

# Statement of Need

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### Consultation Documents:

- Stakeholder Event,
- Service User Survey and Staff Focus Groups
- Service User Survey Report
- Homelessness Strategy

## Chapter 1: Summary

- 1.1.1 Monmouthshire is predominantly rural county consisting of the five major towns of Abergavenny and Monmouth in the north of the county: the town of Usk in the centre and Chepstow and Caldicot in the south.
- 1.1.2 Economically it is a county with more people in work with fewer people claiming benefits than other parts of Wales. However those who work in county earn less than those who work out of county.
- 1.1.3 Monmouthshire's housing stock is predominately owner occupier with just under 74% of the market with limited availability of one or two bedroomed properties, which is often the traditional route on to the housing ladder for first time buyers.
- 1.1.4 The rest of housing stock consists of social housing making up just under 14% of stock with 5,721 properties, (4,510 general need stock plus 1,211 older person stock) and shared across three Registered Social Landlords; And the Private Rented Sector (PRS) making up just under 11% of housing stock with 4,817 properties and 3,200 landlords registered with Rent Smart Wales.
- 1.1.5 In terms of affordability and home ownership the average price of a property is just shy of £360,000 with an entry level price of £200,000. To be able to get on the first rung of the housing ladder requires a household income of over £48,000 (3.5 household income multiplier) and deposit of £30,000 (15%). This makes it extremely difficult for first time buyers and those on lower incomes trying to access the housing market in Monmouthshire.
- 1.1.6 In terms of affordability and the private rented sector Monmouthshire as a whole the rental values have seen an average increase of almost 25% on 2010 values. Rental values can vary across the county with rental values for a 2 bed property typically ranging between £634 and £697 per month while for a three bed property typically ranging between £770 and £845 per month.
- 1.1.7 For those receiving housing benefit, Monmouthshire has one single rate for each bedroom category. For 2020 -2021 the rates for a 2 bed and 3 bed properties is £549 and £648 respectively. For many households on benefits this discrepancy between the housing benefit rate and the actual rental payment renders the private rented sector a non-viable housing option,
- 1.1.8 Accessing accommodation can be a challenging experience for households threatened with homelessness both in the private rented sector (PRS) and the social housing sector (SHS).
- 1.1.9 Monmouthshire's Housing register, Homesearch, has seen an increase of just over 38% on the total number of applicants registered since 2018 with a 26% increase of applicants registering a recognised need. For homelessness and our duty to accommodate this translates to an increase of almost 95% on the March 2018 figure and a 54% increase since March 2020. The number of lets through Homesearch has decreased by almost 26% since 2016 impacting on "move on" options (Section 7).
- 1.1.10 For the PRS the data shows that Monmouthshire has a contracting market with the number of available properties decreased by almost 50% since 2010. Conversely, rental values have seen an increase of nearly 25% over the same period (Section 7, paragraphs 7.5.16 – 7.5.17).

1.1.11 A contracting market with high rental values and a stagnated Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate means that between 2010 and 2019 only 5.75% of all available properties fell within the LHA rate. In addition data from Housing Benefit shows that over 800 households are currently in receipt of LHA. This could suggest that the market has reached saturation in terms the number of properties that would ordinarily fall within the LHA rate applicable to the bedroomed property type without intervention either at a national level, that is, increase the LHA rates, or at a local level by offering substantial landlord incentives (Section 7, paragraphs 7.5.14 - 7.5.19).

1.1.12 An analysis of the homelessness data for the 4-year period 2017 2021 identified the following (Section 8, below):

- Applications
  - Total applications has seen a fall of just over 32% over the past 4 years (paragraph 8.3.1).
  - The number of single households remains relatively stable at around 65.5% of total applications (paragraph 8.3.2).
  - Around 61% of all single households are males (paragraph 8.3.2.2).
  - Around 39% of all single households are females (paragraph 8.3.2.2).
  - Around 29% of applicants have dependent children (paragraph 8.3.3).
- Main Age Range of Applicants
  - Around 25% of applicants were aged between 16 to 24 years old (paragraph 8.3.4.2).
  - Around 4% of applicants were 16 - 17 years old.
- Main Causes of Homelessness (S66)
  - 30.6% of all causes were rent arrears (paragraphs 8.5)
  - 30.5% of all causes was a loss of private rented sector accommodation
  - Around 29% of all causes was family and friends no longer able to accommodate
- The Prevention Duty (S66 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
  - Just under 64% of households owed a S66 duty have their threat of homelessness prevented either through preventing their loss of their current accommodation or through securing alternative accommodation (paragraph 8.6.1.6).
  - The most successful prevention intervention is debt and financial advice followed by mediation and conciliation services.
  - The most successful intervention of securing alternative accommodation is securing accommodation in the private rented sector (63% of households ) followed by the social sector Housing (37% of households) (paragraph 8.6.5.4,)
- The Relief Duty – Help to Secure (S73 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
  - Just under 57% of households owed a S73 duty have their threat of homelessness relieved through securing alternative accommodation (paragraph 8.6.1.7)
  - The most successful intervention was helping to secure alternative accommodation in the Social Housing Sector (51% of households)

followed by securing accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (49% of households).

- The Accommodate Duty (S75 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
  - There has been a steady decline in the number of households being owed a S75 duty
  - The three main priority reasons for a s75 being awarded is
    - Household with dependent children;
    - Households where there is a vulnerability and
    - A person fleeing domestic violence.
- Support Needs
  - 1042 people were supported by HSG funded services in the period April-September 2020 and 98.8% achieved positive outcomes (**Error! Reference source not found.** 10.4.3.1)
  - Managing Accommodation was the most successful positive outcome, followed by Managing Money (Table 49, paragraph 9.4.3.3).
  - There was a 65% decrease in those either homeless or threatened with homelessness following engagement with HSG support services during this period (Table 50, paragraph 9.4.3.4).
  - There is overwhelming demand for mental health support- 23% of those in TA and 33% of those engaged with HSG services were recorded as having Mental Health issues as a lead need (paragraph 9.3.3.1, Table 46, paragraph 9.4.2.1).
  - There has been a significant increase in referrals to Domestic Abuse support services since 2020, and this is reflected in Domestic Abuse being the second highest lead need amongst the HSG support population (Figure 50, paragraph 9.2.2.3, Table 46, paragraph 9.4.2.1).
  - There is an overrepresentation of young people and those with substance misuse issues in TA, and an underrepresentation of over 55s (paragraphs 9.3.5.7, 9.4.2.6, 9.4.4.2).
  - Of the support needs captured for those in TA young people and those with substance misuse issues had the highest proportion of High-Intensive needs recorded (paragraphs 9.3.5.8, 9.3.5.12, 9.5.1.4).

## Chapter 2: Introduction

2.1.1 Preventing and addressing homelessness remains a high priority for the Welsh and Local Government in Wales.

2.1.2 The Statement of Need analyses the nature and extent of homelessness and housing support in Monmouthshire. It focused on the following areas:

- The wider environment that homelessness services operate within
- The accommodation in place to prevent and alleviate homelessness
- Demand for homelessness services and trends – past, current and estimated future levels of homelessness.
- The main causes of homelessness.
- The resources currently in place to prevent homelessness and support those who are homeless and possible gaps.

- Potential areas of improvement.
- The expected resources the Council has to devote to statutory homelessness services moving forward.

## Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1.1 Key policy documents, research and statistics were referenced throughout this document – to provide an overview of the wider environment that homelessness services operate Monmouthshire.

3.1.2 In addition the Statement of Need relied on information collected during feedback from consultation exercises and a questionnaire.

3.1.3 The following exercises informed the Statement.

- A desktop review of key literature and statistical data
- Focus groups and group discussions with key staff relevant to the preparation and implementation of homelessness planning using both SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and PESTL (Political, Economic, Social, Technology and Legislation) analyses.
- A stakeholder questionnaire feedback from service providers, partners and other stakeholders
- Surveys with people who have experienced homelessness and related services first hand
- Direct engagement with different service user groups.

## Chapter 4: Definitions

4.1.1 As a general overview, under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (Section 55), a person is homeless where:

- They have no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere, which is available for them to occupy\*.
- They do have accommodation but can't secure entry into it.
- The accommodation is a moveable structure (e.g. caravan) but someone has nowhere to place it to reside in.
  - \*If it is not considered reasonable for someone to continue to occupy accommodation, then they would also be treated as having no accommodation.
- Someone is threatened with homelessness where they are likely to be homeless within 56 days.

4.1.2 A large amount of detail is contained within the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and Welsh Government's Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness 2016 Code of Guidance, both of which include a number of definitions in relation to homelessness. There are other definitions connected to the statutory homeless data that local authorities submit to the Welsh Government on a quarterly basis as well.

4.1.3 The use of the broader definition of homelessness covering people:

- Owed statutory homelessness duties under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (i.e. sections 66, 68, 73 and 75).
- Sleeping rough (e.g. living on the street).
- Living in insecure/temporary accommodation – excluding assured/assured shorthold tenancies (e.g. private sector property leased by a council).
- Living in short-term accommodation (e.g. bed and breakfast or a direct access hostel).
- Who are hidden homeless (e.g. someone 'sofa-surfing' with friends, relatives or squatting).
- Who are unable to remain or return to their home (e.g. relationship breakdown or domestic abuse).
- Who are leaving an institution, without a home to go to (e.g. hospital or prison).

## Chapter 5: Context: Strategic Links

For the purposes of the Statement of Need, the following strategic documents are key:

### 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

5.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in order to create a Wales that all want to live in, now and in the future. The Act sets out seven well-being goals:

1. A prosperous Wales;
2. A resilient Wales;
3. A healthier Wales;
4. A more equal Wales;
5. A Wales of cohesive communities;
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; and
7. A globally responsible Wales.

5.1.2 The provision of sufficient good quality housing for people's needs, including affordable housing is a cross-cutting theme that will help deliver many of the well-being goals, including a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, a prosperous Wales and a healthier Wales.

## **5.2 Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Assessment**

5.2.1 The eight statutory members of the Gwent Regional Public Service Board, or GRPSB, are the five local authorities, the Local Health Board, Fire and Rescue Authority and Natural Resources Wales. Other organisations are also invited; these include Gwent Police, Local Housing Associations, Melin Homes and voluntary organisations represented through the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

5.2.2 The PSB must prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in the area and then agree priorities to address these.

### **5.2.3 Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Business Plan 2017 / 2022**

Sets out a clear direction for the Council and resources required to deliver it. It informs and shapes a whole set of enabling and delivery plans around People; Digital; Economy; Customers, Land and Assets.

The plan sets out our five Organisational Goals. These goals incorporate the four Well-being Objectives

1. The best possible start in life
2. Thriving and well-connected county
3. Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment
4. Lifelong well-being
5. Future-focused Council

## **5.3 People, Place Prosperity: A Strategy for Social Justice 2017 – 2022**

5.3.1 The Aim of this Social Justice Strategy has always been 'To put Social Justice at the heart of what we do' and over the past two years the Strategy has set out a broad programme of work to help to make a real difference to the lives of local people by working in partnership.

5.3.2 The Commitments made in the Strategy have therefore focussed and continue to focus on the following:

- Enabling connected and caring communities supporting people to live independently;
- Delivering on social justice, better prosperity and reducing inequality; and
- Enabling better local services through supporting volunteers and social action

5.3.3 All of this has aligned with the Public Service Board priorities and aspirations:

- To reduce inequalities between communities and within communities;
- To support and protect vulnerable people; and
- To consider our impact on the environment.

5.3.4 The Community Partnership and Development Team have also been the 'Engine Room' for the Social Justice movement in Monmouthshire 'the Bridge between community needs and aspirations and the wider strategic priorities of the Council and its PSB partners'.

#### **5.4 Gwent Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023**

5.4.1 The Gwent Regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023 sets out six Strategic Priorities that will contribute to the pursuit of the prevention of violence and abuse, the protection of victims and the support of all those affected.

- Strategic Priority 1: Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Gwent.
- Strategic Priority 2: Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong
- Strategic Priority 3: Increase focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety
- Strategic Priority 4: Make early intervention and prevention a priority
- Strategic Priority 5: Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors
- Strategic Priority 6: Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services throughout the region.

5.4.2 Ensuring regular engagement by people who have been affected by VAWDASV has been essential for identifying the Strategic Priorities. Involvement and engagement will continue to be an essential requirement for informing the Partnership Board on the effectiveness of its on-going work.

#### **5.5 Gwent Housing Support Grant Regional Collaborative Group Statement 2021-2022**

5.5.1 The Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme is an early intervention programme that funds a wide range of housing related support and homelessness services for vulnerable people across Gwent, and supports activity, which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation.

5.5.2 The vision for the Housing Support Programme is:

*"A Wales where nobody is homeless and everyone has a safe home where they can flourish and live a fulfilled, active and independent life".*

5.5.3 The Strategic goals of the Gwent RHSCG are:

- Deliver high quality, effective and responsive services;
- Expand our reach by collaborating & working in partnership
- Strengthen engagement and accessibility



## **5.6 National Policies**

### **5.6.1 Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness**

5.6.2 Sets out the strategic approach the Welsh Government is taking to prevent and address homelessness in Wales. It's vision is for "A Wales where everyone has a safe home that meets their needs and supports a healthy, successful and prosperous life. A Wales where we work together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented ensure it is rare, brief and unrepeated".

5.6.3 Other Relevant Legislative Acts and Policies considered in the Strategy's development were the following

- Welsh Government Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2018-20.
- Housing Support Grant Practice Guidance.
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.
- The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

## Chapter 6: Context - Population, Health, Poverty and Income

- 6.1.1 This section gives a broad picture of the social and economic conditions for the County of Monmouthshire. The areas looked at in this section are only intended to be an overview to show the environment that homelessness services operate within the County
- 6.1.2 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county and is noted for its rich and diverse landscape. It covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares and shares a border with the neighbouring counties of Newport, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Powys in Wales and Gloucestershire and Herefordshire in England. The estimated population is 94,950 (Source: ONS, April 2020). The main towns in the county are Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and Caldicot.

### 6.2 Demography

- 6.2.1 In terms of age demography, Monmouthshire has a median age of 49 years, a significantly higher proportion of older age adults (65+) and a lower proportion of younger age adults (16-44) compared to the Welsh average (ONS).
- 6.2.2 Life expectancy for people in Monmouthshire is the highest in Wales, By 2039 the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 61% and, more significantly, the number of people aged 85 and over will more than double.
- 6.2.3 These headline figures mask some variations with those living in the least deprived areas of the county expected to live longer than those in the most deprived areas.
- 6.2.4 \*\*The ethnic identity of the County is that 97% of residents self-identified as white with 3% self-identifying as Black, Asian and minorities<sup>1</sup>.\*\*
- 6.2.5 In terms of Gypsies and Travellers the 2011 census shows that six households identified themselves as Gypsy and Irish Traveller, 0.006% of the population.

### 6.3 The Economy

- 6.3.1 A common perception of Monmouthshire is that it is affluent with a high proportion of people of working-age that are economically active than most other parts of Wales and with less people claiming out-of-work benefits.
- 6.3.2 Again these headline grabbing statements mask some clear disparities. The wages on offer in Monmouthshire are 10% below the UK average and only marginally above the average for Wales. 34% of our working population commute out of the county to earn a living.
- 6.3.3 Average earnings for those who work in Monmouthshire are £570 per week or £29,640 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £535 per week or £27,820 per annum. The average earnings of people who live in Monmouthshire and travel to work elsewhere are higher at £694.60 per week or £36,119.20 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £540.70 or £28,116.40.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

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<sup>1</sup>\*\*<https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/Ethnicity-by-Area-EthnicGroup>\*\*

6.3.4 Economically the county appears to fare well compared to the rest of Wales with no areas in the most deprived 20%. However, social deprivation and in particular poor access to services is widespread across much of rural areas of Wales including Monmouthshire.

## 6.4 Health

6.4.1.1 For Monmouthshire the general consideration is that the general health of its population is healthier than other parts of Gwent.

6.4.1.2 However mental health and substance misuse issues are often an extremely significant problems for homeless people (HAVGHAPs).

### 6.4.2 Mental Health

6.4.2.1 The below graphs demonstrate the number of admissions of Monmouthshire residents to inpatient treatment for Mental Health (Adult and Older Adult) and Learning Disability. The data has been provided by the Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

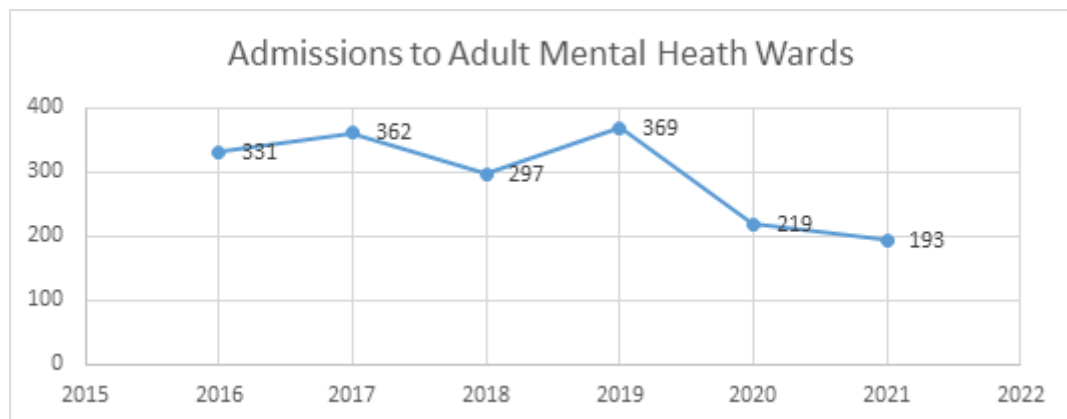


Figure 1: Adult Mental Health Admissions

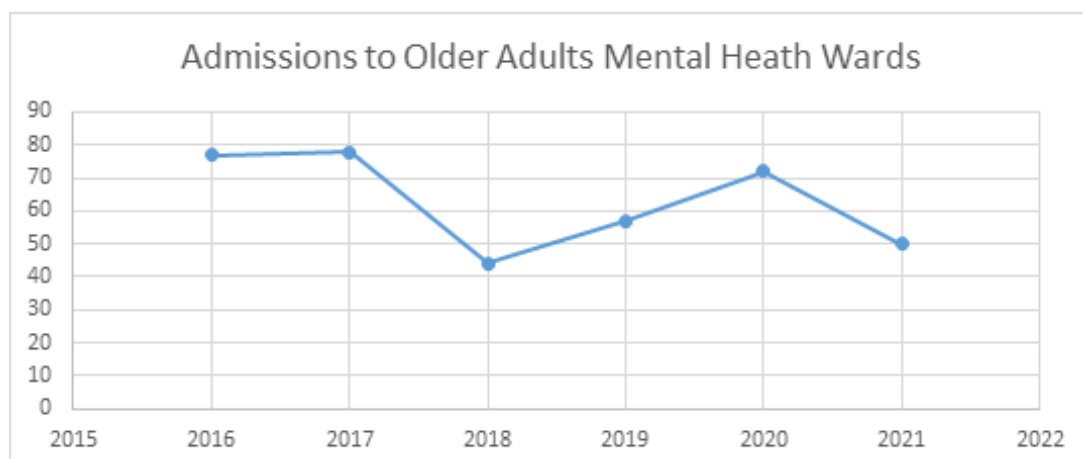


Figure 2: Older Adults Mental Health Admissions for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2015-2022

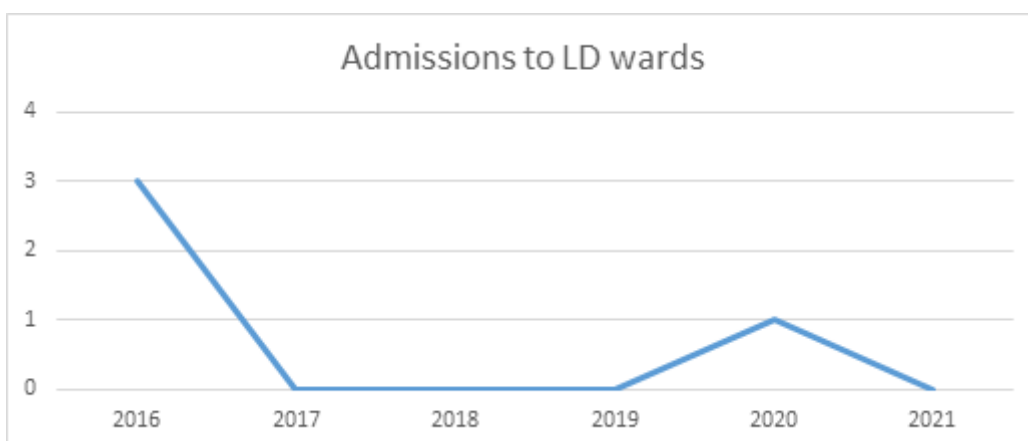


Figure 3 Figure 3: Learning Disability admissions for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2015-2021

6.4.2.2 Numbers of residents admitted to Learning Disability wards is consistently low in Monmouthshire across the 5-year time span. Admissions to both Adult and Older Adults Mental Health wards have seen a decrease in numbers, both dipping in 2018 and 2021. Admissions to Adult wards has been in decline since 2019.

6.4.2.3 Figure 4, below, shows the gender breakdown of admissions shows a trend of more males than females for Adult, and this reversed for Older Adults.

