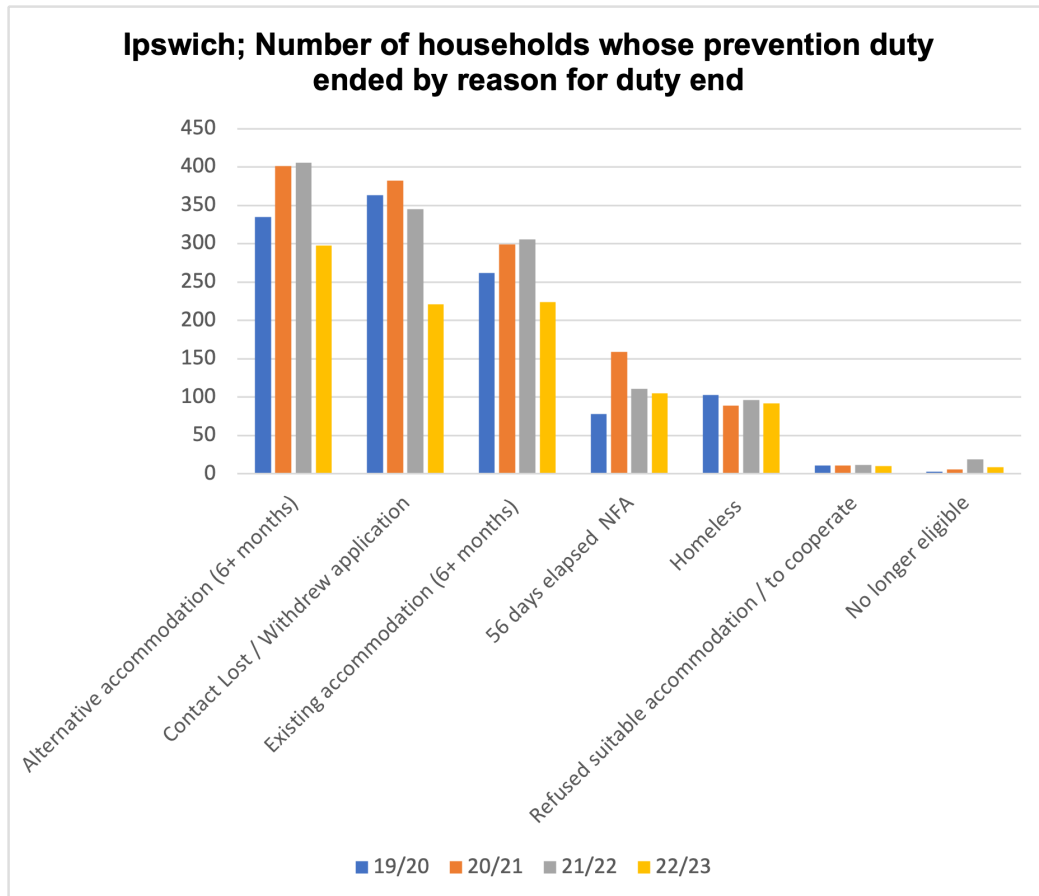
In Ipswich, prevention duties were accepted in 10% of cases in 2019/20 and 18% in 2022/23 because of the landlord wishing to sell or relet (Section 21 notice). This was therefore the second most common reason in Ipswich and has also seen an increase. The data for the East of England and England showed similar trends.

Between the financial years 2019 and 2023 the most common reason for loss of last settled home in Ipswich, leading to a relief duty being accepted, was also family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate (27%-38%). The data has been analysed for 2019/20 and 2022/23 and this was the same for Basildon and Derby (22%-41%), and for the East of England and England as a whole.

4.8. Reasons prevention and relief duties were ended.

In Ipswich, between 2019/20 and 2022/23, most prevention duties ended due to accommodation being secured for 6 or more months (52-55%). During the years of 2019/20 and 2022/23, this was roughly 50% of all prevention duties accepted. There was, overall, a very similar picture for 2019/20 and 2022/23 between Ipswich and our nearest neighbours and nationally.

Figure 17: Reason for prevention duty ending.



Source:
Detailed Local
Authority
level
homelessness
figures: GOV.
UK website.

In Ipswich between 2019/20 and 2022/23, 7-10% of prevention duties ended with the household becoming homeless³⁶. As can be seen from the table below comparing the figures in 2019/20 with 2022/23 with our nearest neighbours and nationally, the figures for Ipswich are significantly lower, showing the results of the positive prevention work which is carried out.

Figure 18; Homelessness as reason for the prevention duty ending in Ipswich.

Year	Ipswich	Basildon	Derby	East of England	England
2019/20	9%	29%	36%	22%	19%
2022/23	10%	40%	14%	25%	24%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

The three most common reasons for the relief duty ending in Ipswich between 2019 and 2023 were the applicant being assisted to secure accommodation for 6 or more months (31-39%), where the household withdrew their application or lost contact (presumably resolving their housing situation) (21-33%), and where the relief duty was unsuccessful, and the 56 days therefore came to an end (26-45%). However, the numbers resolving their own housing situation and withdrawing/losing contact appears to have fallen over this period (33% in 19/20 – 21% in 22-23), which is likely due to challenges being faced in the housing sector both locally and nationally. There appears to have been a general increase in the number of relief duties that have ended due to the 56 days coming to an end without accommodation being secured (30% in 19/20 and 45% in 22/23), which also reflects this.

Figure 19: Most common reasons for the end of the relief duty in Ipswich.

Local Authority	Year	Secured accommodation for 6+ months	Withdrew application /contact lost	56 days elapsed
Ipswich	2019/20	33%	33%	30%
	2022/23	31%	21%	45%
Basildon	2019/20	29%	4%	67%
	2022/23	25%	4%	66%
Derby	2019/20	45%	15%	38%
	2022/23	50%	17%	29%
East of England	2019/20	33%	11%	46%
	2022/23	33%	16%	49%
England	2019/20	40%	18%	38%
	2022/23	36%	17%	44%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

The table above shows similar trends for our nearest neighbours and nationally. The figures for accommodation having been secured for 6 or more months appears to be higher in Derby but the figures for Ipswich are like those of the East of England as a whole. Where the relief duty has ended due to the 56 days of the relief duty having elapsed, the figures for Ipswich are consistent with other areas and significantly lower than for Basildon. The differences in the numbers of applications withdrawn/contact lost in Ipswich could be due to differences in how outcomes are recorded.

4.9. Type of accommodation secured to end the prevention and relief duty.

Securing private rented accommodation was the most common type of accommodation secured to end the prevention duty between 2020/21 and 2022/23 in Ipswich (27%-30%). When comparing this data with our nearest neighbours slightly more households secured self-contained private rented accommodation in the East of England (2019/20; 36% and 2022/23 35%) as was the same for England. In Ipswich, those securing private rented self-contained accommodation was 27% in 2019/20 and 30% in 2022/23. The number of households securing social rented accommodation in Ipswich was 28% in 2019/20 and 20% in 2022/23. This is lower than the figures for the East of England and England which range from 33-37% for the same periods. The numbers of households staying with family, securing supported housing or hostel accommodation and private rented HMO accommodation were higher in Ipswich than in other areas and nationally.

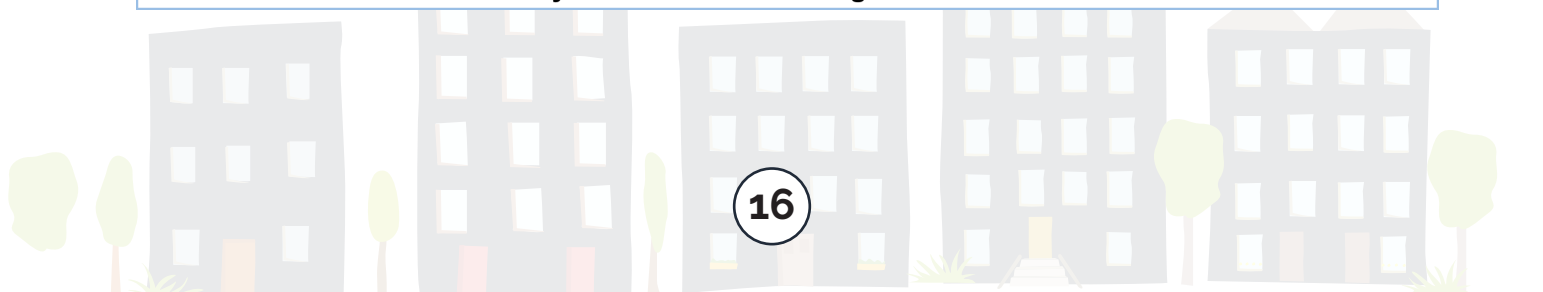
Securing supported housing or hostel accommodation (24-32%) was the most common type of accommodation secured to end the relief duty between 2019/20 – 2022/23 in Ipswich. This must be considered in relation to forthcoming changes in the way supported housing is funded in Suffolk, to ensure that suitable accommodation is available for single / one-person homeless households with support needs.

The picture nationally is different in some Local Authority areas in relation to the type of accommodation secured to end the relief duty between 2019/20 and 2022/23. The numbers securing private rented self-contained accommodation were much lower in Ipswich (2019/20; 9% and 2022/23; 8%) than in the East of England and England as a whole (20-23%). This can also be seen in relation to securing social rented accommodation, where in Ipswich this was 20% for 2019/20 and 16% for 2022/23, for the East of England and England this ranged from 25-30% for the same periods.

Figure 20: Type of accommodation secured to end the relief duty.

Local Authority	Year	Private rented; Self-contained	Private rented; HMO	Lodging (not with family or friends)	Social rented	Supported housing or hostel	Staying with family	Staying with friends	Other/not known
Ipswich	2019/20	6%	9%	2%	8%	21%	8%	3%	43%
	2020/21	6%	12%	0%	4%	24%	4%	2%	48%
East of England	2019/20	23%	10%	1%	26%	22%	4%	1%	11%
	2020/21	20%	11%	1%	30%	25%	4%	2%	7%
England	2019/20	22%	6%	1%	25%	27%	4%	2%	13%
	2020/21	20%	7%	1%	29%	28%	4%	2%	8%

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.