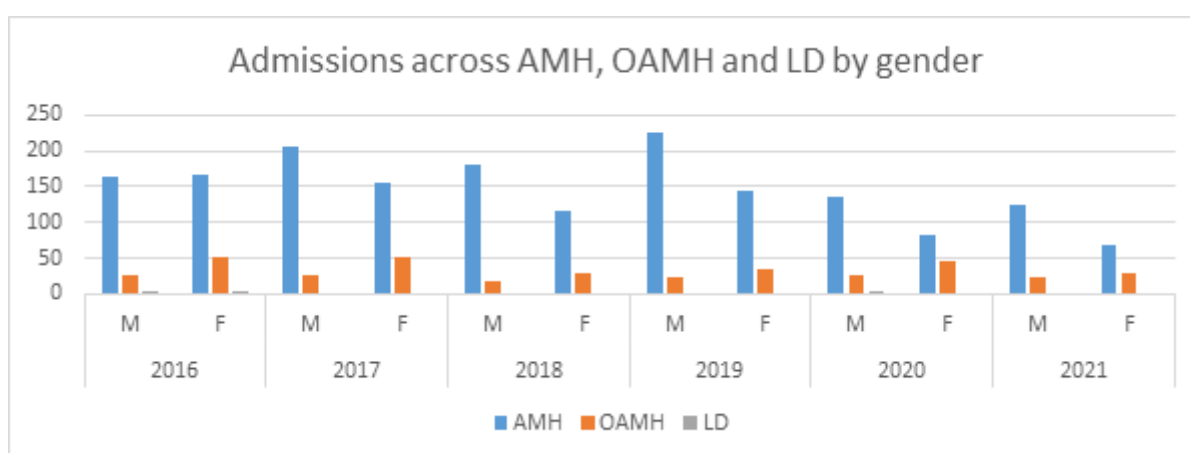


Figure 4 Figure 4: Admissions across Adult, Older Adult and Learning Disability wards by gender for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2016-2021

6.4.2.4 From figure 5 below, when looking at the age breakdown of all admissions those between the ages of 20 and 29 are most occurrent, though people aged between 30-39 and 40-49 also make up a significant number of admissions.

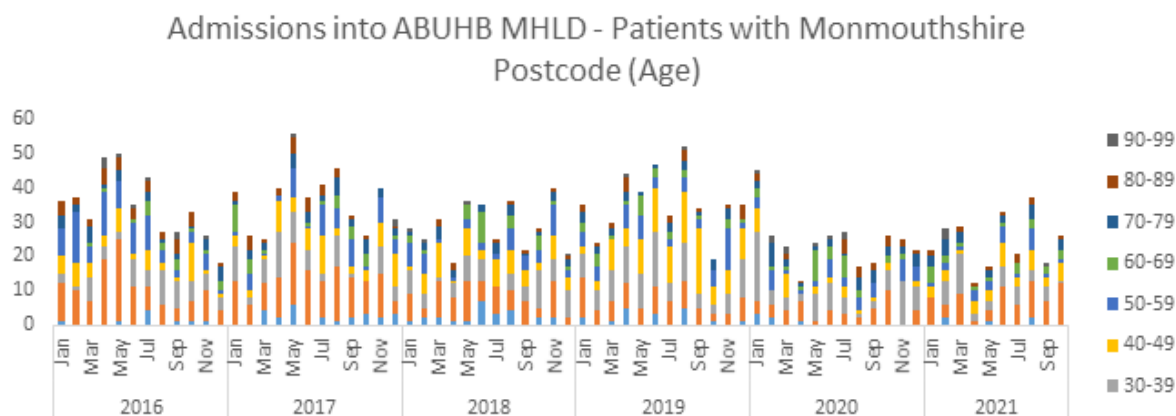


Figure 5: Admissions across Adult and Learning Disability Mental Health by age for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2016-2021

#### 6.4.3 Substance Misuse

6.4.3.1 The below table shows the number of referrals made to the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) for treatment for residents of Monmouthshire between the years 2017-2020.

Year	Gwent referrals	Monmouthshire referrals	As a % of Gwent total
2017	1105	48	4.34
2018	1455	83	5.70
2019	1365	89	6.52
2020	869	53	6.10

Table 1: Referrals of Monmouthshire residents made to Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) for treatment

6.4.3.2 As a proportion of Gwent wide referrals, Monmouthshire makes up a small percentage, however, there has been a general trend of referral numbers increasing. In the first two quarters of 2021 GDAS has received 737 referrals across Gwent, 32- or 4.34%- of which came from Monmouthshire. If this trend continues to the end of 2021 it will be the first year that a marked decrease in referrals will have been recorded.

## Chapter 7: Housing Market

7.1.1 It is possible to split Monmouthshire into 3 distinct housing market areas following the 2011 census travel to work areas as detailed in Figure One below:

- Chepstow Housing Market Area (Newport Travel to Work Area);
- Monmouth Housing Market Area (Cinderford and Ross-on-Wye Travel to Work Area);
- Abergavenny Housing Market Area (Merthyr Tydfil Travel to Work Area)

### 7.2 Tenure

7.2.1 At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 38,233 households in the borough with almost a quarter of residents owning their home. Figure 6 shows the tenure of residents in Monmouthshire.

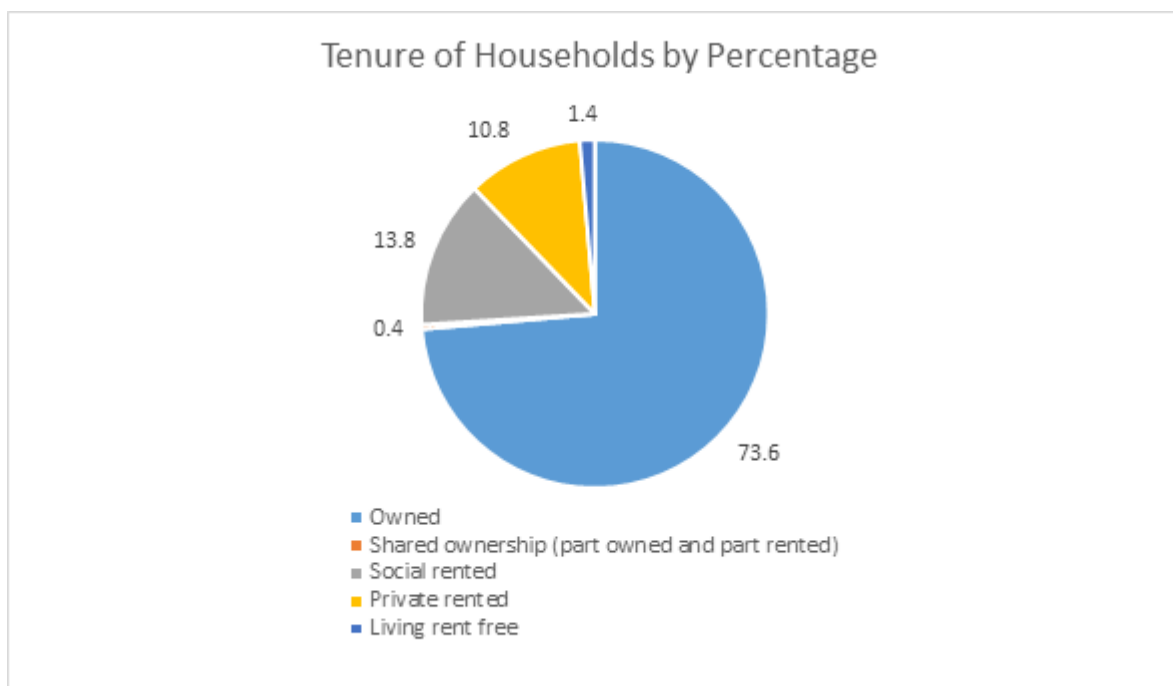


Figure 6: Tenure of residents in Monmouthshire

### 7.3 Home Ownership

7.3.1 Figure 7 below illustrates the average price of each property type in Monmouthshire. This is important to acknowledge as it impacts on the availability of suitable accommodation for first time buyers and those on lower incomes trying to access the Monmouthshire Housing Market. Of particular note, the average price of a flat, maisonette or apartment in Monmouthshire (£124,666) exceeds the average price of all property types in Blaenau Gwent (£112,619), and the average price of a terraced home in Monmouthshire (£222,814) exceeds the average price of all property types in Torfaen (£174,670) or Newport (£204,283).

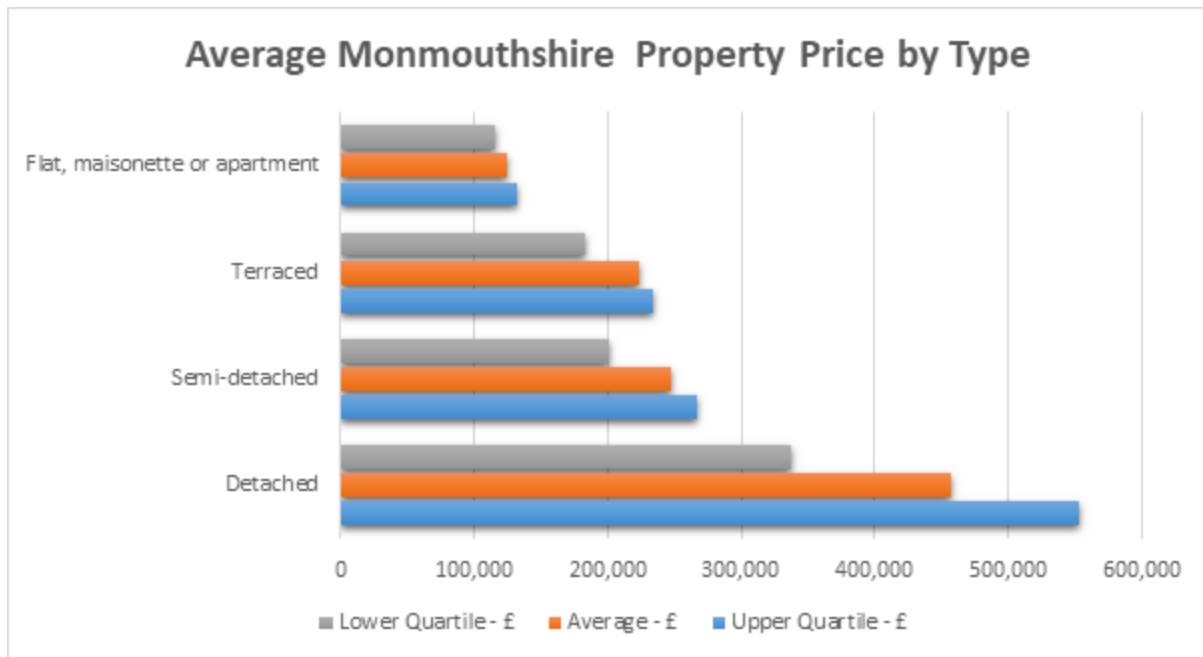


Figure 7: Average property price in Monmouthshire by type

## 7.4 Property Type

7.4.1 The majority of properties in the county borough are detached homes (44.01%) with next most popular property type being semi-detached (28.33%) properties.

7.4.2 In Monmouthshire, there is limited availability of terraced homes or apartments which are often a traditional way of people taking their first step into homeownership.

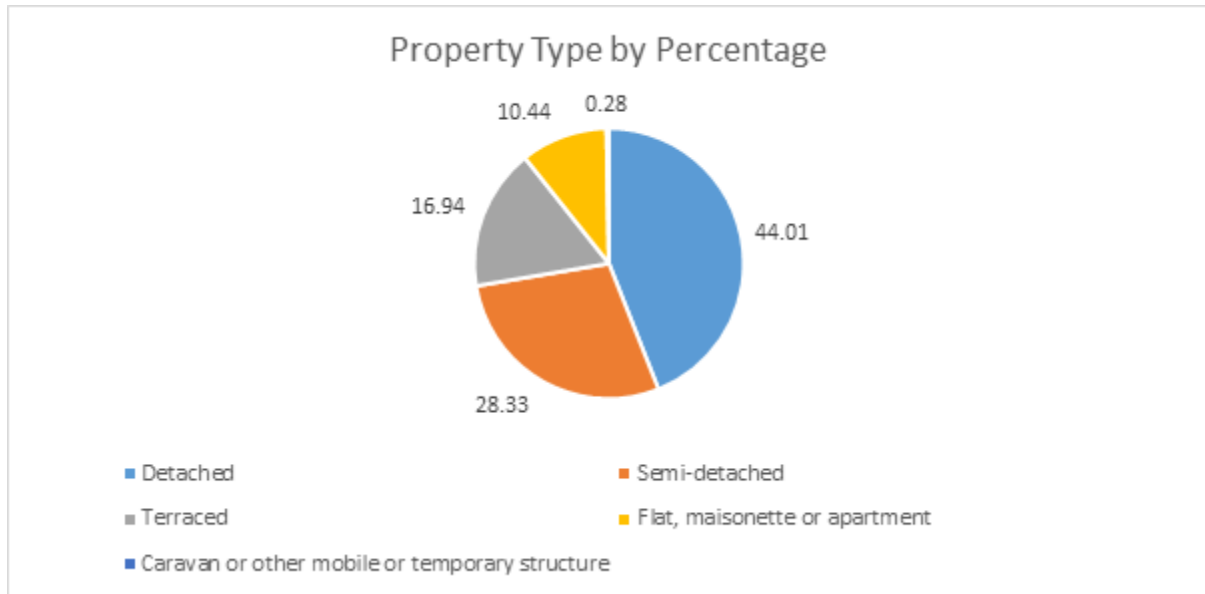


Figure 8: Breakdown of Property type in Monmouthshire



7.4.3 Data obtained from Hometrack (August 2021) shows the current average price of a home in Monmouthshire is £359,159, based on sales and valuations up to June 2021, compared to £336,760 up to September 2020 as identified in the Local Housing Market Analysis (LHMA), 2020. The rise in house prices is likely due to increased demand as households look to move to larger properties in more rural areas, influenced by the increased ability to work from home due to COVID-19 and an increased focus on quality of life.

7.4.4 The entry level house price for Monmouthshire is £200,000. This figure is the lower quartile price of a semi-detached house in Monmouthshire, based on sales and valuations. As seen from figure 8 above, Semi-detached properties account for just under 30% of all housing in Monmouthshire, so they are widely available in all areas of the county whereas terraced houses which would normally be considered “entry level housing” elsewhere in Wales only accounts for 17% of stock.

7.4.5 In terms of affordability, the house price to income ratio for Monmouthshire is 8:1 but levels vary across the county, the rural north between Abergavenny and Monmouth has the highest ratio at 11.5:1 (source: Hometrack).

7.4.6 Therefore to be able to access home ownership in Monmouthshire, with an entry level price of £200,000, after allowing for a 15% deposit of £30,000 a household's income would need to be over £48,500 based on a typical mortgage offer at 3.5 times the household income.

## 7.5 The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA)

7.5.1.1 The LHMA provides a snapshot of the housing market at a particular point in time, which is projected forward 5 years with a review the data within every two years.

7.5.1.2 Monmouthshire's LHMA for the period 2020 – 2025 estimates a net need of 468 additional affordable homes per annum up until 2025.

### 7.5.2 Social Rented Sector

7.5.2.1 Monmouthshire Housing Association, Melin Homes and Pobl own and manage the majority of affordable housing stock. There are around 5700 units of affordable housing across Monmouthshire (LHMA, 2020) as detailed in Tables 2 and 3 below:

Submarket Area	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed	8 bed	Total
10.Abergavenny	354	463	621	59	2	0	0	1,499
Chepstow	536	788	861	69	1	1	0	2,256
Monmouth	158	257	322	17	0	0	1	755
<b>Total</b>	1,048	1,508	1,804	145	3	1	1	4,510

Table 2: Existing Housing Stock – General Needs

Submarket Area	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Abergavenny	20	289	148	9	0	466
Chepstow	0	322	156	2	1	481
Monmouth	0	208	54	2	0	264
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,211</b>

Table 3: Existing Housing Stock – Older Person's Housing

### 7.5.3 Housing Need and Demand

7.5.3.1 The LHMA carried out in 2020 estimated a shortfall of 468 affordable homes per annum between 2020-2025 with the majority to be provided as Social Rent (68%), followed by Low Cost Home Ownership (25%) and finally Intermediate Rent (7%). Further analysis of the data allows for the shortfall to be broken down across the three housing market areas, as shown below.

Area	Social Rent	LCHO	IR	Total
Abergavenny	94	39	13	146
Chepstow	183	59	17	259
Monmouth	43	17	3	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>320 (68%)</b>	<b>115 (25%)</b>	<b>33 (7%)</b>	<b>468</b>

Table 4: Affordable housing need and tenure per housing market area per annum

### 7.5.4 Affordable Housing Completions

7.5.4.1 Table 5 below shows the total number of additional affordable housing completions delivered & planned.

	Delivered 19/20	Delivered 20/21	Planned 21/22

Affordable housing completions	113	146	81
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Table 5: Number of additional affordable housing completions

#### 7.5.5 Monmouthshire's Common Housing Register (Homesearch)

7.5.5.1 Monmouthshire operates a choice based lettings scheme for social housing, known as Homesearch. Households requiring social housing apply to join a waiting list and are placed into bands representing their level or priority of need for an allocation of a property.

#### 7.5.6 Level of Need / Band Priority

- Band 1 - Applicants registered in this band are those who have an exceptional / urgent need to move, such households being decanted.
- Band 2A: Applicants registered in this band are those who have a high housing need.
- Band 2B & Band 3B: Applicants registered in these bands are subject to Homelessness intervention. Band 2B is awarded for applicants that have been awarded a section 75, homeless duty.
- Band 3: Applicants with a medium housing need are placed in this band.
- Band 4: Applicants registered in band 4 have a low housing need. Most applicants in band 4, are applicants who are adequately housed in the private rented sector who have a local connection to Monmouthshire.
- Band 5: Applicants in band 5 have no housing need. The majority of housing waiting list applicants have no housing need or who have no local connection to the county

#### 7.5.7 Waiting List Data

7.5.7.1 The table and graph below show the number of applicants registered on the waiting list at the year end for years 2017 – 2021.

	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021
Total number of Applicants registered	2295	3164	3316	4043
Applicants with a recognised housing need (i.e. bands 1-4)	2052	2143	2237	2588

Table 6: Number of applicants on Homesearch Waiting List

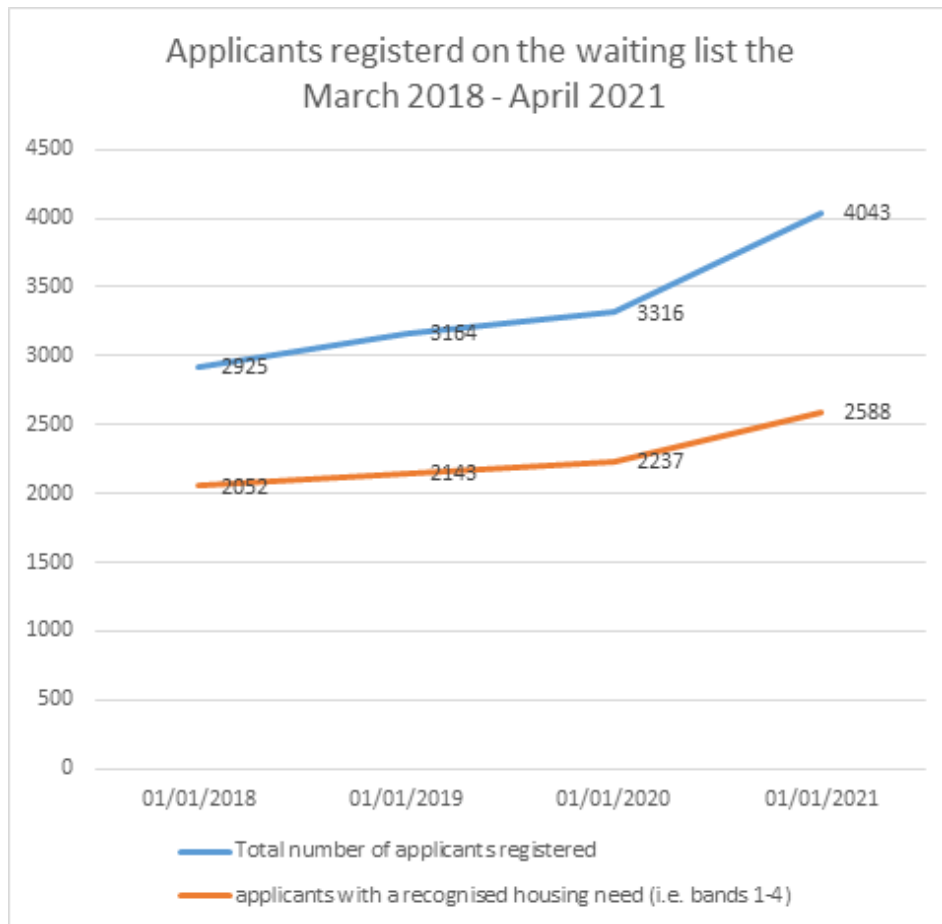


Figure 9: Number of applicants on Homesearch Waiting List 2018-2021

7.5.7.2 The above table and graph shows that there has been an increase of just over 38% on the total number of applicants registered on the waiting list across all bands (1 to 5) and a corresponding increase of just over 26% of applicants with a recognised need (bands 1 to 4). The majority of the increase occurs in band 5 (applicants with no need).

#### 7.5.8 *Banding*

7.5.8.1 Although there has been an increase across all the bands, band 2b (the homelessness band) has seen an increase of almost 54% since March 2020 and is up almost 95% on the March 2018 figure (see figure 10, below).