4.10. Types of activity that lead to prevention and relief duties ending.

The most common activity that led to the end of the prevention duty between 2019/20 and 2022/23 was accommodation secured by Local Authority (16-27%). The most common activity that led to the end of the relief duty for this period was accommodation secured by Local Authority (35-51%). This reflects the national picture; however, these figures are slightly higher for the East of England and England as a whole.

4.11. Reasons the main duty was ended.

In Ipswich between 2019 – 2023, the reason for the main duty ending was accepting an offer of social housing in most cases (91-98%). This was slightly higher in Ipswich than for the East of England and England. This is believed to be due to the difficult housing conditions nationally and the fact that once the main duty has been accepted, the applicant must be assisted into a tenancy that is at least 12 months long which limits options for discharging the main homelessness duty.

4.12. Temporary accommodation.

The government figures only report on “temporary accommodation” and do not distinguish between accommodation provided under Section 188 (interim accommodation) and Section 193 (temporary accommodation) of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

The table shows the proportion of the households (with and without children) accommodated in temporary accommodation in Ipswich and nationally on the 31st March 2023. The table shows the very different picture in Ipswich regarding temporary accommodation in comparison to England as a whole. In Ipswich significantly more households, both with and without children, were accommodated in Council-run accommodation for homeless households than is the case nationally. In contrast the use of nightly paid accommodation, private sector accommodation and Local Authority or housing association accommodation was significantly higher nationally than in Ipswich. This evidences that Ipswich values good quality temporary accommodation for homeless households, therefore placing homeless households, particularly those with children, in our own hostel accommodation wherever possible.

Figure 21: Type of temporary accommodation on the 31st March 2023.

Local Authority Area	Bed and breakfast hotels (including shared annexes)	Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation, self-contained	Hostels (including reception centres, emergency units and refuges)	Private sector accommodation leased by your authority or managed by a registered provider	Local authority or housing association (LA/HA) stock	Any other type of temporary accommodation (including private landlord and not known)
Households without children						
Ipswich	12%	0%	82%	0%	4%	2%
Nationally	13%	25%	6%	23%	25%	8%
Households with children						
Ipswich	8%	0%	84%	0%	8%	0%
Nationally	6%	25%	5%	28%	27%	9%
Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.						

In Ipswich, of those without children in bed and breakfast accommodation, 83% had been there for less than 6 months and 80% of those in hostel accommodation had been there for less than 6 months (compared with national figures of 69% and 37%, respectively). There were no households who had been in any type of temporary accommodation for longer than 1-2 years. However nationally the percentages for this were comparatively high, with the highest being 34% having been in private sector accommodation for 2-5 years and 38% for more than 5 years. For households with children in bed and breakfast accommodation, 100% had been there for less than 6 months, and of those in hostels 91% had been there for less than 6 months (compared with national figures of 85% and 34% respectively). There were no households who had been in temporary accommodation for longer than a year. Nationally the highest figures for families placed in private sector accommodation were 34% having been there for 2-5 years and 39% for 5 or more years. This shows that in Ipswich households with and without children spent less time in temporary accommodation than is the case nationally.

4.13. Section 208 referrals.

The table below shows Section 208 notices provided by other Local Authorities to Ipswich Borough Council that they have discharged their duty to accommodate a household within the Ipswich Borough Council area. As can be seen the number of notices received increased in 2022/23.

Figure 22; Section 208 referrals to Ipswich.

Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Number	94	105	98	155

Source; Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

There is currently no data on the numbers of households that then remain in the town, but anecdotally we have not seen an impact from people subsequently coming to the Council for assistance.

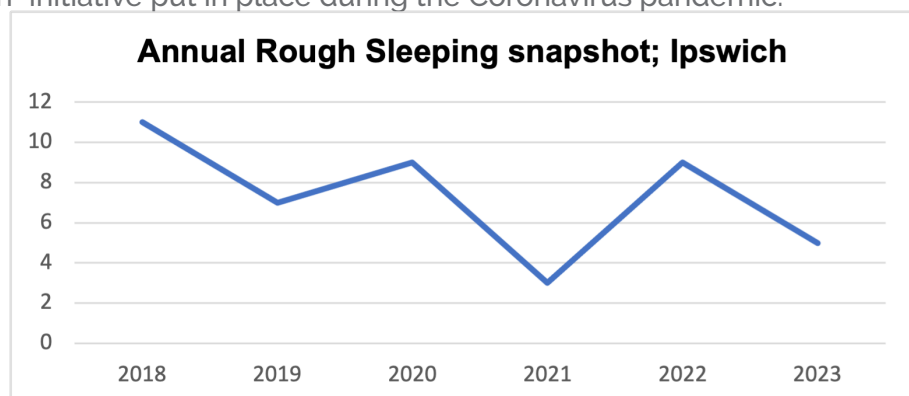
5. Rough sleeping.

5.1. Annual rough sleeping snapshot.

The chart below shows rough sleeping numbers based on the annual counts, which are carried out in November each year of numbers found bedded down on a given night. Numbers reduced in Ipswich following the launch of the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) in March 2018, and there was a further reduction in 2021 following the government's "Everyone In" initiative put in place during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Figure 23: Annual rough sleeping snapshot for Ipswich.

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.



As can be seen below, this is similar to the national picture, however where the national figures have increased since 2022, in Ipswich they have reduced.

Figure 24: Annual rough sleeping snapshots - Ipswich and national.

5.2. Rough sleeper characteristics.

According to information recorded during the annual rough sleeping snapshot 2018 - 2023 regarding the characteristics of people rough sleeping in Ipswich, the majority have been male, aged over 26 and either of UK or EU nationality.

Figure 25: Annual rough sleeping snapshot - nationality of residents.

Year	UK	EU (non UK)	Non-EU	Not Known
2018	9	2	0	0
2019	7	0	0	0
2020	7	2	0	0
2021	3	0	0	0
2022	4	5	0	0
2023	1	3	0	1

Source: Detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website.

5.3. Rough sleeper support needs.

According to the rough sleeping team’s own data recorded from the 112 rough sleepers worked with between July and December 2023, substance misuse (42) and mental health (32) issues are the most common support needs experienced by those rough sleeping in Ipswich. By far the most common reason for loss of settled home recorded was being evicted (30), however rough sleepers reported being housed (6) more than other reasons for the loss of their home such as fear of violence (4) or being released from prison (4). The most common routes off the street were accessing Rough Sleeping Initiative funded emergency beds including short-term emergency provision (5) and rough sleeper emergency beds (3).

5.4. Rough Sleeping Initiative funding.

The chart below shows the amounts of rough sleeper grants from the government that have been achieved by Ipswich Borough Council each year.

Number of households assisted through Spend to Save

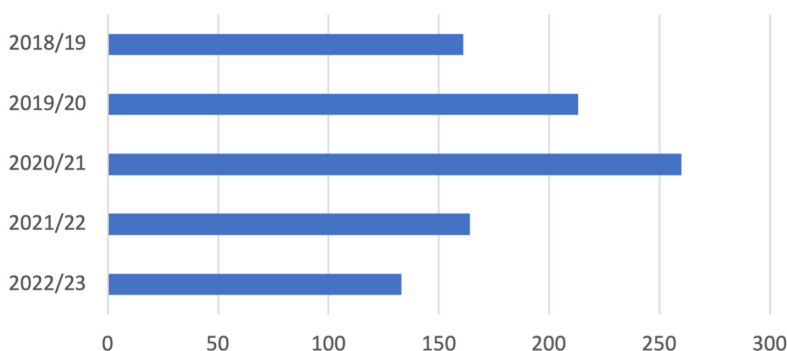


Figure 26: Rough sleeper grants for Ipswich

Source: Ipswich Borough Council Housing Options Team.

In addition to Rough Sleeping Initiative grant funding, additional “top up funding” is received for use on individual projects.

5.5. Rough Sleeping Initiative interventions.

Between April 23 – February 2024, the Rough Sleeping team have delivered the following interventions to individuals.

Figure 27: Ipswich Rough Sleeping Initiative interventions April 23 – February 24.

Mental Health Practitioner Support	Outreach Support	Navigator	STEP beds	Housing First Initiative	Rough Sleeping Emergency Beds	NSAP	Prevention Bed	SWEP Beds	Cedars Beds	In-reach Support
230	172	58	49	30	21	14	11	9	5	1

Source: Ipswich Borough Council, Rough Sleeping Project.

5.6. Target Priority Group.

The Target Priority Group (TPG) is a group of individuals who have been identified as regularly rough sleeping within Ipswich. They are identified by counting the number of times the individual rough sleeps and returns after 180 days. There are criteria for the TPG group including relating to the number of nights spent rough sleeping, acceptance of accommodation and returning to sleep rough. There are currently 21 individuals who meet the TPG criteria, and as such we submit regular reports to DLUHC regarding their rough sleeping.

6. Supported housing

In 2022/23, of the 830 applications made for supported housing, 263 were successful in obtaining placements (32%), and most successful applicants were placed in accommodation within a month (43%).

7. Gateway to Homechoice (social housing register)

7.1. Gateway lets to households under homelessness duties.

The table shows the proportion let to households under homeless duties, showing that the percentage lets to those under homelessness duties has also remained relatively constant.

Figure 28: Gateway lets to households under homelessness duties.

Year	Total lets	Total lets to those under homelessness duties	% Lets to those under homelessness duties out of total lets
2019/20	650	190	29%
2020/21	465	142	31%
2021/22	622	164	26%
2022/23	651	197	30%
2023/24	719	195	27%

Source: Gateway to Homechoice annual reports.