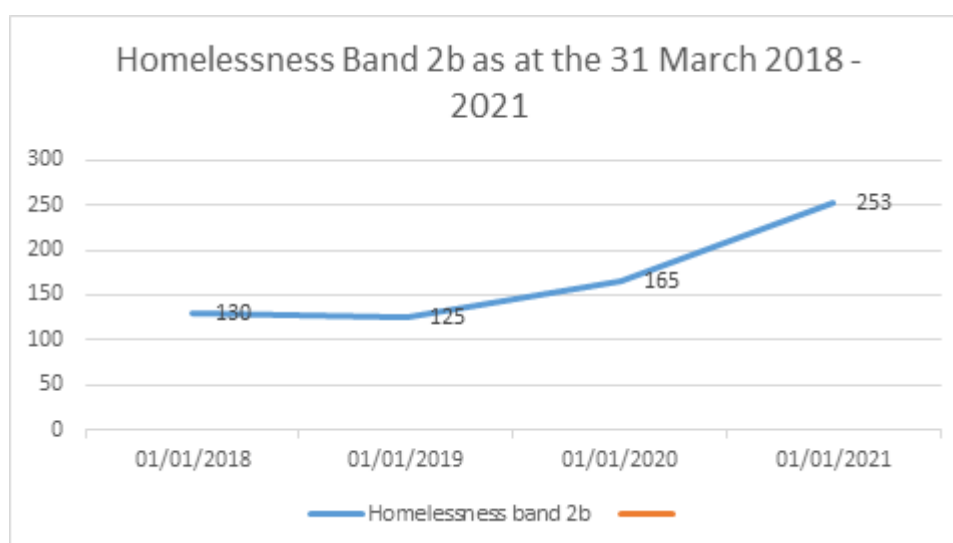


Figure 10: Number of applicants in Band 2b 2018-2021

#### 7.5.9 *Number of Properties Let during years 2017 to 2021*

7.5.9.1 The following table shows the number of lets during the years 2017 to 2021.

2017 / 2018	412
2018 / 2019	486
2019 / 2020	481
2020 / 2021	355

Table 7: Number of lets per year 2017-2021

7.5.9.2 The figure below shows the trend over the period and represents almost a 14% reduction in the number of lets available since 2017/18 and almost 26% reduction over the previous year 2019/20

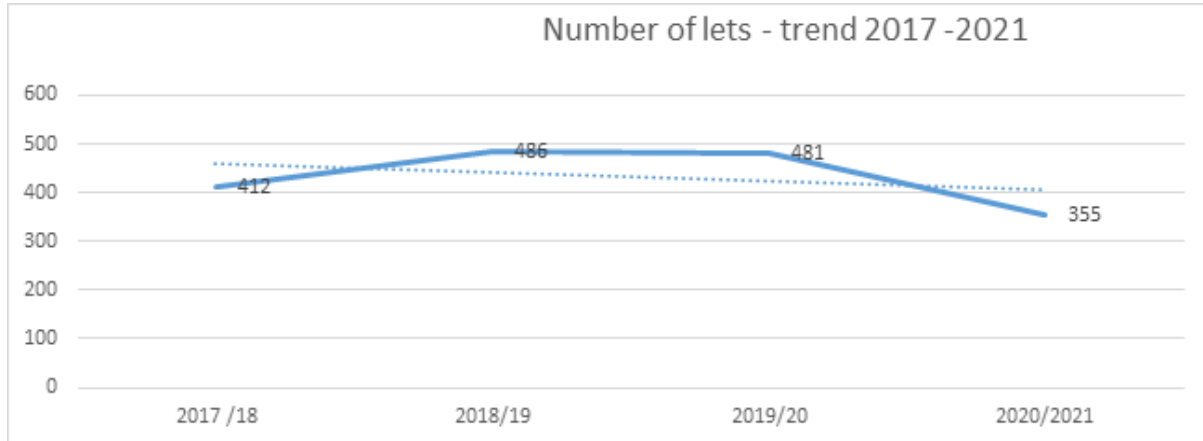


Figure 11: Number of Homesearch Lets 2017-2021

#### 7.5.10 Number of lets per band

7.5.10.1 The figure 12 below show the number of lets per band 2017 to 2021.

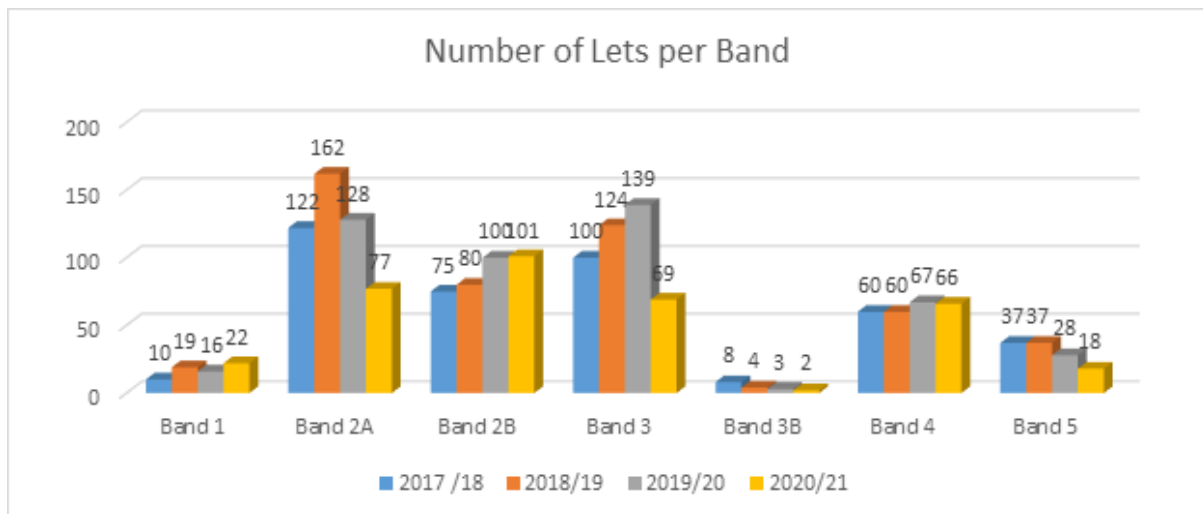


Figure 12: Number of Homesearch lets by band 2017-2021

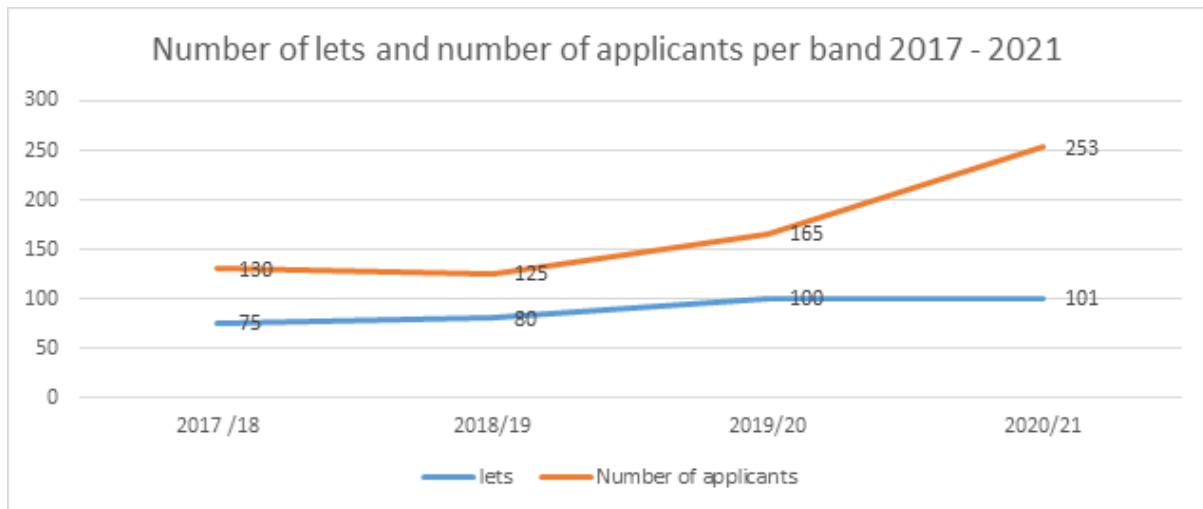


Figure 13: Number of Lets and number of applicants 2017-2021

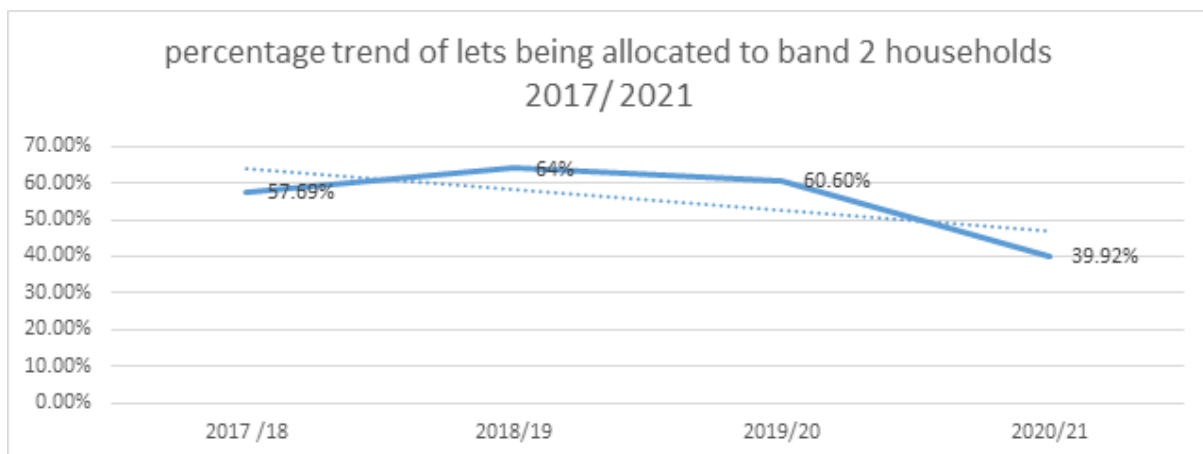


Figure 14: Percentage of all Lets being allocated to Band 2 2017-2021

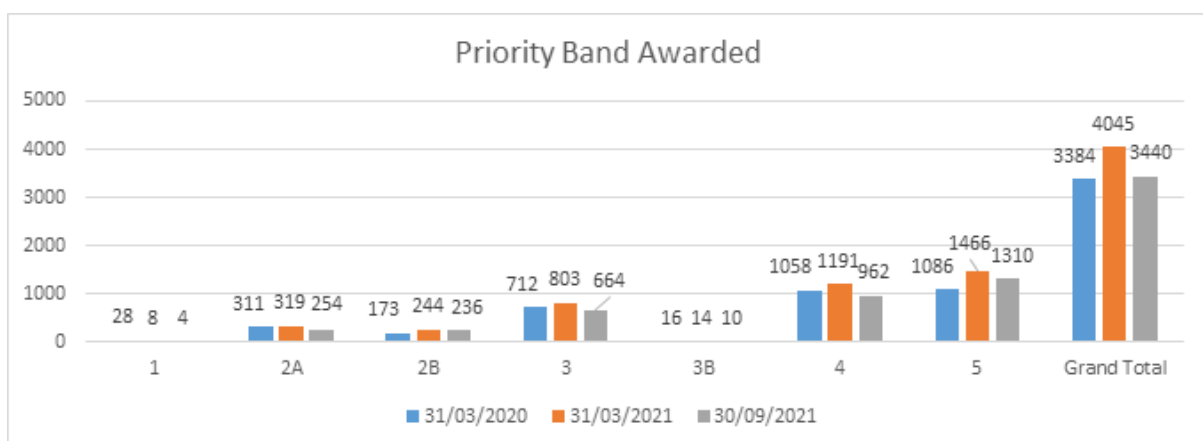


Figure 15: Number of applicants allocated to each band 2020-2021

### 7.5.11 Monmouthshire Homesearch Data

7.5.11.1 The lead reason for applying during the previous two financial years was “Homeless or in danger of losing your home”:

Lead Reason	2019/20	2020/21
Homeless or in danger of losing your home	50 (16.6%)	147 5.0%)

Table 8: Number of applicants with lead reason of ‘Homeless or in danger of losing your home’ 2019-2021

### 7.5.12 Social Rent Lettings

7.5.12.1 Past letting trends were analysed over the previous 4 years – 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Year	Number of Lets
2017/18	412
2018/19	486
2019/20	481
2020/21	355

Table 9: Lettings Data 2017 - 2020

7.5.12.2 The number of lets has seen a decrease of almost 26% between 2019/20 and 2020/21. This could be attributed to successful preventative measures being undertaken by RSL’s for their own tenants and would translate into limited “move on” options for those experiencing homelessness and being accommodated in temporary forms of accommodation See figure 16 below.



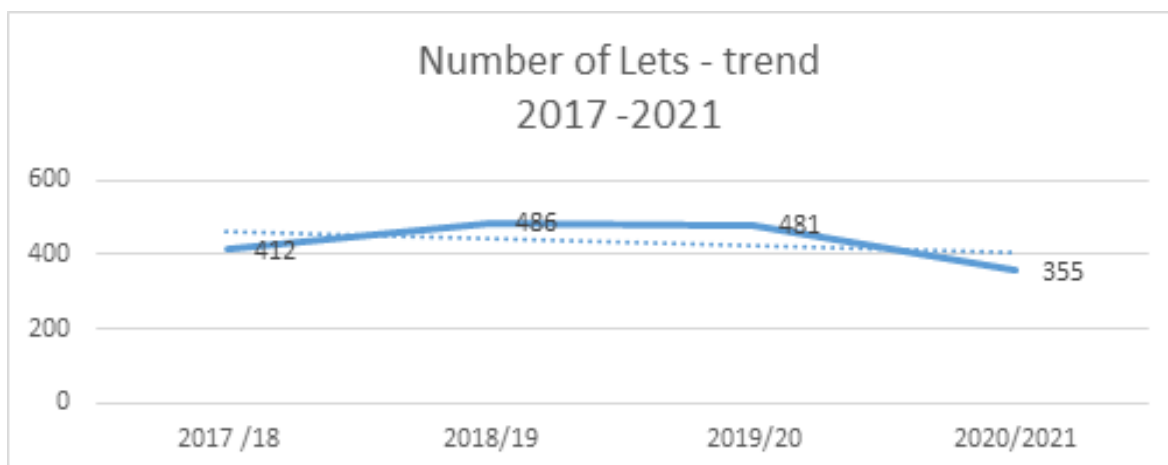


Figure 16: Number of Social Rent Lets 2017-2021

### 7.5.13 Private Rented Sector

7.5.13.1 The private rented sector is important in meeting the housing requirements of those who are in housing need but cannot access social rented housing and those who cannot afford to purchase on the open market. Since the change in legislation allowing local authorities to utilise the private rented sector to house homeless applicants it has become an increasingly important sector for Monmouthshire.

7.5.13.2 During July 2020, a desktop study of the residential rental market was undertaken. The study was an historical analysis of rental activity from 2010 to 2020 using Hometrack's comprehensive database of properties advertised to let and looked at the following:

- Rental market and activity within Monmouthshire
- Distribution of properties and rental values by bedroom category
- Rental values and Local Housing Rates
- Affordability

7.5.13.3 This section reflects the study but the following statements caveat the findings:

- The collation of information and data on private rental activity, costs and affordability is not as reliable as collating data on housing sales due to the lack of data currently available. As a result the data is not robust and, therefore, only for a very broad analysis of the rental market in Monmouthshire.
- The data does not differentiate between rents for furnished/unfurnished properties, nor for whether utility bills and council tax are included/not included within the value of rent.
- The study concentrates on properties where the bedroom category is known as this demonstrates the issue of affordability especially when referring to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

#### 7.5.14 Private Rental Market and Activity

7.5.14.1 As of July 2020 there are 3,200 Landlords registered with Rent Smart Wales representing 4,817 properties spread throughout the five rental areas of Monmouthshire, which are, Abergavenny and Monmouth in the north of the County, Usk in the centre and Chepstow and Caldicot in the south. It should be noted that these five areas relate to postcode areas in the county and the Hometrack system provides a breakdown only for these areas below the county as a whole. It was therefore not possible to correlate the rental analysis with the three housing market areas for Monmouthshire.

7.5.14.2 The following figures (17 & 18) show the distribution of rental properties by bedroom count and rental area.

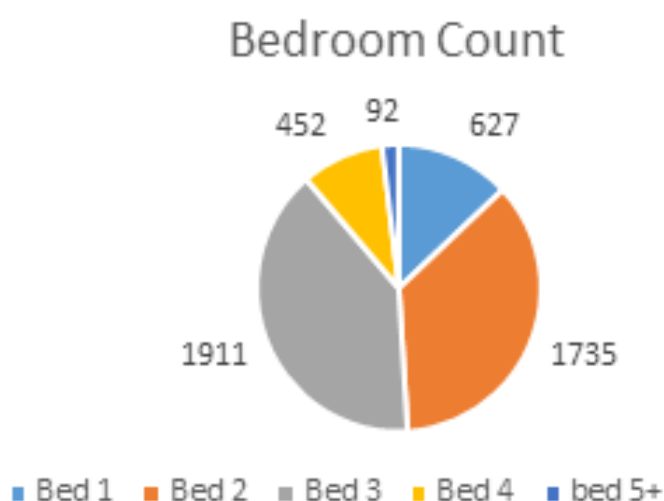


Figure 17: Number of Properties by Bedroom Count

Source: Hometrack

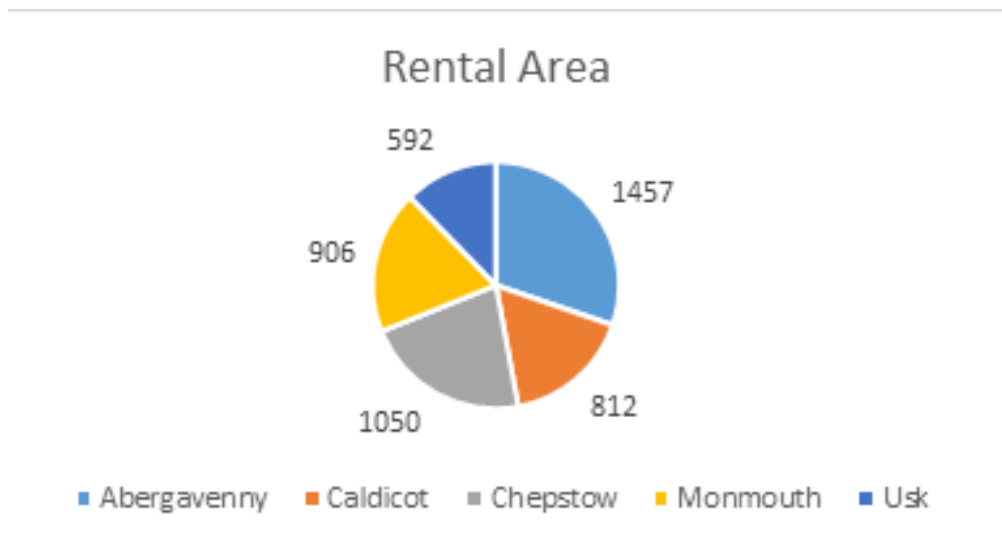


Figure 18 Number of Properties by Rental Area

Source: Hometrack

#### 7.5.15 Historical Market Activity

7.5.15.1 The following paragraphs analyse market activity over the last ten years 2010 to 2020 using Hometrack's comprehensive database of properties advertised, which is a sample size of 5,844 properties.

7.5.15.2 The following graphs (19 & 20) shows the spread of the properties within the five main rental areas of Monmouthshire and by bedroom count.