The table below shows the total number of Gateway lets to those under an accepted prevention, relief and main duty in total by property type. The majority of lets to those under prevention, relief and main duties were for one-bed and two-bed properties.

Figure 29: Gateway lets to residents under homelessness duties by bedroom number.

Year	Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed+
2019/20	2%	29%	52%	17%	0%
2020/21	1%	35%	44%	18%	1%
2021/22	0%	40%	50%	9%	1%
2022/23	2%	34%	43%	20%	1%

Source: Accommodation team, Ipswich Borough Council.

7.2 Gateway average waiting time.

The table shows the average waiting time in months in Ipswich to secure accommodation through Gateway, both overall and by band. Those under a prevention or relief duty will generally be a band C on Gateway and those who have an accepted main housing duty will usually be a band B. There appears to be slightly longer waiting times for 2023/24 for band A and overall, reflecting the current pressures on social housing. These times are an average and some people will have a significantly longer wait.

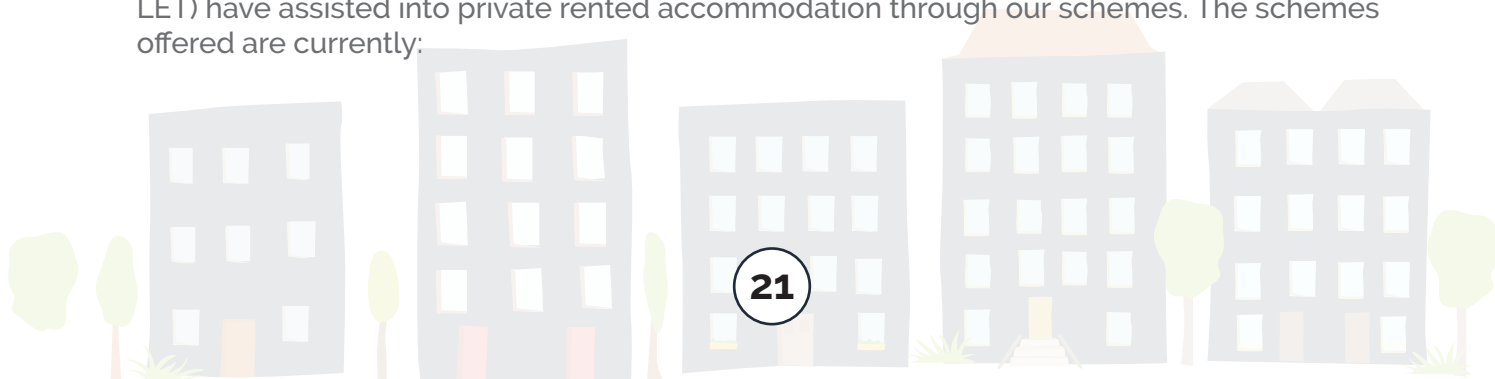
Figure 30: Average Gateway waiting time in months by band.

Year	By band			
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Overall
2019/20	4.3	10.7	23.2	12.7
2020/21	5.4	13.3	17.6	12.9
2022/23	4.9	14.7	18.2	12.6
2023/24	6.7	14.3	17.3	14.1

Source: Accommodation Team, Ipswich Borough Council.

8. Ipswich LET

The table shows the numbers of households that the Council's private lettings team (Ipswich LET) have assisted into private rented accommodation through our schemes. The schemes offered are currently:



Deposit Bond Scheme (DBS) – offers a deposit in the form of a bond that landlords can claim against at the end of the tenancy if required.

Landlord Security Scheme (LSS)– like a deposit bond but offers this security where an applicant has no guarantor.

Rent Guarantee Scheme (RGS) – rent is set at Local Housing Allowance rates and the Council guarantees the rent is paid to the landlord.

Figure 31: Households assisted through Ipswich LET schemes.

Year	DBS	RGS	LSS
2019/20	28	4	
2020/21	40	33	
2021/22	41	35	
2022/23	26	27	2

Source: Ipswich LET.

The Landlord Security Scheme is a relatively new initiative, which was developed in May 2022. The number of properties under these schemes has fallen in the last financial year. This reflects the general increase in difficulty in accessing the private rented market due to the reduced number of properties available and increases in the cost of living meaning that landlord expenses have risen and affordability for tenants is reduced. However, for those Rent Guarantee Scheme agreements that are in place, there is a high rent recovery rate, as is illustrated below.

Figure 32: Ipswich LET Rent Guarantee Scheme rent recovery rates 2023.