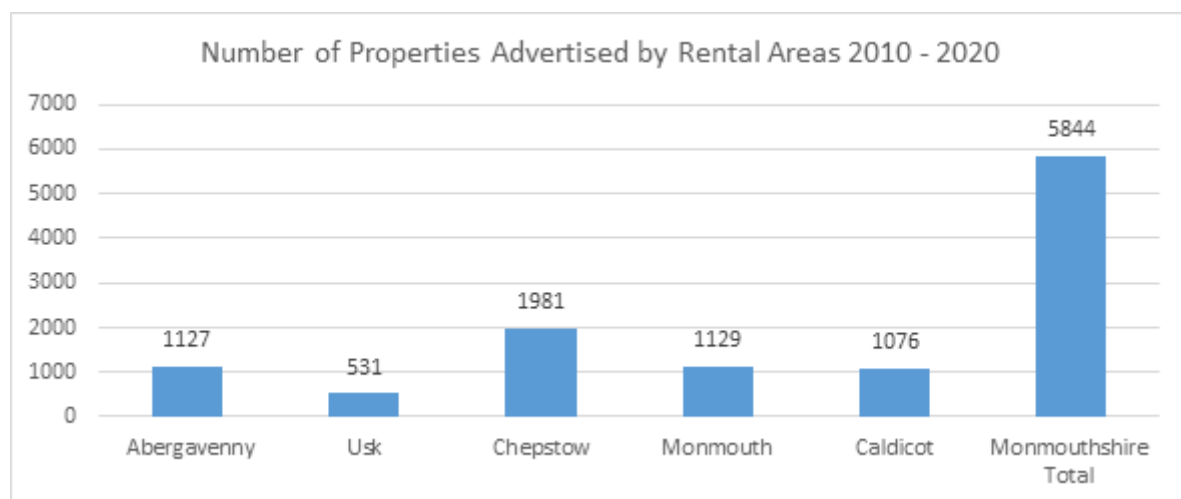


Figure 19: Number of Properties Advertised by Area 2010-2020

Source: Hometrack

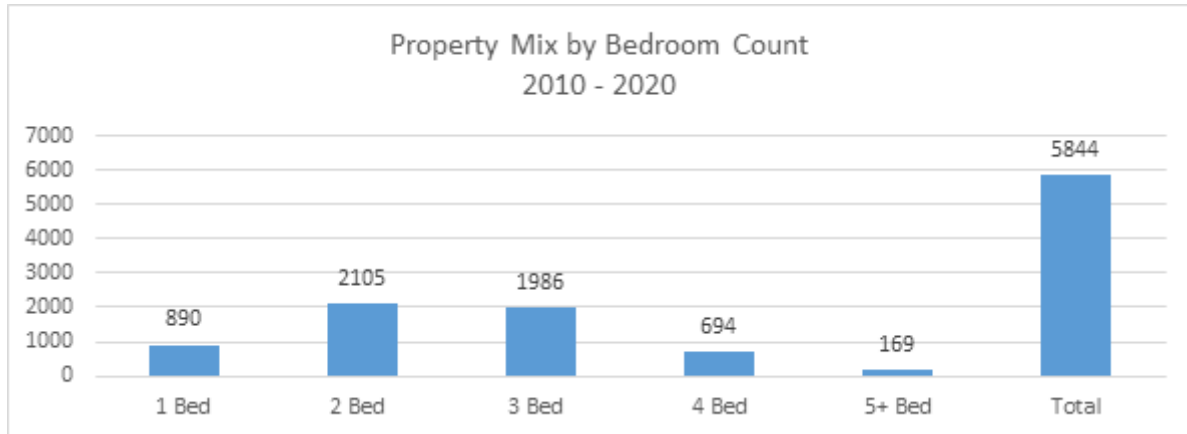


Figure 20: Property Mix by Bedroom Count 2010-2020

Source: Hometrack

7.5.15.3 Figure 15 below shows the mix of rental listings over the last 12 months by bedroom count. The largest share was two-bedroom properties with 36%, followed by three-bedroom properties with 34%. One, four and five bedroom properties made up 3%, 12% and 15% of the share respectively.

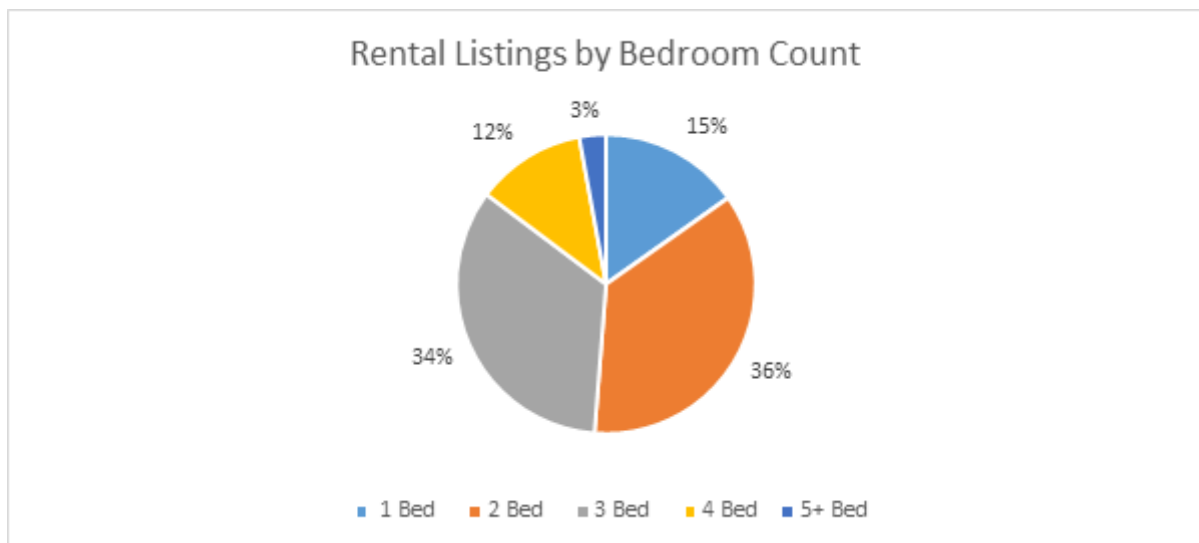


Figure 21: Rental Listings by Bedroom Count

Source: Hometrack

### 7.5.16 Market Activity

7.5.16.1 The data for this section includes only full years from 2010 – 2019.

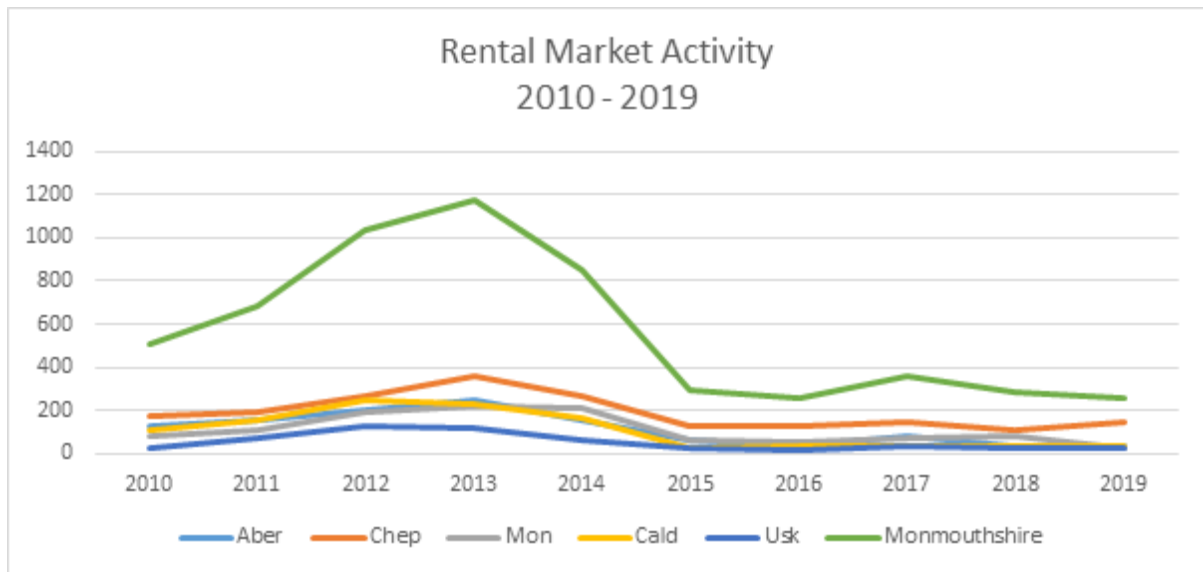


Figure 22: Rental Market Activity in Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

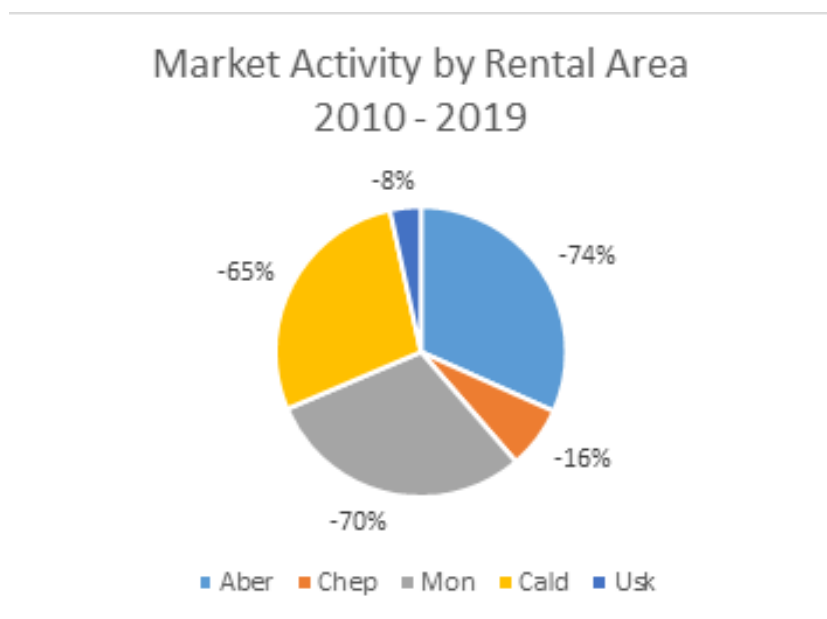


Figure 23: Market Activity by Rental Area in Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

7.5.16.2 Figure 23 shows the market activity has contracted quite considerably in the five rental areas and Monmouthshire as a whole the rental market contracted by almost 50% between 2010-2019.

#### 7.5.17 Market Rental Value Growth

7.5.17.1 For this section, only data between one and four bedrooms was used due to the lack of available data five bedrooms.

Percentage Increase / Decrease of Monthly Rents		
2010 - 2019		
Rental Area	Number of bedrooms	Average Rent Price Increase Since 2010
Abergavenny	1 Bed	22%
	2 Bed	16%
	3 Bed	22%
	4 Bed	11%
Usk	1 Bed	13%
	2 Bed	19%
	3 Bed	17%
	4 Bed	-1%
Chepstow	1 Bed	34%
	2 Bed	26%
	3 Bed	28%
	4 Bed	43%
Monmouth	1 Bed	30%
	2 Bed	25%
	3 Bed	19%
	4 Bed	13%
Caldicot	1 Bed	34%
	2 Bed	26%

3 Bed	19%
4 Bed	46%

Table 10: Percentage Increase/ Decrease in monthly rental amounts across 5 areas of Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

7.5.17.2 Other than the Usk rental area, the other rental areas have seen a significant rise in monthly rental values over the past ten years. For Monmouthshire as a whole the rental values have seen an average increase of almost 25% on 2010 values.

#### 7.5.18 Current Rental Values

7.5.18.1 Table 11 below illustrates the monthly rental values for the five rental areas as at Summer 2020. For example, the rental value for a one-bed property in Abergavenny ranges from £815 (highest value) to £295 (lowest value) with an average value of £513 and a median value of £475, based on a sample size of 192 properties.

	Bedroom Category	Sample Number of Properties	Highest Current Monthly Rent	Lowest Current Monthly Rent	Average Current Monthly Rent	Median Current Monthly Rent
<b>Abergavenny</b>	1 Bed	192	£815	£295	£513	£475
	2 Bed	444	£925	£330	£634	£638
	3 Bed	347	£1,200	£405	£771	£755
	4 Bed	109	£2,195	£390	£1,070	£965
	5 + Bed	35	£3,535	£600	£1,649	£1,535
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1127</b>				
<b>Usk</b>	1 Bed	61	£710	£360	£535	£535
	2 Bed	178	£870	£398	£663	£660
	3 Bed	211	£1,190	£476	£805	£783

	4 Bed	65	£1,735	£424	£1,047	£960
	5 + Bed	16	£3,020	£1,100	£1,896	£1,818
	<b>Total</b>	<b>531</b>				
<b>Chepstow</b>	1 Bed	350	£770	£285	£559	£565
	2 Bed	650	£1,030	£485	£697	£695
	3 Bed	677	£2,055	£475	£845	£830
	4+ Bed	236	£2,380	£685	£1,295	£1,215
	5+ Bed	68	£3,165	£1,055	£1,663	£1,553
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1981</b>				
<b>Monmouth</b>	1 Bed	191	£710	£350	£529	£560
	2 Bed	450	£925	£410	£664	£665
	3 Bed	297	£1,545	£470	£836	£820
	4+Bed	151	£2,185	£700	£1,243	£1,170
	5+ Bed	40	£3,535	£1,065	£1,902	£1,813
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1129</b>				
<b>Caldicot</b>	1 Bed	96	£970	£250	£512	£520
	2 Bed	383	£885	£460	£655	£665
	3 Bed	454	£1,105	£535	£775	£770
	4+Bed	133	£1,515	£790	£1,051	£1,015
	5+ Bed	10	£2,010	£420	£1,450	£1,503
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1076</b>				

Table 11: Monthly Rental Values across 5 areas of Monmouthshire summer 2020



Source: Hometrack

### 7.5.19 Local Housing Allowance Rates (LHA)

7.5.19.1 Monmouthshire has one single rate for each bedroom category (maximum bedroom rate of four bedrooms for the county). Table 12 illustrates the details for 2020/2021.

Shared Allowance	£329
1 Bed	£414
2 Bed	£549
3 Bed	£648
4+Bed	£779

Table 12: Local Housing Allowance Rates for Monmouthshire 2020/2021

7.5.19.2 The following table illustrates the number of available properties that are affordable to those in receipt of the appropriate LHA rate for their bedroom category.

Rental Area	Bedroom Count	Sample Number of Properties	Monthly LHA Rate	Number of properties at or below LHA rate	Percentage of properties at or below LHA
Abergavenny	1 Bed	192	£414.00	24	12.5%
	2 Bed	444	£549.00	81	18.2%
	3 Bed	347	£648.00	38	11.0%
	4 Bed	109	£779.00	5	4.6%
Usk	1 Bed	61	£414.00	0	0.0%
	2 Bed	178	£549.00	21	11.8%
	3 Bed	211	£648.00	15	7.1%

	4 Bed	65	£779.00	3	4.6%
Chepstow	1 Bed	350	£414.00	14	4.0%
	2 Bed	650	£549.00	9	1.4%
	3 Bed	677	£648.00	5	0.7%
	4+ Bed	236	£779.00	1	0.4%
Monmouth	1 Bed	191	£414.00	22	11.5%
	2 Bed	450	£549.00	41	9.1%
	3 Bed	297	£648.00	5	1.7%
	4+Bed	151	£779.00	4	2.6%
Caldicot	1 Bed	96	£414.00	8	8.3%
	2 Bed	383	£549.00	19	5.0%
	3 Bed	454	£648.00	11	2.4%
	4+Bed	133	£779.00	0	0.0%

Table 13: Number of Properties at LHA Rate in Monmouthshire

Source: Hometrack

7.5.19.3 Table 14, below, details the number of properties that came within the LHA rate applicable to their bedroom count is 326, which equates to 5.75% of the total number of available properties. This data shows that it is highly unlikely that recipients of local housing allowance could afford to rent a property at market rent. Data from Housing Benefit shows that over 800 households were in receipt of LHA of which 253 households were having their payments made directly to the Landlord (156) or were receiving DHP (97).

<b>Total by Rental Properties</b>	<b>5675</b>	<b>Total Number of Properties at LHA Rate</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>5.75%</b>
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Table 14: Total number of properties in Monmouthshire within the LHA rate

### 7.5.20 Affordability

7.5.20.1 A comparison between the median net annual household income and the median rental values for each property type by area determined whether a household could afford to rent privately.

7.5.20.2 In addition there is an assumption that a maximum of 35% of net income is spent on renting and that net income is 74% of gross income (accounting for tax and NI contributions). The calculation method and assumptions are in line with guidance on calculating affordability issued by the Homes and Communities Agency.

7.5.20.3 Table 15 below shows the net median family income required to meet the median rental values of each bedroom count. Note that the median wage has two values. This represents those residents that work “in county” and those that work “out of county”. This latter category represent 40% of the total work force.

Rental Area		Sample Number of Properties	Highest Current Monthly Rent	Lowest Current Monthly Rent	Median Current Monthly Rent	Rent as a percentage of <b>Median</b> Monthly Wage ( <b>In County</b> )	Rent as a percentage of <b>Median</b> Monthly Wage ( <b>Out of County</b> )	In County Median Net Wage.	Out of County Net Wage.
Abergavenny	1 Bed	192	£815.	£295.	£475.	26.0%	30.6%	£1,828	£2,085
	2 Bed	444	£925.	£330.	£638.	34.9%	30.6%		
	3 Bed	347	£1,200	£405.	£755.	41.3%	36.2%		
	4 Bed	109	£2,195.	£390.	£965.	52.8%	46.3%		
	5 + Bed	35	£3,535.	£600.	£1,535.	84.0%	73.6%		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1127</b>							
Usk	1 Bed	61	£710.	£360.	£535.	25.7%	25.7%		
	2 Bed	178	£870.	£398	£660.	36.1%	31.7%		
	3 Bed	211	£1,190	£476.	£782.	42.8%	37.5%		
	4 Bed	65	£1,735	£424	£960.	52.5%	46.1%		

	5 + Bed	16	£3,020.	£1,100.	£1,817.	99.4%	87.2%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>531</b>					
Chepstow	1 Bed	350	£770.	£285.	£565.	30.9%	27.1%
	2 Bed	650	£1,030.	£485.	£695.	38.0%	33.0%
	3 Bed	677	£2,055.	£475.	£830.	45.4%	40.0%
	4+ Bed	236	£2,380.	£685.	£1,215.	66.5%	58.0%
	5+ Bed	68	£3,165.	£1,055.	£1,552	84.9%	74.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1981</b>					
Monmouth	1 Bed	191	£710.	£350.	£560.	30.6%	26.9%
	2 Bed	450	£925.	£410.	£665.	36.4%	31.9%
	3 Bed	297	£1,545.	£470.	£820.	44.9%	39.3%
	4+ Bed	151	£2,185.	£700.	£1,170.	64.0%	56.1%
	5+ Bed	40	£3,535.	£1,065.	£1,812.	99.2%	87.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1129</b>					
Caldicot	1 Bed	96	£970.	£250.	£520.	28.5%	25.0%
	2 Bed	383	£885.	£460.	£665	36.4%	31.9%
	3 Bed	454	£1,105.	£535.	£770.	42.1%	36.9%
	4+Be d	133	£1,515.	£790.	£1,015.	55.5%	48.7%

5+ Bed	10	£2,010.	£420.	£1,502.	82.2%	72.18%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1076</b>							

Table 15: Affordability – Net Median Wage Based on Median Rents by Bedroom Category

Source: Hometrack

7.5.20.4 With the net monthly median earnings for people residing and working in Monmouthshire being £1,828 and for people residing in Monmouthshire but working outside the county being £2,085, accessing properties in the private rental sector in Monmouthshire remains a challenge for a large number of households (Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics).

7.5.20.5 Although average wages have increased over the last two years for Monmouthshire residents, the high house prices in Monmouthshire still puts owning a home beyond the reach of many families who live and work in Monmouthshire.

7.5.20.6 Average earnings for those who work in Monmouthshire are £570 per week or £29,640 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £535 per week or £27,820 per annum. The average earnings of people who live in Monmouthshire and travel to work elsewhere are higher at £694.60 per week or £36,119.20 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £540.70 or £28,116.40.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

#### 7.5.21 Higher Managerial Socio-economic Status

7.5.21.1 Monmouthshire's economically active population can be broken down by occupation, 51.5% of residents are recorded as working in Higher Managerial or Professional positions and this compares to a Wales average of 42.6%. The house purchasing ability of this socio-economic group is far greater than local people on local incomes, and is one of the reasons why house prices, especially in rural areas are so unaffordable. With the removal of Severn Bridge tolls at the end of 2018, it is quite likely that there will be further counter-urbanisation from Bristol into Monmouthshire with both house prices and rental values in the private rented sector being pushed up even higher.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

### *7.5.22 Entry Level Property Price*

- 7.5.22.1 The entry level house price for Monmouthshire is £200,000.
- 7.5.22.2 There are cheaper properties available to buy in the county, but this figure reflects the market evidence of where the majority of first-time buyers access home ownership in Monmouthshire.
- 7.5.22.3 The £200,000 figure is the lower quartile price of a semi-detached house in Monmouthshire, based on sales and valuations. The reason it is based on sales and valuations is with far fewer sales taking place in 2020, combining it with valuation data gives a more up-to-date and robust figure.
- 7.5.22.4 Semi-detached properties account for just under 30% of all housing in Monmouthshire, so they are widely available in all areas of the county, as opposed to terraced properties which account for only 17% of the housing stock and detached properties which account for nearly 45% of the stock. Detached properties are significantly more expensive and therefore not considered entry level.
- 7.5.22.5 Although there are obvious differences between housing markets within Monmouthshire, the differences in semi-detached prices is not significant. The most recent market data shows the figure for Abergavenny to be the cheapest for semi-detached at £175,000, with Caldicot being the most expensive area at £210,000. Although the figure for Abergavenny does appear low, using sales only data the lower quartile figure is then £210,000, but this is based on a property count of only seven properties.
- 7.5.22.6 To be able to access home ownership in Monmouthshire, with an entry level price of £200,000, after allowing for a 15% deposit of £30,000 a household's income would need to be over £48,500 based on a mortgage offer at 3.5 times the household income.
- 7.5.22.7 According to the latest Hometrack data, the current Monmouthshire average house price to average income ratio is 7.23:1. In other words, people living in Monmouthshire would need over seven times their income to be able to afford an averaged priced property. That ratio increases to 9:1 for someone on a lower quartile income.
- 7.5.22.8 Rural house prices in Monmouthshire usually attract a significant premium and with the majority of housing being detached a separate entry level price for the rural parts of the country was not considered to be necessary.

## Chapter 8: Profile of Homelessness : Use of Statutory Homelessness Services

8.1.1 Section 8 considers the profile of homelessness in Monmouthshire. The section incorporates quantitative data, such as household characteristics, causes of homelessness and reoccurring themes and considers future trends. This data consists of locally collated data and statutory data sourced from Welsh Governments WHO 12.

### 8.2 Background

8.2.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the legal definition of homelessness. As recommended by the Welsh Government and for the purpose of this strategy the following broader definition of homelessness is used.