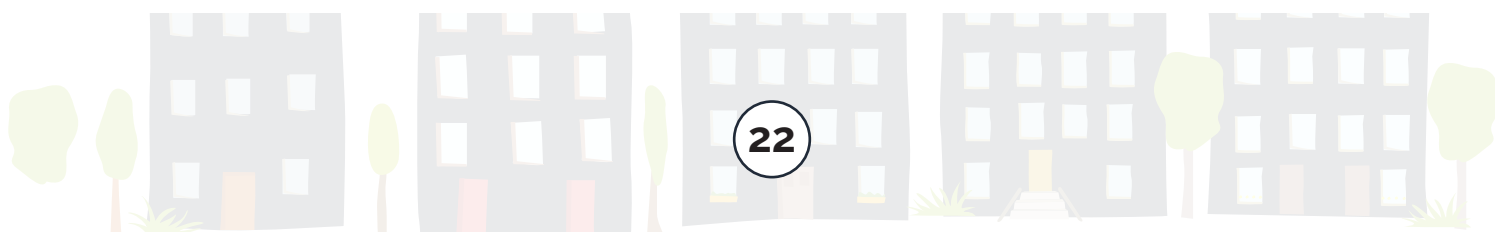
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rent Recovery Rate %	98.23	100.83	105.43	85	90.36	87.04	94.24	95.8	92.94	96.57	94.49	92.1

Source: Ipswich LET.

In addition, LET have assisted single/one-person households into self-contained accommodation at Old Foundry Road to prevent or relieve their homelessness, with 52 applicants having been accommodated there between 2020/21 and 2022/23.

9. Money advice

During 2022/23 a total of 123 referrals were made for money advice to Anglia Care Trust's Money Advice Service, with all of these having been received from the Tenancy Services team. Although not recorded as preventions when no prevention duty has been accepted, the advice given to households referred by Tenancy Services can also be early prevention work. Most applicants referred did not engage with the service with 12% receiving advice. This service is now under review as it is not demonstrating value for money.



10. Financial assistance measures

10.1. Spend to Save: Homelessness Prevention Grant.

The Homelessness Prevention Grant funds measures to prevent and relieve homelessness. During 2024/25 Ipswich was allocated £1,016,067 of government funding. The grant is used to fund interventions such as the rough sleeping emergency beds, Housing First, Rent Guarantee Scheme incentive payments, money advice contract, temporary accommodation, staff and Spend to Save.

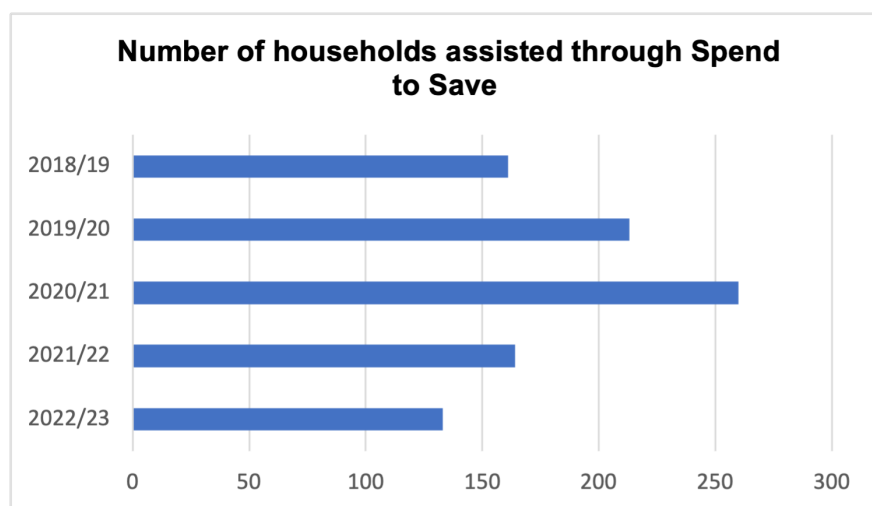
Spend to Save is the part of the funding used to assist households with upfront costs to secure private rented accommodation and to pay rent arrears. The aim is to prevent and relieve homelessness to save the Local Authority the cost associated with the household presenting as homeless and providing temporary accommodation. Spend to Save funds are used to assist households in a variety of ways such as moving costs, rent arrears, LET rent deposit claims, and other measures such as train tickets and birth certificates. The overall expenditure on Spend to Save in 2022/23 declined sharply from the previous year, down from £176,673 to £116,744, a fall of 34%. The graph below shows a decline in annual expenditure since a high of £191,419 in 2019/20. Overall, in 2022/23 there was a fall in the number of households assisted through Spend to Save compared to previous years. This was due to prioritising the Household Support Fund for homelessness prevention measures.

Figure 33: Spend to Save total expenditure.

Spend to Save total expenditure						
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
£27,608	£47,980	£165,230	£191,419	£171,838	£176,673	£116,744

Source: Business Support Unit, Housing Services, Ipswich Borough Council.

Figure 34: Number of households assisted through Spend to Save in Ipswich.



Source: Business Support Unit, Housing Services, Ipswich Borough Council.

10.2. Household Support Fund (HSF).

The Household Support Fund is provided by the government to Local Authorities to assist vulnerable households in financial hardship. The chart shows the breakdown per quarter of the total £329,604.54 HSF obtained through Housing Options and Tenancy Services teams to assist households in need during the financial year 2022/23 (1st July – 31st December 2023).

Figure 35: HSF grant utilised 1st July – 31st December 2023.