8.2.2 Section 55 of the Act set out the meaning of homeless and threatened homelessness:

- A person is homeless if there is no accommodation available for the person's occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which the person—
  - is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court,
  - has an express or implied licence to occupy, or
  - occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving the person the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.
- A person is also homeless if the person has accommodation but—
  - cannot secure entry to it, or
  - it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where the person is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it.
- A person is not to be treated as having accommodation unless it is accommodation, which it would be reasonable for the person to continue to occupy.
- A person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that the person will become within 56 days.

8.2.3 In its revised Code of Guidance for Allocations and Homelessness (2016) Welsh Government provided a broader definition and describes homelessness as:

8.2.4 'Where a person lacks accommodation or where their tenure is not secure'. This will include people who are:

- Sleeping rough
- Living in insecure/temporary housing (excluding assured/assured short-hold tenants)
- Living in short term hostels, night shelters, direct access hostels
- Living in bed and breakfasts
- Moving frequently between relatives/friends
- Squatting
- Unable to remain in, or return to, housing due to poor conditions, such as
  - overcrowding,
  - affordability problems,

- domestic violence,
- harassment,
- mental, physical and/or sexual abuse,
- unsuitability for physical needs or learning disabilities, sensory impairments or mental health conditions
- Threatened with losing their home and without suitable alternative accommodation for any reason, e.g. domestic abuse
- Leaving hospitals, police custody, prisons, the armed forces and other institutions or supported housing without a home to go to,
- Required to leave by family or friends or due to relationship breakdown,
- Facing possession proceedings or threat of eviction within 56 days of the end of tenancy.

8.2.5 In addition the Act introduced several new duties in relation to homelessness for local authorities with particular emphasis on prevention.

### 8.3 What is the data telling us about homelessness and prevention in Monmouthshire?

8.3.1 Initial presentation to the Council's Housing Options Team is the starting point of determining the overall demand on the service of households seeking housing-related advice.

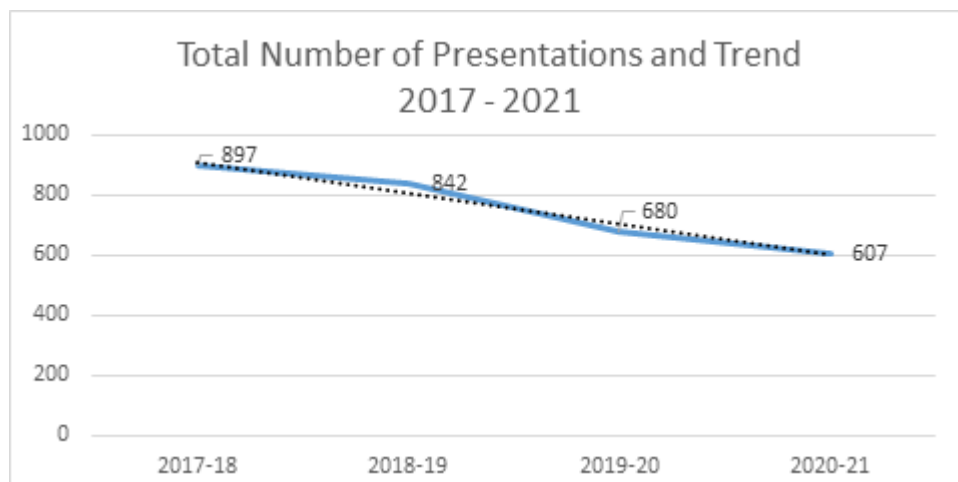


Figure 24: Number of presentations to Monmouthshire County Council's Housing Options Team 2017-2021

8.3.1.1 The graph (Figure 24) shows that presentations have fallen over the past 4 years, from a high of 897 presentations in 2017/18 to 607 presentations in 2020/21 a fall of 32.33%.

#### 8.3.2 Single Households

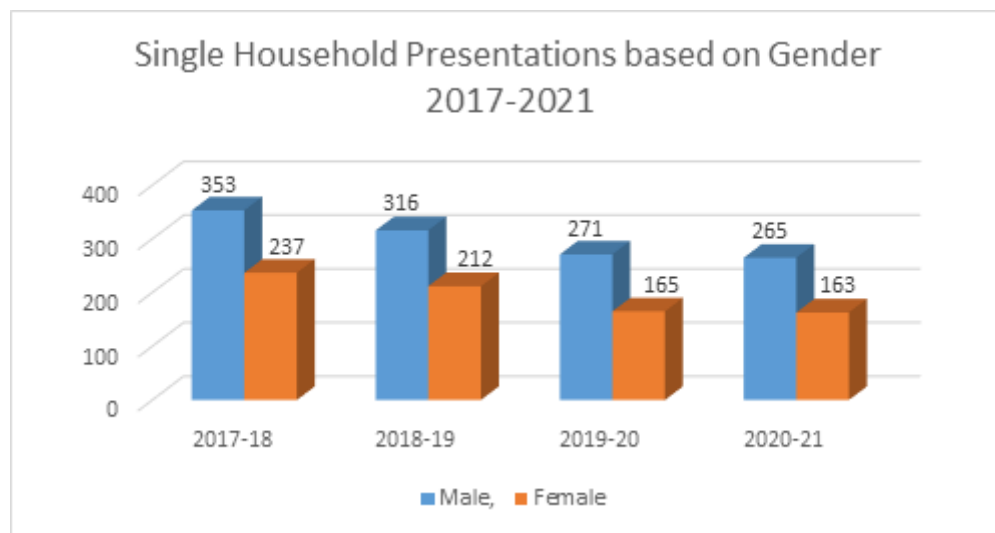
8.3.2.1 The following table shows the percentage of single household presentations as a percentage of the total number of presentations. This has remained relatively stable over the past 4 years fluctuating between 62% and 68%.



2017-18	65.77%
2018-19	62.7% <sup>1</sup>
2019-20	64.12%
2020-21	68.86%

*Table 16: Number of single presentations as a percentage of total*

8.3.2.2 Figure 25 and Table 17 shows the breakdown between male and female presentations.



*Figure 25: Breakdown of single household presentations by gender 2017-2021*

2017-18	59.83%
2018-19	59.85%
2019-20	62.16%
2020-21	61.91%

*Table 17: Male single households as a percentage of total single household presentations 2017-2021*

8.3.2.3 Again the percentage of male to female presentations remains relatively consistent across the 4-year period with males making up almost 61% of all presentations.

### 8.3.3 *Households with Dependent Children*

8.3.3.1 The figure below shows that the number of presentations of households with dependent children fell by around 50% over the same period.

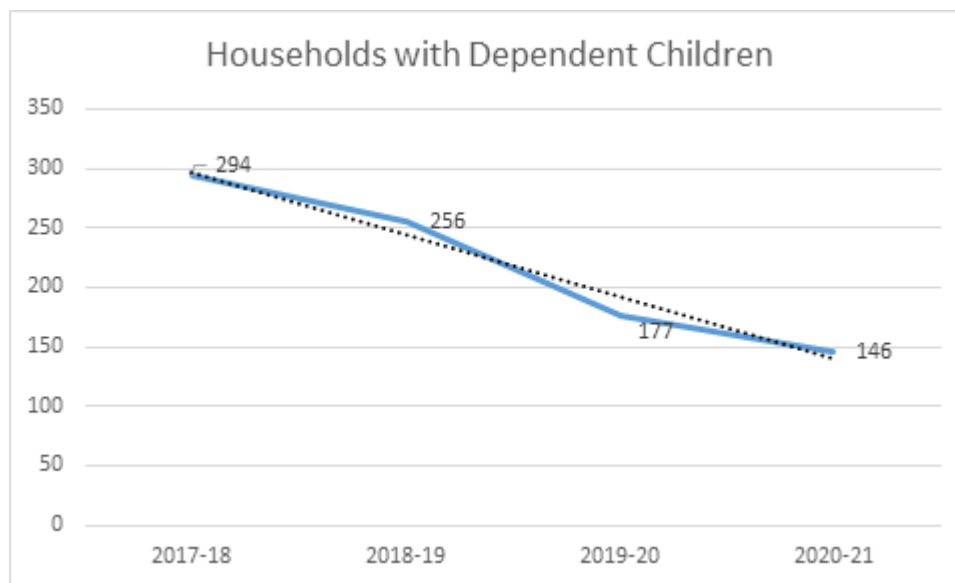


Figure 26: Number of households presenting to Monmouthshire Council Housing Options Team with Dependent children 2017-2021

### 8.3.4 *Young Persons: 16/ 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds*

8.3.4.1 Figure 27 below displays the number of young person households presenting April 2017 to March 2021.

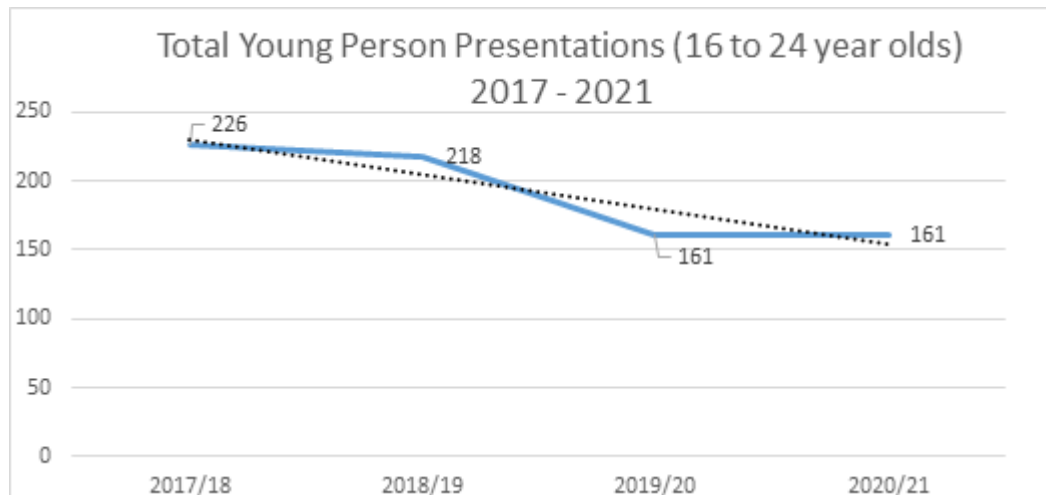


Figure 27: Number of Young Person presentations to Monmouthshire County Council Housing Options Team 2017-2021

8.3.4.2 The total number of presentations from young persons (16 – 24 olds) has followed almost the same line as the total number of presentations – a fall of 28.76%. Young people make up 25% of all applications.

8.3.4.3 In terms of gender the Figure 28 below shows a fall in presentations across the genders with females making up 57.44% percentage of presentations over the four-year period (2017 – 2021)

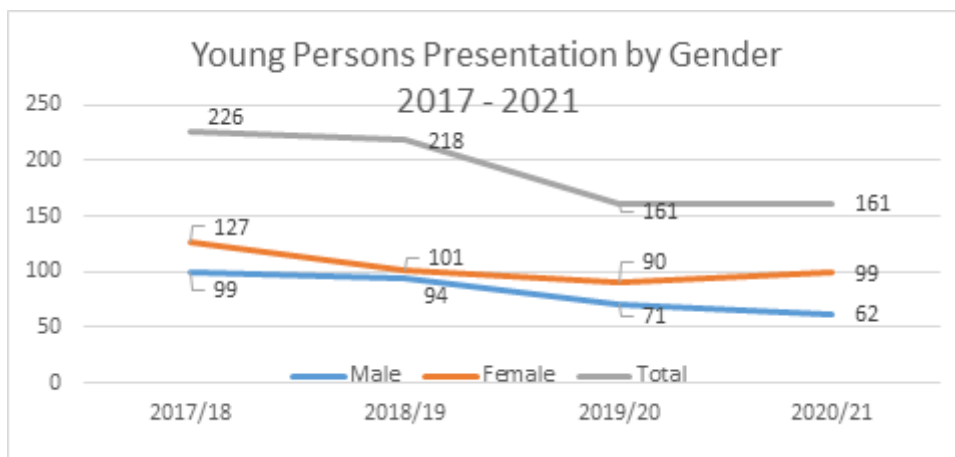


Figure 28: Young Person presentations broken down by Gender

8.3.4.4 Young persons are divided into two age cohorts 16 and 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds, Figure 29 below shows there was a spike in presentations during 2018 – 19 for 16 and 17 year olds and that the trend has fallen since then. However overall the trend shows presentations has increased by just under 65% with female presentations making up the majority of that rise.

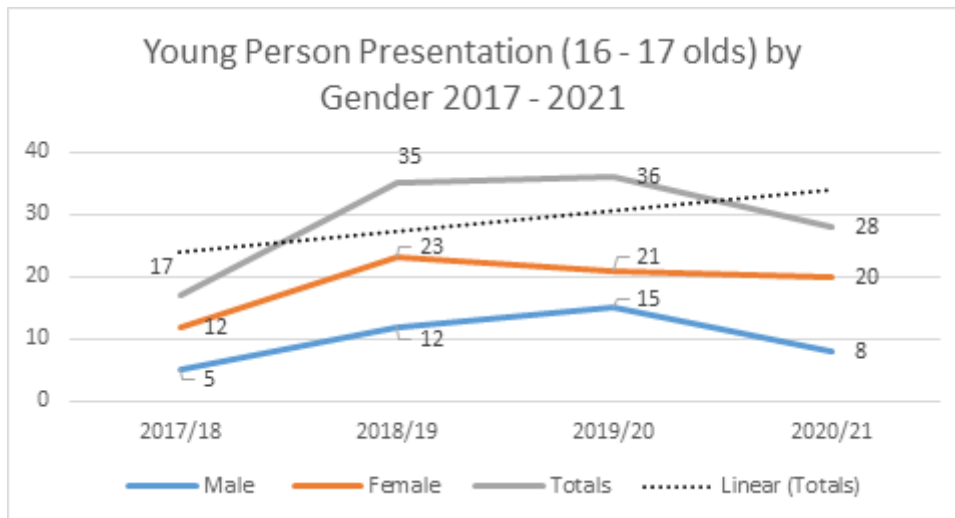


Figure 29: Young Person presentations- 16-17 year olds- by Gender 2017-2021

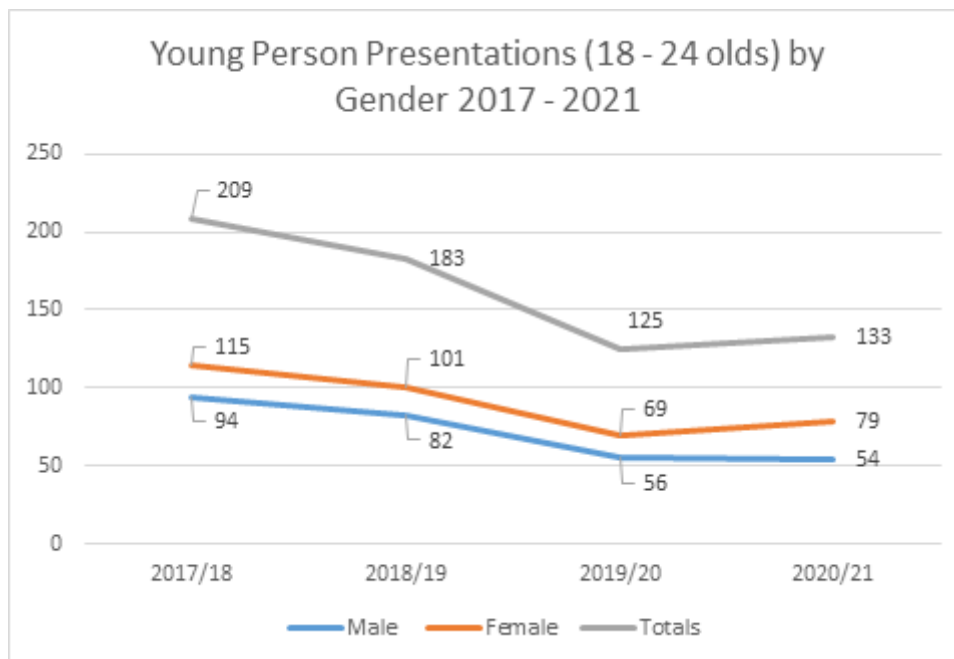


Figure 30: Young Person presentations- 18-24 year olds, by gender 2017-2021

8.3.4.5 For the 18 to 24 year old cohort Figure 30 above shows of just over 36% fall during over the four year period 2017 – 2020 with a slight increase during 2020 – 21. As with the 16- 17 year old cohort females make up the majority of the 18 – 24 year old cohort.

8.3.4.6 The gender split for the young person cohort (more female than male) is opposite to the gender split for all presentation (more male than female).

#### **8.4 The Duties**

8.4.1 Section 60 – The Duty to provide housing advice, information and assistance that is free and easily accessible.

8.4.2 Section 62 – The duty to undertake an assessment

8.4.3 The local authority has a duty to assess every household who could be at threat of homelessness. At this point the Council must satisfy itself what further duties apply to the household applicant.

8.4.4 Section 66: The Prevention Duty. The duty placed on the Council to take reasonable steps to prevent or alleviate homelessness. It applies to all households threatened with homelessness within 56 days of approaching the Council regardless of their priority status or connection to the County.

8.4.5 Section 73: To Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation – A prevention duty. The activation of this duty occurs when all other forms of assistance to prevent or alleviate homelessness occurring under the S66 duty are exhausted and the household has to leave their current accommodation. Again this duty applies to all households regardless of their priority status or connection to the County. Under this duty the Council will help the applicant to secure alternative accommodation through various means such as.

8.4.6 Section 75 – The Duty to Accommodate. Only households with a priority need, local connection and unintentionally homeless will fall under this duty. This duty applies once all other preventative options under the duties above have failed.

8.4.7 This duty ends any one of the following happens

- The household applicant accepts an offer of suitable accommodation
- The household applicant refuse offer of suitable accommodation
- The household applicant voluntary ceases to occupy the accommodation,
- The household applicant is no longer eligible,
- There is a mistake of fact during the investigation stage,
- The household applicant withdraws their application
- The household applicant unreasonably fails to cooperate.

#### **8.5 The main reasons for being threatened with homelessness under a Section 66 or 73 Duty**

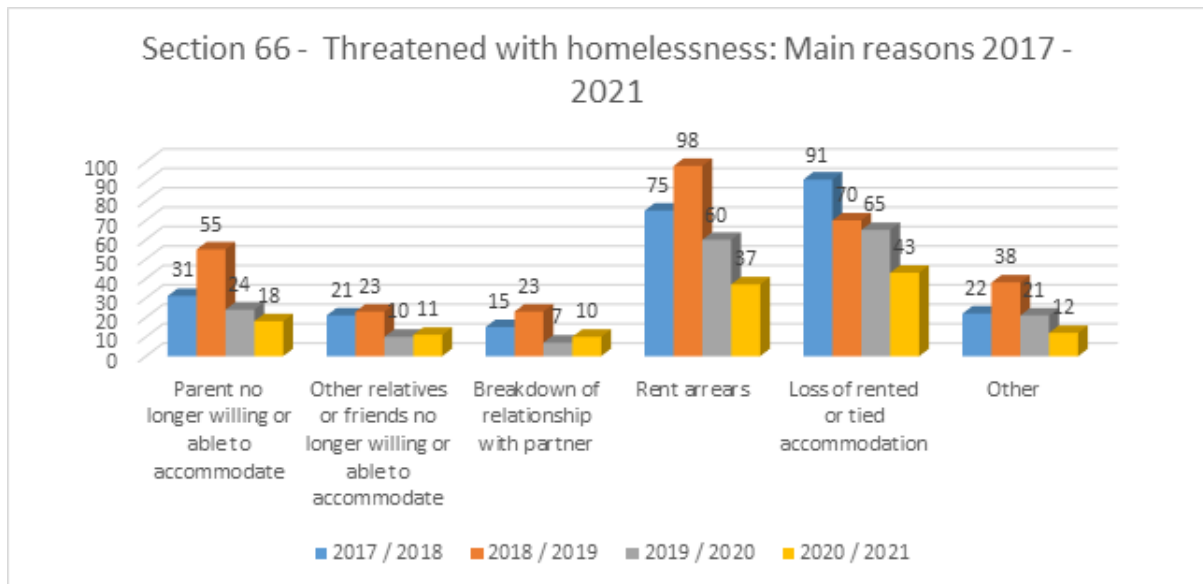


Figure 31: Main reasons for the threat of homelessness under a Section 66 2017-2021

8.5.1 When it comes to Section 73, the main reasons for being threatened with homelessness is the applicant is no longer able to remain in their current accommodation either due to parental eviction or other relatives or friends evicting (300) followed by breakdown with partner (233) and by loss of private rented accommodation (including rent arrears) (220), see figure 32 below.

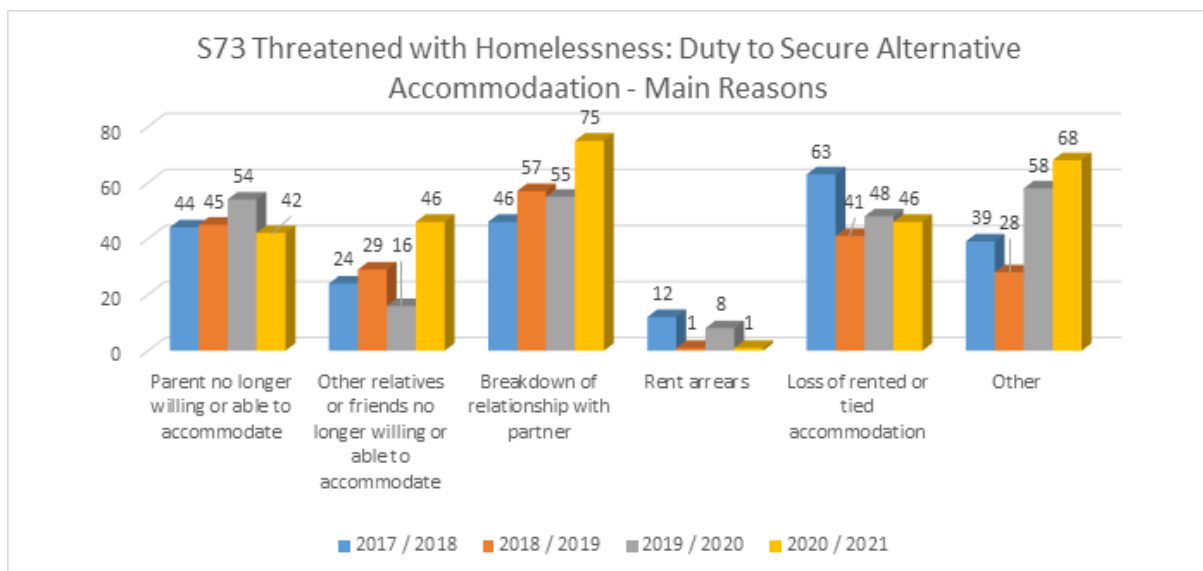


Figure 32: Main reasons for the threat of homelessness under a Section 73 2017-2021

8.5.2 The category “Other” for both S66 and S73 covers the following

- Current property unaffordable
- Violence or harassment:
- Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)
- Current property unsuitable

- Prison Leaver
- In institution or care (e.g. hospital, residential home, army etc.)
- homeless in emergency eg, returned from abroad, sleeping rough or in hostel)

8.5.3 Loss of a Private Sector rented accommodation has consistently remained the most common reason for household threatened with homelessness (both rent arrears and loss of accommodation) followed by parent and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (both from parents and relative and friends).

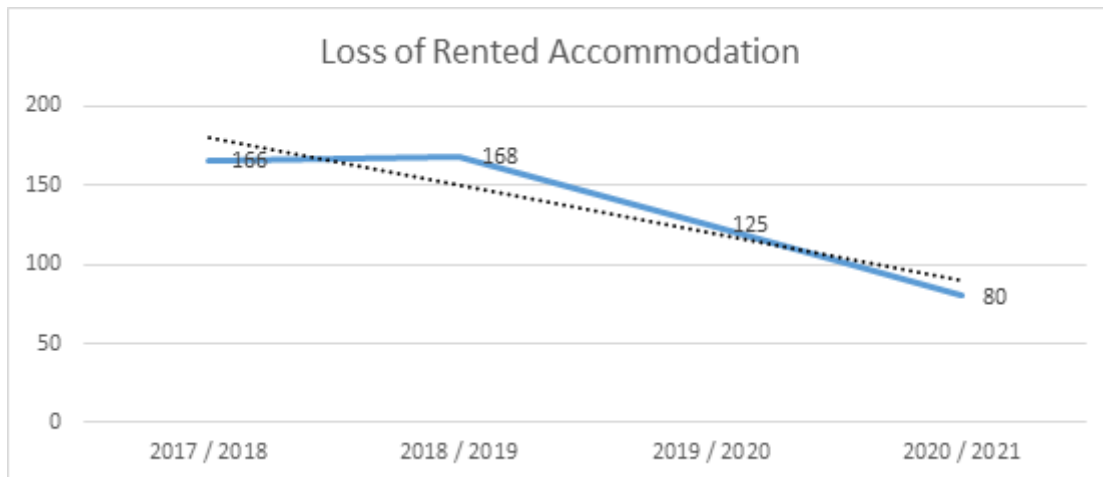


Figure 33: Number of applicants who have lost Private Rented Accommodation 2017-2021

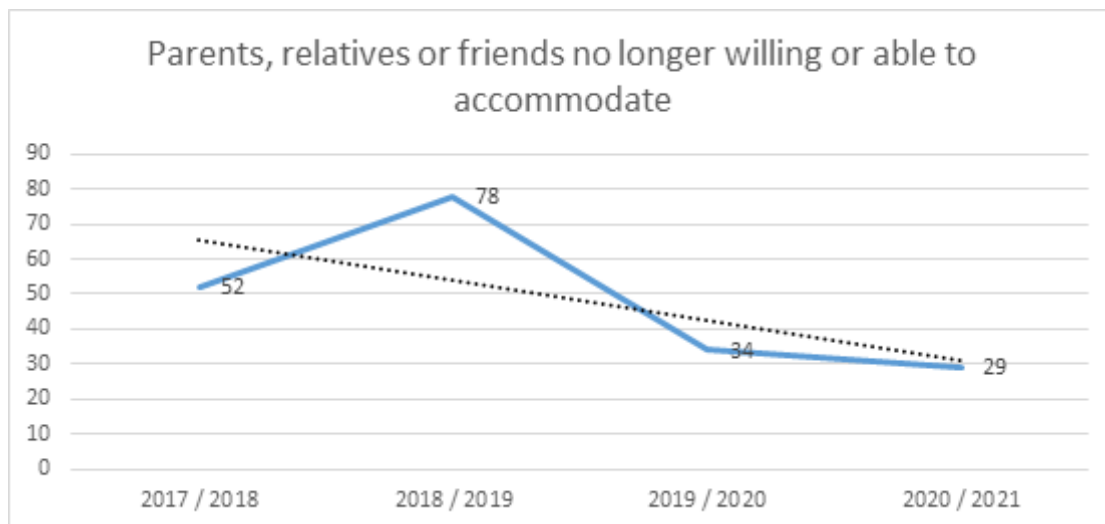


Figure 34: Number of applicants whose Parents, Friends or Relatives are unable to accommodate 2017-2021

8.5.4 When cross referencing with data on single people gives some indication that parents no longer willing to accommodate is broadly more of an issue for single households, compared to all households that present to the Council.

8.5.5 When we look at the number of single households they account for almost 43% of all household under a S66 duty during 2017/18 and rises to almost 65.5% for the financial year 2019/20.

8.5.6 Under a S73 duty single household's account for almost 69% of all households rising to just under 75% for the 2019/20 financial year.

<b>S66</b>	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total single Households	Total Households	Percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	55	55	110	255	43.13%	50%	50%
2018/2019	92	58	150	307	48.88%	61.33%	38.67%
2019/2020	73	57	130	187	69.51%	56.15%	43.85%
2020/2021	38	23	61	130	46.92%	62.29%	37.71%

Table 18: Breakdown of Section 66 Households

<b>S73</b>	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total Singles Households	Total Households	percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	106	52	158	228	69.29%	67.08%	32.92%
2018/2019	82	47	129	201	64.17%	63.56%	36.44%
2019/2020	112	66	178	239	74.47%	62.92%	37.08%



2020/2021	138	67	205	278	73.74%	67.31%	32.69%
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Table 19: Breakdown of Section 73 Households

## 8.6 The Duties and the Data

8.6.1.1 As discussed at paragraph 8.4, above, the Council has a duty has a number statutory duties to help alleviate households from being homelessness. To recap the duties

- S66 and S73 the “preventative” and help to “secure” duties that are available to all households irrespective of their local connection or priority status, and the “reasonable steps” the Council must undertake to alleviate the threat of homelessness.
- S75 the duty to accommodate – is available to those households that have a local connection and priority need and preventive work under sections 66 and 73 has failed to prevent the household from becoming homelessness.

8.6.1.2 The following paragraphs show the demand and effectiveness of the service.

8.6.1.3 **Section 66** to prevent homelessness occurring in the first instance either by helping households to remain in their current accommodation if it is safe and practical to do so or through the securing of alternative accommodation.

8.6.1.4 All cases where positive action succeeded or did not succeed in preventing/relieving homelessness.

S66				
	Unsuccessful	Successful	total	Success as a Percentage
2017/18	100	155	255	60.78%
2018/19	101	206	307	67.10%
2019/20	74	113	187	60.43%
2020/21	46	83	129	64.34%

Table 20: Number of Section 66s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

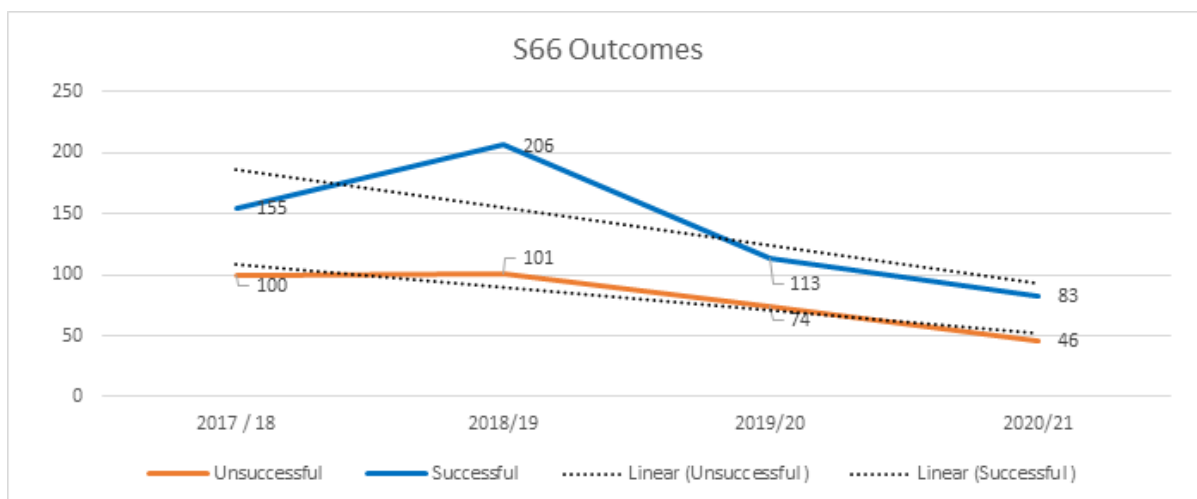


Figure 35: Number of Section 66s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

8.6.1.5 Table 20 and Figure 35 above shows that for households owed a Section 66 duty across all four years the Council success rate in alleviating the threat of homelessness was just under 64%.

8.6.1.6 **Section 73:** Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation. Households are owed this duty when all other forms of assistance to prevent or alleviate homelessness occurring under the S66 duty are exhausted.

S73				
Year	Unsuccessful	Successful	Total	Success as a Percentage
2017 / 18	115	113	228	49.56%
2018/19	71	130	201	64.68%
2019/20	77	162	239	67.78%
2020/21	135	127	273	46.52%

Table 21: Number of Section 73s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

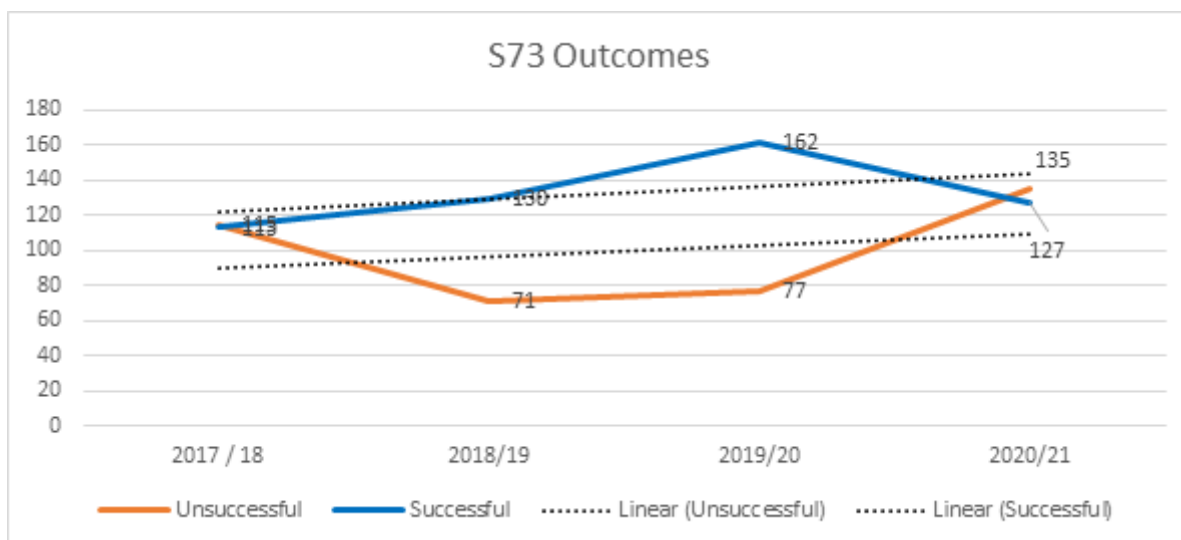


Figure 36: Number of Section 73s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

8.6.1.7 Table 21 and Figure 36 above shows that for households owed a Section 73 duty across all four years the Council success rate in alleviating the threat of homelessness by securing alternative accommodation was just under 57%.

8.6.1.8 The following table (Table 22) shows the total number of successful and unsuccessful outcomes across both S66 and S73 duties.

S66 and S73	Successful	Unsuccessful	Total
2017/18	268	215	483
2018/19	336	172	508
2019/20	275	151	426
2020/21	210	181	391

Table 22: Total outcomes S66 & S73 2017-2021

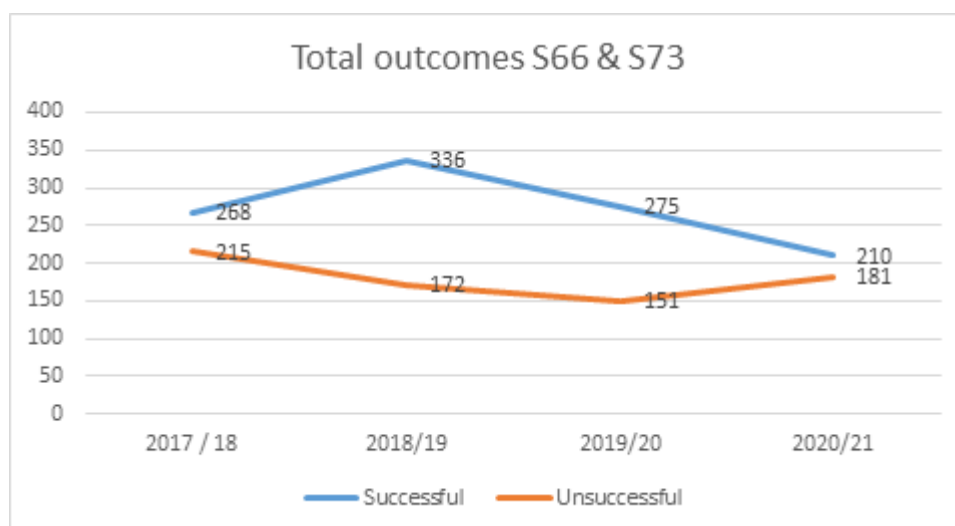


Figure 37: Total outcomes S66 & S73 2017-2021

8.6.1.9 From the table below (Table 21) our successes as a percentage of the total preventative outcomes reduced during 2020/21 to below the 2017/18 level.

	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
Successful Outcomes	55.5%	66.14%	64.55%	53.71%
Unsuccessful Outcomes	44.5 %	33.86%	35.45%	46.29%

Table 23: Breakdown of preventative outcomes 2017-2021

## 8.6.2 The “Reasonable Steps” taken to Prevent Homelessness (S66)

8.6.2.1 Reasonable steps can include any of the following:

- Services offering mediation between young people and their parents / other relatives that will allow young persons to remain living their current accommodation if it is safe to do so.
- Services offering financial and debt advice to address issues such as
  - Mortgage and rent arrears.
  - The use of discretionary housing payments (DHP)
  - Prioritising debts
  - Services offering support to mortgage lenders and landlords to resolve issues that would prevent an eviction or withdraw an eviction notice.
- The use of a “prevention fund” that can resolve issues or assist households secure alternative accommodation, such as
  - rent/ mortgage arrears
  - Rent in advance
  - Rent deposits
  - Introduction payments
  - Landlord incentive measures

8.6.2.2 The following graph (Figure 38) shows the type of S66 interventions that enable the household to remain in their existing home.

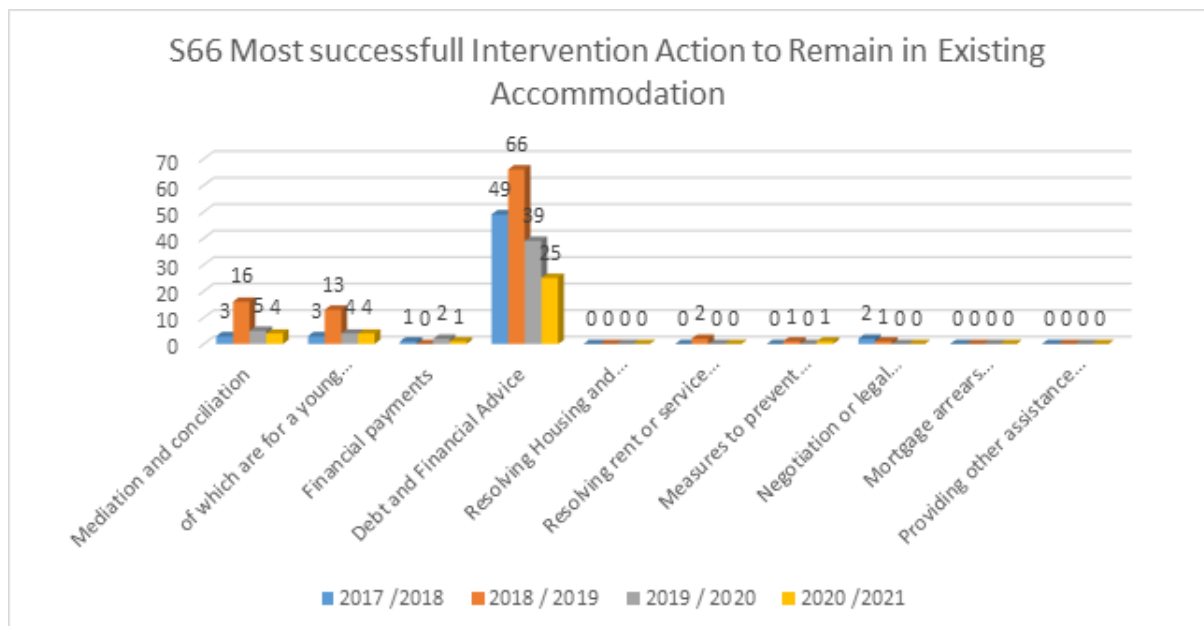


Figure 38: S66 Most Successful Intervention Action

8.6.2.3 Between 2017 – 2021, the most successful intervention allowing households to remain in their existing home has consistently been debt and financial advice (179 households) followed by mediation and conciliation (28 households)

### 8.6.3 Debt & Financial Advice

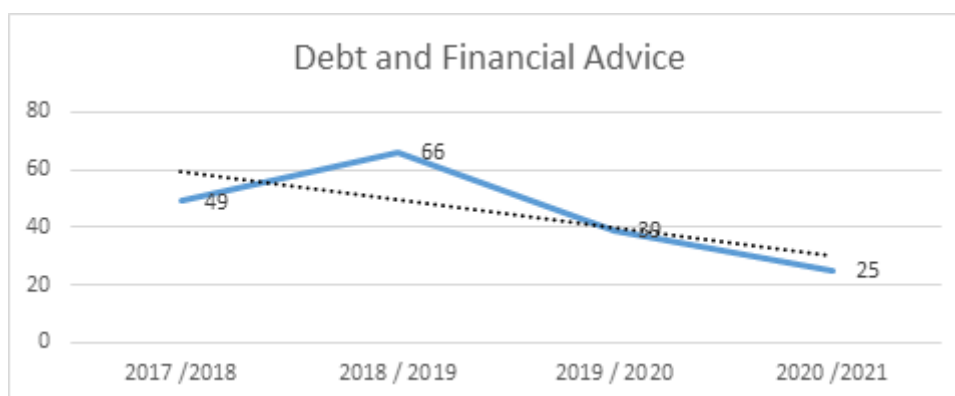


Figure 39: Debt & Financial Advice Intervention 2017-2021

8.6.3.1 However there has been a steady decline in the number of outcomes from a high of 66 during 2018/19 to 25 during 2020/21.

#### 8.6.4 Young Persons Services

##### 8.6.4.1 Mediation

8.6.4.2 Llamau provide a service for under 25s who are at risk of relationship breakdowns in the family home which could result in homelessness. Llamau work with the young person and their family as a mediator with the aim being for the young person to remain in the family home.