1 st April – 30 th June 2022	1 st July – 30 th September 2022	1 st October 2023 – 31 st December 2022	1 st Jan – 31 st March 2023
39,558.33	116,501.09	60,049.15	113,495.97

Source: Housing Options Team, Ipswich Borough Council.

During the 6-month period, of the £137,330.40 HSF funds allocated 49% was awarded to households with children and 39% where there was a disabled person within the household. The payment of rent accounted for 5% of the total spend and 95% was utilised to pay rent arrears. This was to prevent homelessness where a family was working with Housing Options, or it could be to aid an early prevention where a family with a Council tenancy had been assisted through the Tenancy Services team.

10.3. Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).

The number of applications for Discretionary Housing Payments and how many cases were successful can be seen in the table below. This shows that applications typically exceed successful cases significantly.

Figure 36: Discretionary Housing Payments; Ipswich applications and successful cases

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Applications			819	889	878
Successful cases	616	561	522	363	306

Source: Housing Benefit Department, Ipswich Borough Council.

*Total application numbers are not known for 18/19 and 19/20

The tables below show a breakdown of the totals spent, numbers of cases assisted and a breakdown of what the DHP funds were used for. As can be seen, most funds were used to assist households to mitigate the effects of local housing allowance reform.



Figure 37: Discretionary Housing Payments - Ipswich breakdown of funds used.

Year	Number of cases	Spent	Benefit Cap	Reduced Social Rented Size Criteria	Local Housing Allowance Reform	Combination	Other (non welfare reform)
2020/21	522	£294,021	£29,258	£59,581	£121,754	£7,458	£75.97
2021/22	363	£265,526	£28,766	£62,757	£119,720	£1,170	£53,113
2022/23	306	£199,834	£7,817	£47,543	£87,371	£3,201	£53,902

Source: Housing Benefit Department, Ipswich Borough Council

Benefit Cap - introduced by the government to set a limit on the amount of Housing Benefit and other welfare benefits working age applicants can receive.

Reduced Social Renter Size criteria – reduces the rent of a social sector tenant who is of working age and has more bedrooms in the property than they are assessed to require.

Local Housing Allowance reform – where levels do not meet the rent.

Combination – some applicants will come under several areas.

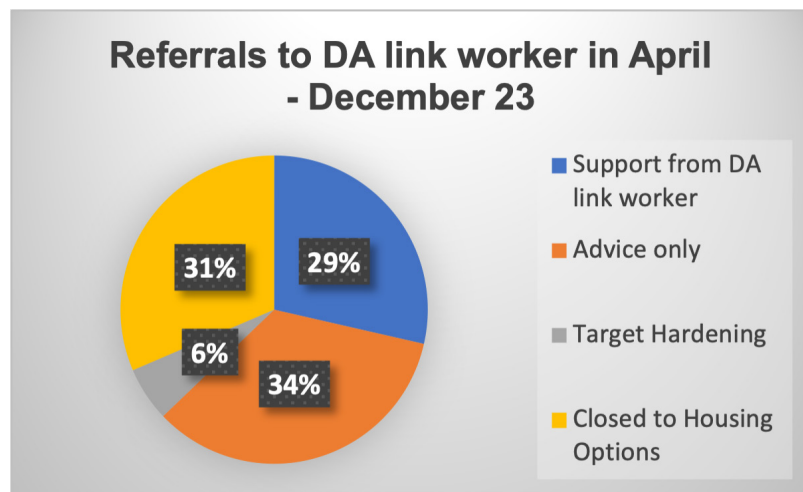
Other – applications that do not fall into one of the categories above.

11. Specialist Housing Options officers / link workers

The domestic abuse link worker received 98 referrals during the first three quarters of the 2023/24 financial year.

The nature of work completed by the domestic abuse link worker following the referral is outline in the chart below.

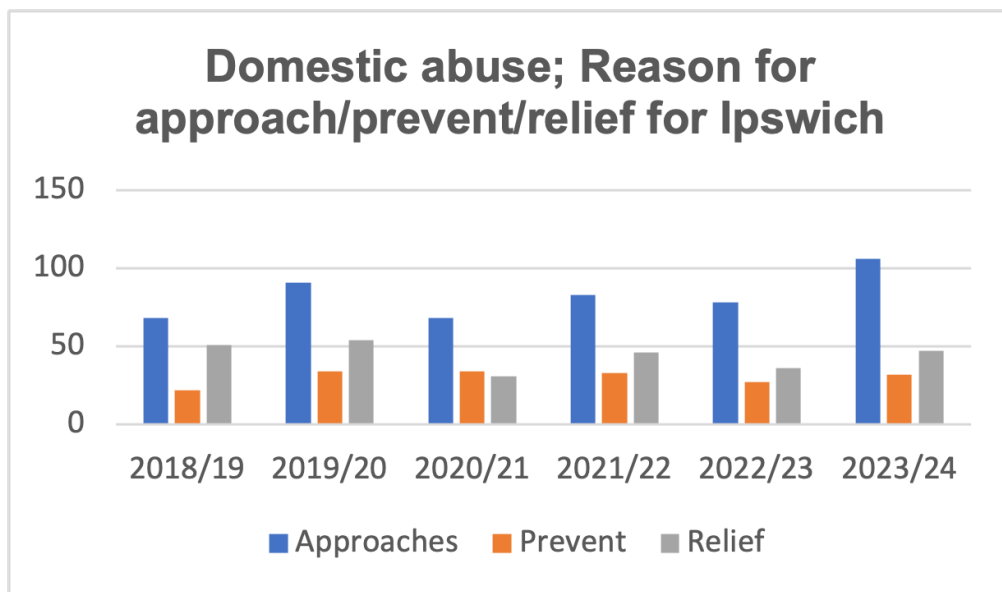
Figure 38: DA Link Worker referrals April – December 23.