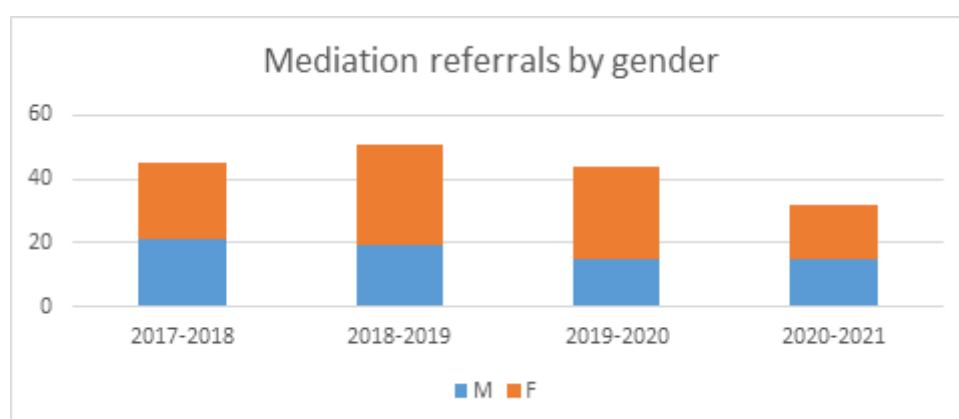


Figure 40: Number of referrals for Mediation 2017-2021 by Gender

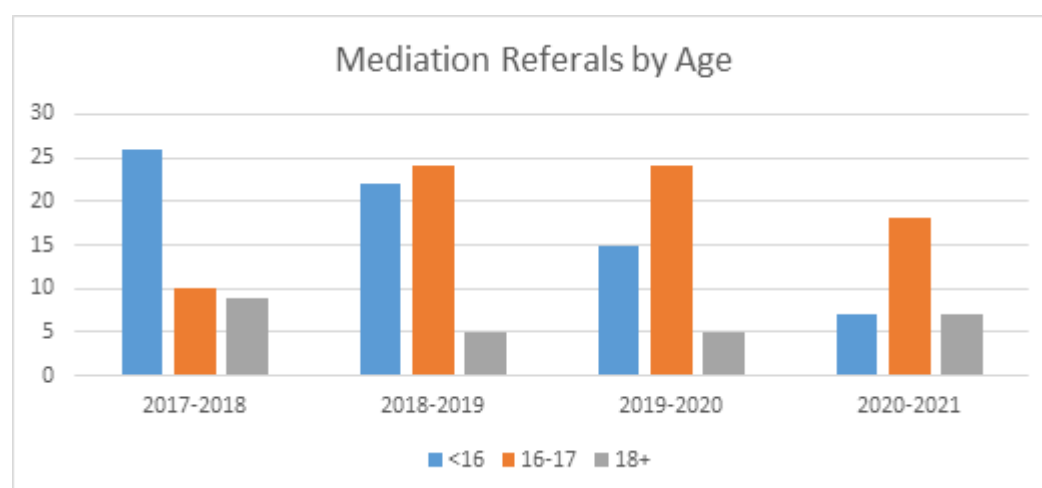


Figure 41: Number of referrals for Mediation 2017-2021 by Age

Year	Number of referrals	Number remaining/ returning	Success rate (%)
2017-2018	45	38	84.44

2018-2019	51	40	78.43
2019-2020	44	32	72.73
2020-2021	32	26	81.25

Table 24: Number of referrals who were able to stay or return to accommodation

8.6.4.3 As the above table (Table 24) shows mediation has a high success rate in supporting young people to avoid homelessness and rebuild relationships. In general there are more female referrals than males with the number of U16s referred in decline.

#### 8.6.4.4 Compass

8.6.4.5 Compass is a service working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

8.6.4.6 Compass receives referrals from schools, MCC Gateway, MCC Community HUBs, Self-referrals, Social Services, Job Centres, POBL group (hostels) and Llamau (Mediation and Emphasis projects). For those at risk of homelessness Compass provides support through holistic support approach based on assessment of individual needs from a single support factor to combined factors (**Note:** this will include where required collaboration with specialist support) inclusive of: mental/emotional well-being, at risk of NEET, Family Relationship Support, Advocacy, Mentoring, Independent Living Skills/budgeting, Employment and Training.

8.6.4.7 Those who approach as or find themselves homeless are provided with advocacy and support through presenting to HOT, Homesearch registration plus ongoing support where required.

8.6.4.8 The below tables (Table 25 and 26) demonstrate a rise in referrals in the last two years, with successful outcomes remaining relatively stable. Successful outcomes include actions leading to accommodation and/ or referrals to other services. As these are in- year outcomes and do not record for those whose cases span more than one financial year the actual success rate may be higher.

Year	Closed				Remained open/ support ongoing	Total number of referrals
	Led to accommodation	Referred to/in receipt of specialist support e.g. mental health. Employment, etc	Non-engagement	Disengaged from support		
2019-2020	15	7	3	3	13	41
2020-2021	19	13	3	6	17	58

Table 25: Number of referrals broken down into outcomes

		As a % total referrals		As a % total referrals
	Positive		Negative	
2019-2020	22	53.66	6	14.63
2020-2021	32	55.17	9	15.52

Table 26: Referrals broken down into positive and negative outcomes 2019-2021

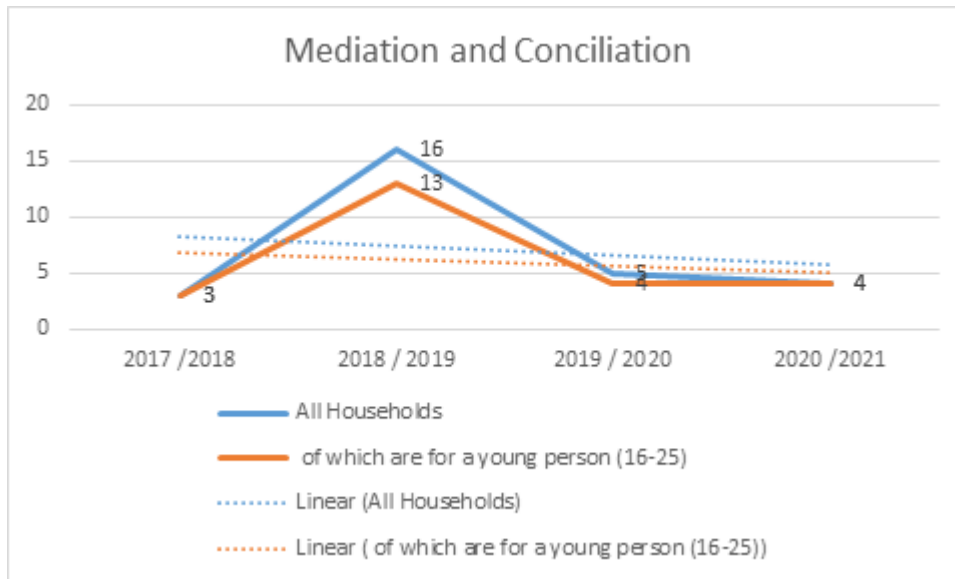


Figure 42: Mediation and Conciliation – Total of all households and the number of young persons (16-24)

#### 8.6.5 Section 66 and Section 73: Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation

8.6.5.1 There are a number of actions recorded by WHO 12 data to alleviate the threat of homelessness through assisting applicants to secure alternative accommodation:

- I. Any form of non-self-contained supported accommodation.
- II. Self-contained supported accommodation
- III. Private rented sector accommodation with landlord incentive scheme (e.g. cashless bond, finders fee, deposit payment, rent in advance, landlord insurance payment)
- IV. Private rented sector accommodation without landlord incentive scheme
- V. Accommodation arranged with friends, relatives or returning home
- VI. Social Housing - Local authority
- VII. Social Housing – RSL
- VIII. Low cost home ownership scheme, low cost market housing solution



8.6.5.2 The following figures show the most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation through S66 and S73 intervention. In figures 43 and 44, below, and actions III and IV above, have been combined to create total for the private sector and likewise actions VI and VII have been combined to create a total for the social sector.

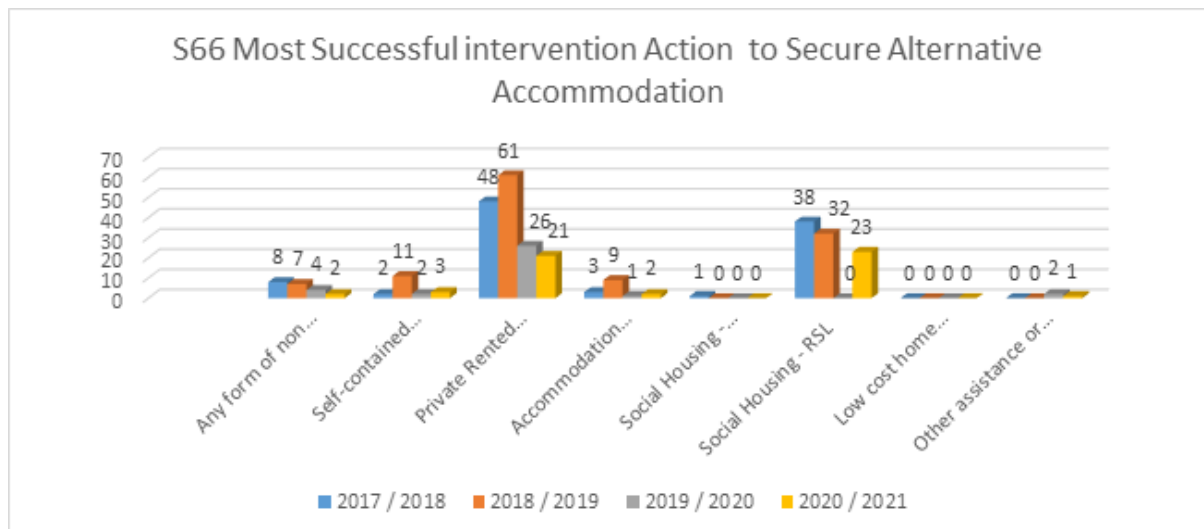


Figure 43: S 66 Most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation

8.6.5.3 When it comes to preventing homelessness and finding alternative accommodation options under a S66 duty the most successful option was the PRS with 63% of all household securing alternative accommodation (156) followed by the Social Housing Sector 37% (94 households).

8.6.6 Section 73: The duty to take reasonable steps to alleviate homelessness

8.6.7 However when it comes to Section 73 duty Figure 40, below shows that the most successful intervention for securing accommodation was in the social housing sector followed by securing accommodation in the private rented sector 187 and 177 households respectively.

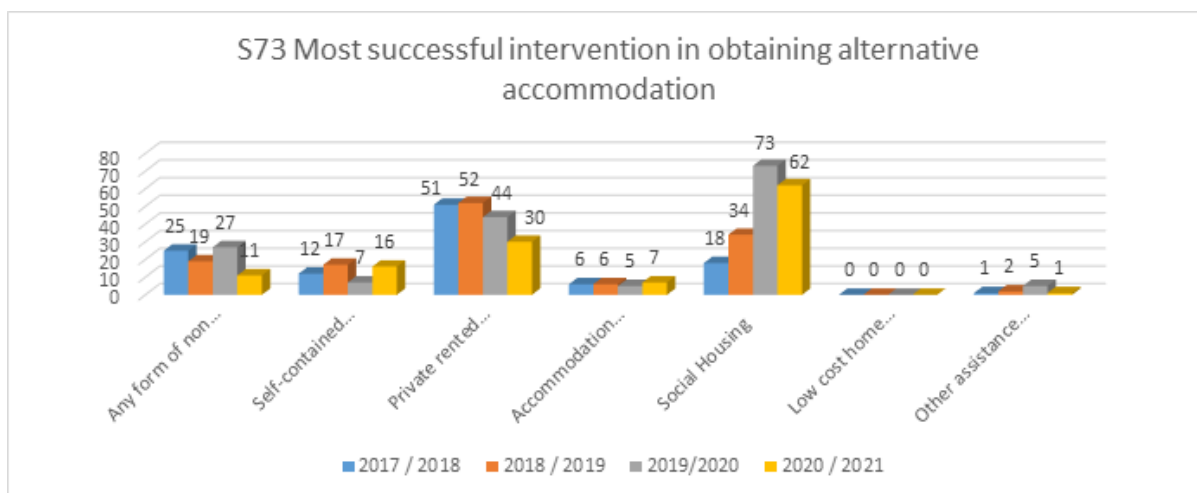


Figure 44: S73 Most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation

## 8.7 Accessing Private Rented and Social Rented Accommodation

8.7.1 Table 27 below shows the demand for both private rented property (PRS) and social housing (SHS) across S66 and S73 duties. A total of 614 households were assisted to find alternative accommodation within the PRS and SHS between April 2017 and March 2021.

Alternative Accommodation	PRS		SHS		Total
	S66	S73	S66	S73	
2017 / 2018	48	51	39	18	156
2018 / 2019	61	52	32	34	179
019 / 2020	26	44	0	73	143
2020 / 2021	21	30	23	62	136
	156	177	94	187	614

Table 27: Demand for both private rented property (PRS) and social housing (SHS) across S66 and S73 duties

8.7.2 In terms of household being accommodation in both the PRS and the SHS and across both S66 and S73 duties the PRS accommodates 54.23% of households, see Table 28 below

		Percentage
PRS	333	54.23%
SHS	281	45.77%
Total	614	100%

Table 28: Number of those accommodated broken down into PRS and SHS

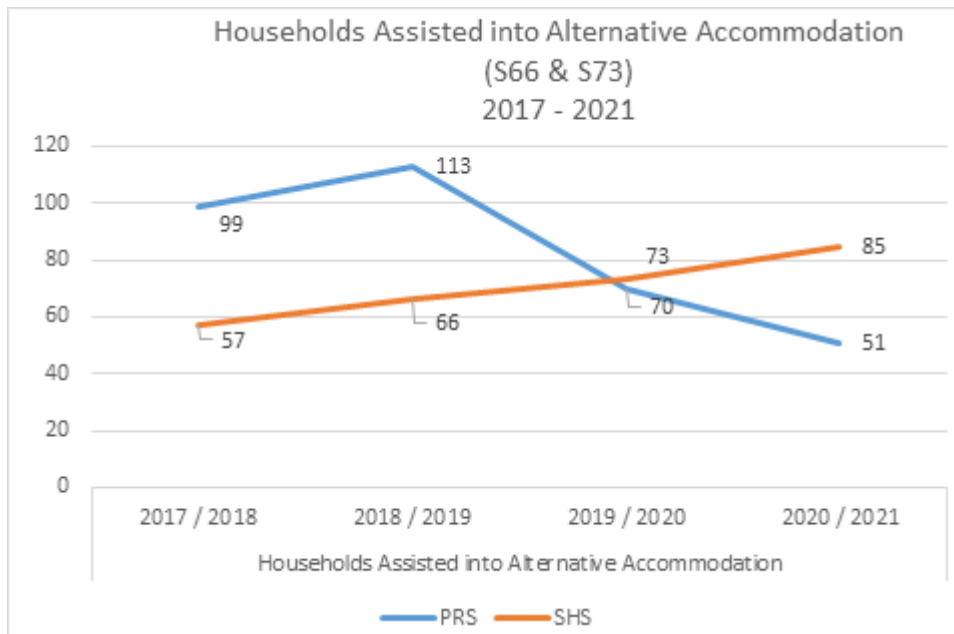


Figure 45: Number of Households Assisted into Alternative Accommodation 2017-2021

## 8.8 Landlord Incentives

8.8.1 As part of the toolkit to assist households find alternative accommodation within the PRS the use of landlord incentives such as cash and cashless bond, finders fee, deposit payment, rent in advance and landlord insurance payment helped to secure almost 59% of accommodation.

8.8.2 An invaluable intervention - without being able to use this we would be looking to find other forms of accommodation and more likely emergency temporary accommodation in bed & breakfast establishments.

## 8.9 S75: The Duty to Accommodate

8.9.1.1 This is the final duty owed to households threatened with homelessness and is only triggered when all the duties mentioned above have failed. In addition to the qualifying criteria required to meet the S66 and S73 duties, above, S 75 requires the applicant household to prove a “priority need” and “local connection”.

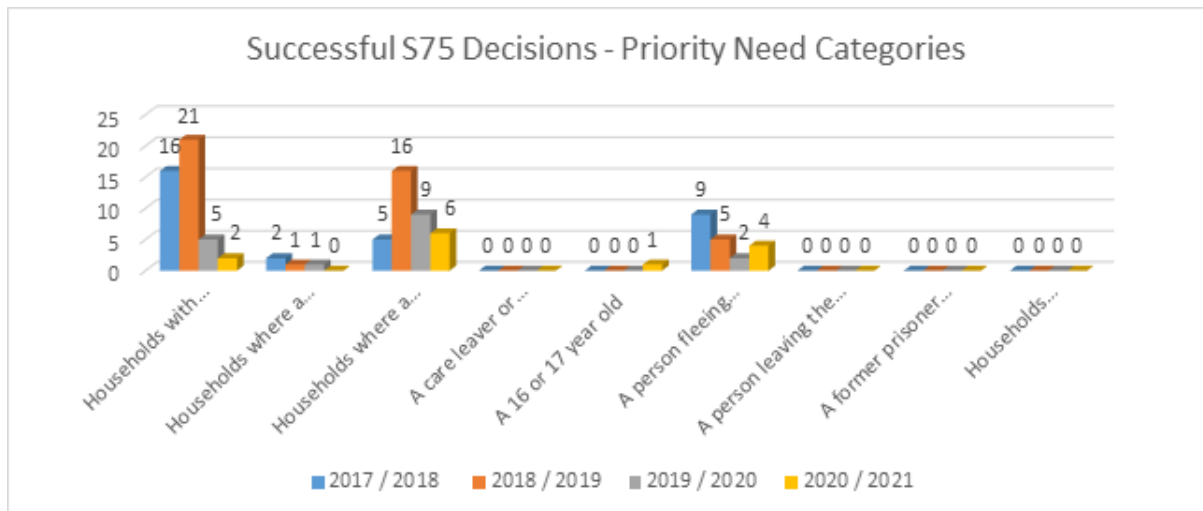


Figure 46: Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the year: Categories of priority need by type of household (Section 75)

8.9.1.2 The three main priority reasons for a s75 being awarded is

- Household with dependent children;
- Households where there is a vulnerability and
- A person fleeing domestic violence.

8.9.1.3 Figure 47 below shows the trend of the number of households owed a Section 75 duty and although there was a 34.5% spike during 2018 /19, since then there has been a steady decline.

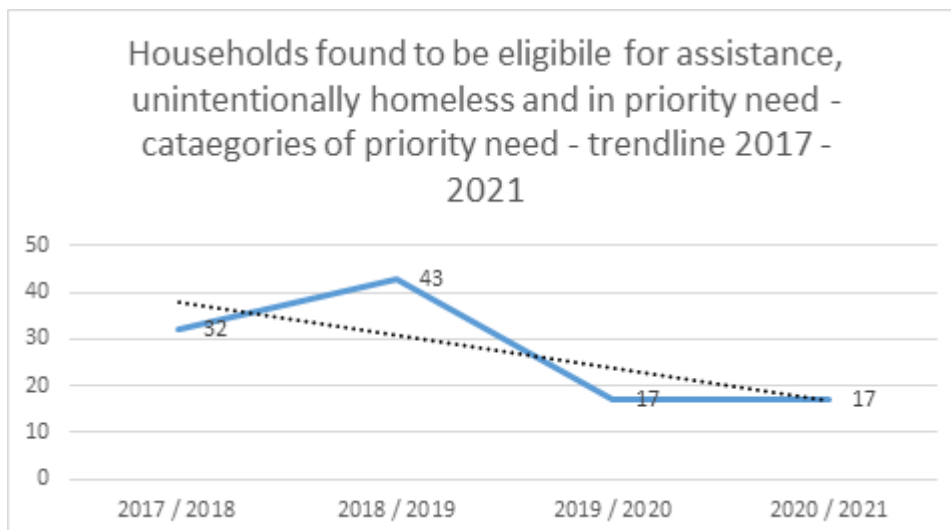


Figure 47: Number of Households owed a Section 75 duty 2017-2021

## 8.9.2 Household Composition

8.9.2.1 From the table below (Table 29) we can see that single household's accounted for almost 35.5%% of all households during 2017/18 to 70.6% for the 2020/21 financial year.

<b>S75</b>	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total single Households	Total Households	Percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	3	8	11	32	35.54%	27.28%	72.72%
2018/2019	6	9	15	43	27.90%	40%	60%
2019/2020	7	3	10	17	56.82%	70%	30%
2020/2021	9	3	12	17	70.59%	75%	25%

Table 29: Section 75s owed 2017-2021 by Household composition

## 8.10 Discharge of S75 Duty to Accommodate

8.10.1 Table 30 breaks down the reasons behind the discharge of the section 75 duty (household numbers). Key themes and trends include:

Reason for Discharge (Section 75) – Household numbers	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21
Ceased to be eligible	0	0	0	0
Withdrawal of application	0	1	1	1
Mistake of fact	0	0	0	0
Became homeless intentionally from accommodation provided under section 75	1	1	2	1

Accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (part vi 1996 HA)	24	23	13	10
Accepted a private sector offer	4	12	0	4
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation made available under section 75	1	1	0	1
Refusal of an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (Part VI 1996 HA)	0	2	1	0
Refusal of an offer of suitable accommodation in the Private Rented Sector	0	0	0	0
Refusal of an offer of suitable interim accommodation under section 75	2	2	0	0
Refusal to co-operate	0	1	0	0
Total	32	43	17	17

Table 30: Reasons for Discharge of Section 75 duty 2017-2021

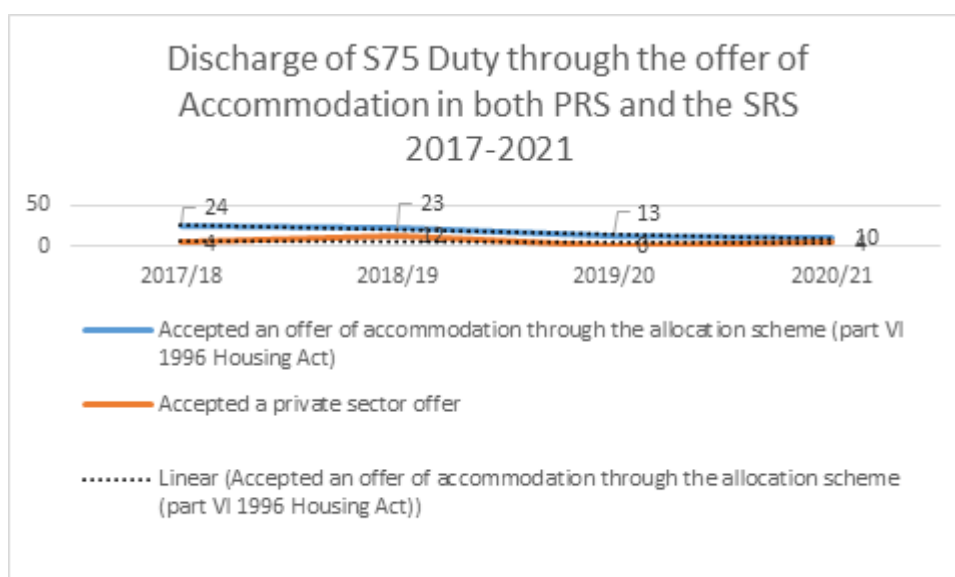


Figure 48: Breakdown of the Discharge of 75 Duty by Accommodation Offer Type 2017-2021

## 8.11 Ethnicity

8.11.1.1 Figures show that the ethnic identity of the county is 97%<sup>2</sup> of Monmouthshire's population are of white ethnicity with 3% being of Black, Asian and minority ethnicity.