Source: Business Support Unit, Housing Options, Ipswich Borough Council

The chart below shows approaches to the Housing Options team as well as prevention and relief duties accepted within Ipswich where domestic abuse was recorded as the reason. This appears to show fluctuations in numbers between years, however, there appears to have been an increase in approaches due to domestic abuse in 2023/24.

Figure 39: Domestic abuse in Ipswich - Reason for approach/prevent and relief.



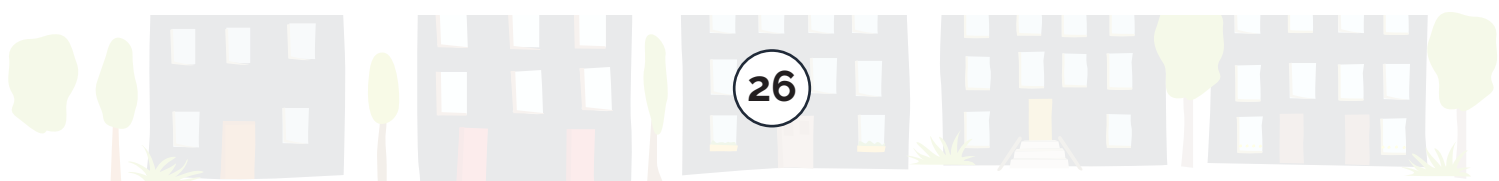
During 2022/23, 257 referrals were made to our financial inclusion specialist Housing Options officer.

Our criminal justice link worker started taking referrals in November 2023. Funded by the National Probation Service and hosted by the Council as a pilot project to prevent people leaving prison from becoming homeless. Between November 2023 and January 2024, they had received 43 referrals, with 35 remaining open at the end of that period. Of the 8 referrals that were closed, 3 ended with a positive outcome of being provided with supported accommodation.

12. Review of services provided by other Local Authorities

As a part of this homelessness review an online search was carried out to identify what services are currently provided by other Local Authorities that are not currently provided by Ipswich Borough Council. This was influenced by the difference in some of the data obtained, and to help us generate new ideas for the continuous development and improvement of our services. This research will continue, and below are some of the schemes operating in other Local Authority areas for future consideration.

- Derby Council offer home visits for assessment and advice (as well as face to face and via telephone).
- Babergh & Mid Suffolk Council provide an AdviceAid questionnaire to offer initial support and an online system to self-report homelessness or threat of homelessness.
- Basildon Borough Council have single homelessness advisors to specifically assist this group.
- Basildon Borough Council provide friends and family evictions mediation and family license termination (FLT) officers to try to prevent homelessness and assist with achieving a planned move.
- Derby City Council operate a “Call B4 You Serve” scheme to offer private landlords and agents advice and to intervene before they serve their tenants a notice.



13. Comments, complaints, and compliments

The Council promotes a positive complaints culture, ensuring the complaints process is accessible and complaints are used as an opportunity for continuous learning and improvement. In 2023/24, Housing Advice received 22 complaints, 9 compliments, and 5 comments. 16 of the complaints were regarding Choice Based Lettings / Gateway to Homechoice, and the remaining 6 were regarding Housing Options / Homelessness. Since the 1st of April 2024, the Council employs a two-stage complaints process. Stage 1 is the first complaints stage, in which a service user who isn't happy with the service they have received can submit their complaint to the Council, and the relevant service area will investigate the issue and reply. This response will be approved by the relevant Head of Service and Assistant Director. If the complainant is still dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to Stage 2, in which the Director of the relevant service area will review the client's concerns, and the Chief Executive will approve the response before it is issued. If the service user is still not satisfied with the response provided, they can then contact the relevant Ombudsman. Prior to the 1st of April 2024, the Council employed a three-stage complaints process. Of the complaints raised in 2023/24, three were escalated to Stage 2 and another three progressed to Stage 3, which no longer exists. The remaining sixteen complaints were resolved at Stage 1.

14. Evidence

The data that has been used to inform this report can be found [here](#). This includes data on the following subjects:

- » Household characteristics.
- » Support needs.
- » Homelessness duties.
- » Rough sleeping.
- » Supported housing.
- » Gateway to Homechoice (social housing register).
- » Money advice.
- » Provision of support services in Ipswich in relation to homelessness and homelessness prevention.
- » Review of services provided by other Local Authorities.

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