8.11.1.2 The ethnicity of clients accessing homelessness services broadly follows the pattern of the County:

2017 - 18	1.1%
2018 - 19	5%
2019 - 20	2.1%
2020 - 21	3.1%

Table 31: Percentage of ethnic applications

### 8.11.2 Gypsy and Traveller

8.11.2.1 In terms of Gypsies and Travellers the 2011 census shows that six households identified themselves as Gypsy and Irish Traveller, 0.006% of the population.

## 8.12 What is the data telling us?

8.12.1 The table below shows how households fared as they journeyed their way through the homelessness process of presenting to the council, the preventative duties S66 and S73 and finally S75.

Year		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Totals
Presentations		897	842	680	607	3026
Section 66 Duty	Unsuccessful	100	101	74	46	321
	Successful	155	206	113	83	557
Section 73 Duty	Unsuccessful	115	71	77	135	398
	Successful	113	130	162	127	532

<sup>2</sup> <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/Ethnicity-by-Area-EthnicGroup>

Section 75 Duty	Unsuccessful	4	8	4	3	19
	Successful	28	35	13	14	90
	Total outcomes	515	551	443	408	1917

Table 32: Household journey through Duties 2017-2021

Total successful Outcomes	296	371	288	224	1179
Total Unsuccessful Outcomes	219	180	155	184	738

Table 33: Breakdown of Successful and Unsuccessful outcomes

8.12.2 We can conclude from table, that the Council were able to alleviate the threat homelessness or actual homelessness of almost 61% of households over the four year period 2017 – 2021. However, for almost 39% households the outcomes were unsuccessful. Further research is required to understand this figure.

Success Rate as a Percentage	61%
Unsuccessful Rate as a Percentage	39%

Table 34: Total number of Successful and Unsuccessful outcomes as a percentage 2017-2021



## Chapter 9: Temporary Accommodation

- 9.1.1 Monmouthshire council currently (February 2022) has 177 units of Temporary Accommodation.
- 9.1.2 Prior to the Global Pandemic in 2020 the number of individuals placed in TA accommodation remained relatively stable. Following a change in guidance from WG to bring everyone indoors under Public Health Measures, Monmouthshire has seen a steep increase in the demand for TA that has made it necessary for the council to employ costly B&B accommodation at levels not previously seen, despite the number of overall presentations slightly declining. At the end of 2019 MCC had 15 households in TA Accommodation and no households in B&B accommodation; in March 2020 that had risen to 21 households in TA Accommodation, with 1 family in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation due to the flooding across the County during late February. By the end of March 2021 there were 74 households in Bed and Breakfast, including 3 families; with a further 67 households in TA Accommodation. By December 2021, this had increased to 92 households, including 12 families in Bed and Breakfast, with a further 84 households in TA Accommodation.
- 9.1.3 Expenditure on TA and related costs has significantly increased between 2017-2021. A large portion of this increase in expenditure is related to security costs across B&B and TA accommodation due to the increase in households with complex needs (see section 10).
- 9.1.4 The expansion of the “Duty to Accommodate” for those who may not have previously been considered ‘Priority Need’ has seen an upsurge of single households in TA. The obligation of the Local Authority to continue to accommodate those who have lost their Homeless Duty, i.e. those who have effectively exited accommodation due to Anti-Social Behaviour or left accommodation voluntarily, also continues to put a significant strain on current existing TA provision, in both housing management and physical capacity. The issue remains that for those who have no Homeless Duty, who are excluded or demoted on the Local Housing Register, there is very little opportunity for people to move on from Temporary Accommodation once the Homeless Duty is withdrawn. This is mainly due to a lack of affordable Private Sector properties and shared housing in Monmouthshire.
- 9.1.5 For those single households who remain on the Housing Register, waiting times for move on from TA Accommodation continue to grow. In the year 2018-19, the average waiting time for a one-bedroom flat was 5 months; this dropped to 3 months in the year 2019 -20. However, this escalated to an average of 7 months in the year 2020-21, with the average waiting time hitting 11 months from April – December 2021. This peaked in November 2021 to an average of 15 months.
- 9.1.6 There has been a 516% increase in single households being accommodated between 2017 and 2022, while couples decreased by 42% over the same period. ‘Other’ Households which includes households with children has seen an 80% increase.

- 9.1.7 With the sudden leap in single households in TA the demand for 1 bed self-contained move on accommodation is overwhelming the availability in both the social and private rented sectors. Added to the temporary ban in evictions during the Pandemic it is not a surprise that households are having to spend longer on average in Temporary Accommodation.

## Chapter 10: Housing Support Grant Data

- 10.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council Housing Support Grant supports the aim of working together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented, ensuring it is rare, brief and un-repeated. The HSG focusses on the root cause of homelessness and work to enable people to stay in their own homes longer.
- 10.1.2 HSG funded services augment, complement and support the statutory service to ensure that the overall offer authorities provide helps people into the right homes with the right support to succeed. Housing related support seeks to enable vulnerable people to address the, sometimes multiple, problems they face, such as debt, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and mental health issues, to maintain and increase their independence and capacity to remain in their own home.
- 10.1.3 The HSG does NOT fund personal care services (e.g. help with bathing, dressing, prompting/taking medication), or housing management activities (e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour problems).

### 10.2 Current Services funded through HSG

- 10.2.1.1 Currently Monmouthshire Council is commissioning 24 projects through its allocated HSG budget to meet the needs of its residents. The table below illustrates the number of clients accessing each service, collated by primary service area (some services will be cross sectional). Though full comparative data for this financial year will not be available until April 2022, figures for the first half of 2021-2022 have been included in the table to provide an indication of potential trend.

	Project Name	Number of referrals			
		2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021 (April-Sept)
	MCC Gateway – Housing Support Team	1525	1639	1301	709
VAWDASV Services	Cyffanol WA CRISIS	168	135	207	105
	Cyffanol WA Refuge	20	22	36	11
	Cyffanol WA Group Work	235	79	44	18
	Llamau MODAS	83	80	113	86
	Target Hardening	5	6	9	5
Mental Health Services	MIND TASL	188	283	162	150
	MIND Welfare Rights	217	121	153	118
	MIND Farmers Project		15	31	15
Young People's Services	POBL Mon YP Scheme (Hostels)	57	40	58	44
	Emphasis Project	27	23	19	17
	Young Persons Accommodation Officer	26	76	32	
Older People's Services	Care & Repair				
	Healthy at Home Project	192	262	221	100
	POBL Derwin 55+	53	62		
Families Services	POBL Family Intervention	11	15	44	16
Generic Services	POBL Gwalla TSS	234	199	216	
	POBL Reach Housing Support	124	104	134	
	POBL Solas Low Level Floating Support	32	25	39	
	POBL Lifestyles	124	121	257	
	POBL Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Service				211
	POBL Tenancy Support Service				232
	Llamau Tenancy Support	43	48	130	54
	CHYPS (Crisis Housing Young Person Service)	8			
	MHA Social Inclusion	96	96	58	
	Gateway Universal Credit Officer	42	62	112	35
	MHA Resettlement	74			
	Data for all Housing & Wellbeing Projects	199	216		
Place Based Services	MHA Housing & Wellbeing			168	114
	POBL Housing & Wellbeing			75	68
	Llamau Housing & Wellbeing			37	23
	Llamau Assertive Outreach				72
Housing Support Grant funded new projects from Phase 2	POBL Housing First				12
	POBL Gwent Pathways			17	13
	GDAS Outreach Service				

Table 35: Number of Referrals across all HSG funded projects 2018- Sept 2021

Key	
	Project not operational at this time
	Decommissioned end of financial year 2020-2021
	From 1st April 2020 merged with POBL Lifestyles service
	Amalgamated with POBL TARS and POBL TSS
	This service was merged with Llamau TSS
	19/20 amalgamated with MHA Housing & Wellbeing Project
	Data now split between projects

Table 36: Key for Table 35

10.2.1.2 All requests for support come through the Monmouthshire's Gateway Team who act as a single point of contact for housing support referrals. Officers in the Gateway then triage clients and allocate them to the most appropriate service for their needs.

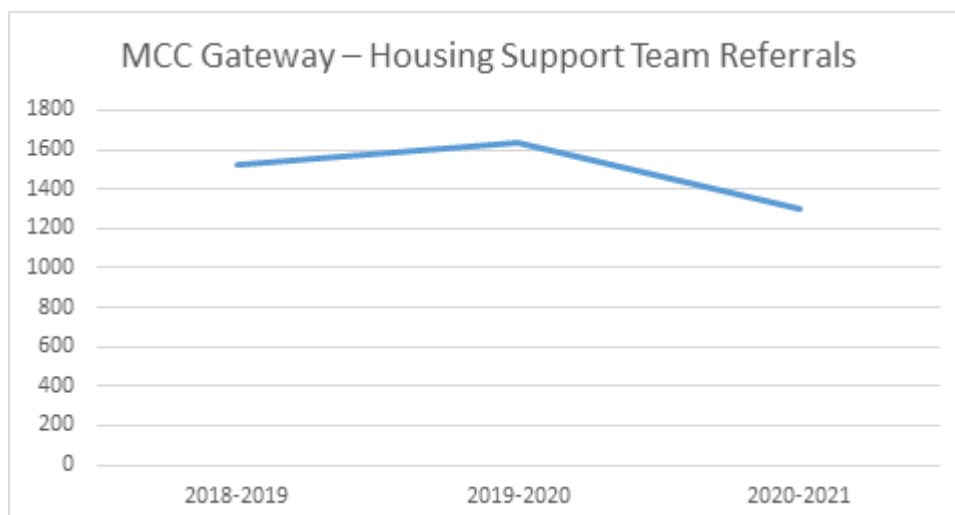


Figure 49: Number of Requests for Support to Gateway 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.1.3 The number of referrals into the MCC Gateway Housing Support Team is largely stable, though dipped slightly in 2020-2021. However, it is anticipated that the number of referrals will rise again to 2018-2020 levels, with the Gateway having seen 709 referrals in the first 6 months of the 2021-2022 financial year.

## 10.2.2 VAWDASV Services

10.2.2.1 There are currently 5 services for those fleeing or seeking support with Domestic abuse. Llamau MODAS and Target Hardening measures are available for whoever is experiencing any form of domestic abuse, whereas Cyfannol services are strictly for women and children.

10.2.2.2 Cyfannol WA work group runs three projects which can be accessed:

- Recovery Toolkit
  - The Recovery Toolkit is for any woman who has suffered domestic abuse and no longer has contact with her perpetrator or their perpetrator is on a recognised programme.
- Freedom Project
  - The Freedom Programme is for any woman who has experience of domestic abuse; be it in their personal or professional lives. The course identifies tactics abusers use, the beliefs held by abusers and the effects of domestic abuse on women and children.
- Own My Life
  - Online course for any women who has experience of domestic abuse. Many courses over the last eighteen months have been run online due to the pandemic.

## Number of Referrals to VAWDASV services 2018-Sept 2021

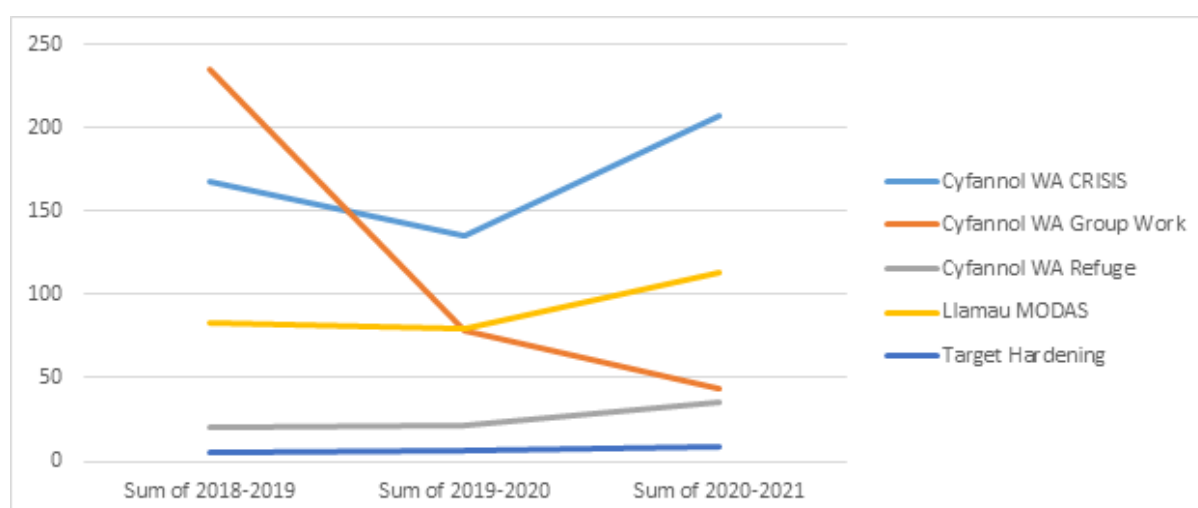


Figure 50: Referrals to VAWDASV 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.2.3 As the data illustrates, there was a significant increase in demand for Cyfannol's Crisis service which provides emergency support for women fleeing abuse- and this trend is likely to continue given the projection of data from the first 6 months of 2021-2022. Similarly, Llamau has also seen a marked increase since 2020 which looks likely to be a continuing trend. Llamau MODAS is currently operating a waiting list with 27 referrals as of October 2021 which illustrates high demand.

10.2.2.4 The increase in demand for VAWDASV services converges with the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. The data would suggest that the lockdown measures taken nationally had an impact on the levels of domestic abuse and violence experienced, something which had been a national concern. Anecdotally there has also been feedback to suggest that those experiencing DA feel more comfortable to report and come forward to seek support- possibly in part due to the extensive media campaign during this time. As the data also shows no sign of this demand decreasing as we have seen a relaxation of Coronavirus measures it is unclear whether this trend will continue.

### 10.2.3 Mental Health Services

10.2.3.1 Monmouthshire has 3 projects devoted to those with low to medium mental health and housing needs, all delivered by MIND. TASL provides floating support, Welfare Rights is a free service which assists with benefits and income maximisation including expertise and documentation for Mandatory Reviews and for appeals to a Tribunal and the Farmers Project work within the villages and more rural areas of Monmouthshire to support those in farming industry to maintain their tenancy/accommodation.

### Number of Referrals to Mental Health services 2018-Sept 2021

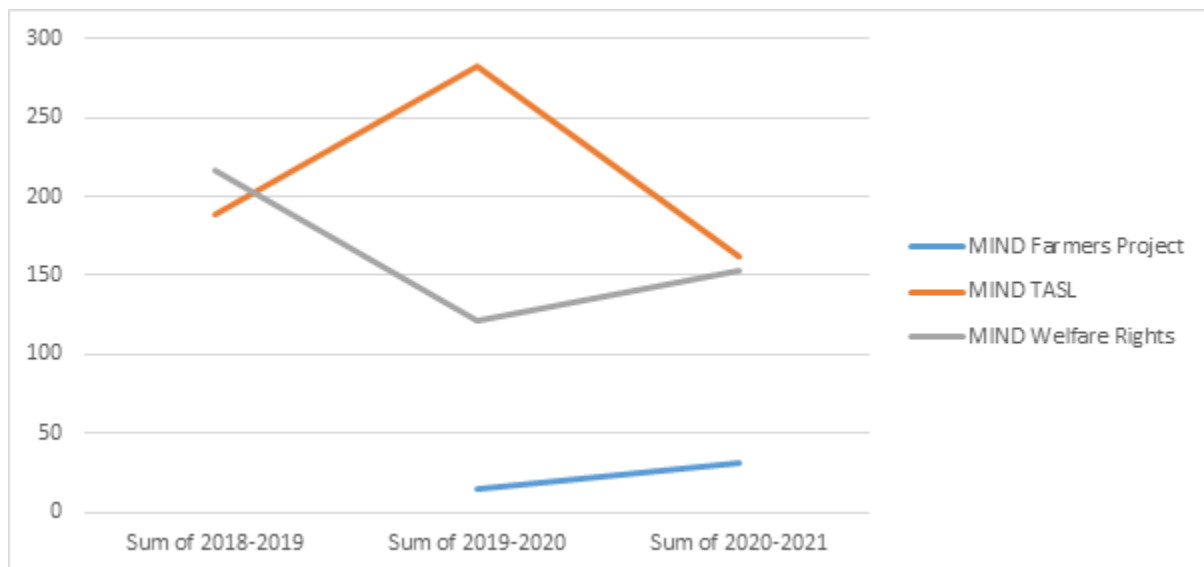


Figure 51: Referrals to Mental Health Services 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.3.2 Interestingly MIND's mental health floating support service saw a sharp decrease in clients during 2020-2021 which covers the period of the pandemic. However, this decrease does not look like it will become an ongoing trend. If the current rate of clients accessing the service continue at the same pace 2021-2022 looks like it could see the highest demand on the service that we have seen yet as client numbers for the first 6 months have almost reached 2020-2021's total. There is also a waiting list of 8 clients for this service as of October 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. The demand for the Farmers Project could also climb significantly by the end of this financial year.

10.2.3.3 The demands for Welfare support picked up in 2020-2021 and look like it will continue to increase this financial year. This is unsurprising given the changes in household income felt by many due to the Coronavirus measures brought in 2020 and continuing into this year, such as furloughing and the £20 per week UC uplift.

#### 10.2.4 Young People's Services

10.2.4.1 Young people's services cater for those between 16 and 24 with a housing need.

Number of Referrals to Young People's services 2018-Sept 2021

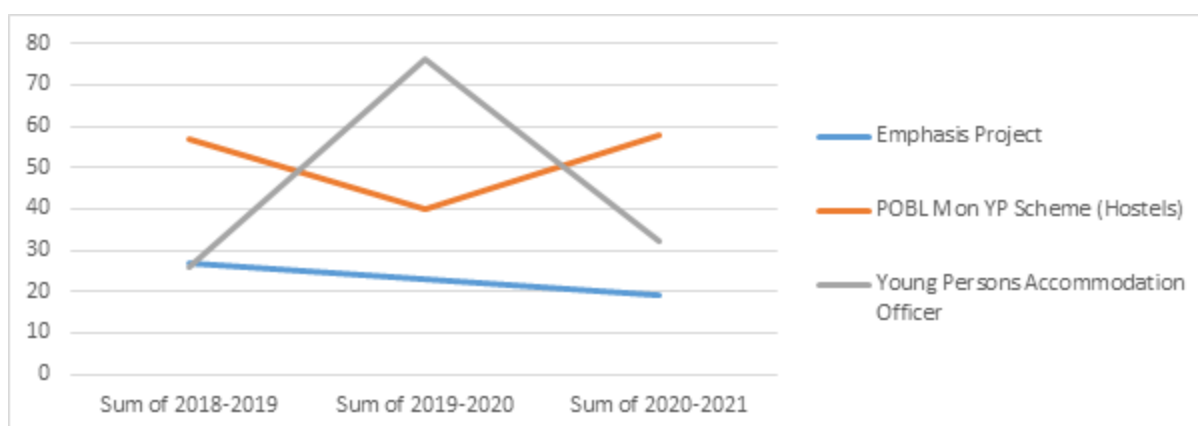


Figure 52: Referrals to Young People's Services 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.4.2 There are currently 21 units of supported accommodation across two separate schemes in Abergavenny and Chepstow provided by Pobl. As dedicated accommodation for young people, this is an extremely important resource within the county. The schemes, however, are for young people with low needs and are not suitable for all young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable and with higher needs. Furthermore, there is no 'step-down' accommodation in Monmouthshire for those young people who make good progress towards independent living but are not quite fully ready for independent living.

10.2.4.3 Due to the nature of this scheme numbers will remain largely consistent as turnover and demand remains stable. Going forward however we anticipate that this figure will change as the projects are currently being remodelled with the input of Children's Services and the number of bedspaces altered to accommodate an emerging need for 24 hour staffed high support provision.

10.2.4.4 Emphasis is a floating support service which aims to provide support to 'non-engaging' young people who are or at risk of NEET(Not in Education, Employment or Training) / homeless. Client numbers so far for 2021-2022 indicate that the service will surpass last year's figure.

10.2.4.5 The Young Person's Accommodation Officer was decommissioned 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 due to requirements of the pandemic where priorities changed

#### 10.2.5 Older People's Services

Number of Referrals to Older People's services 2018-Sept 2021

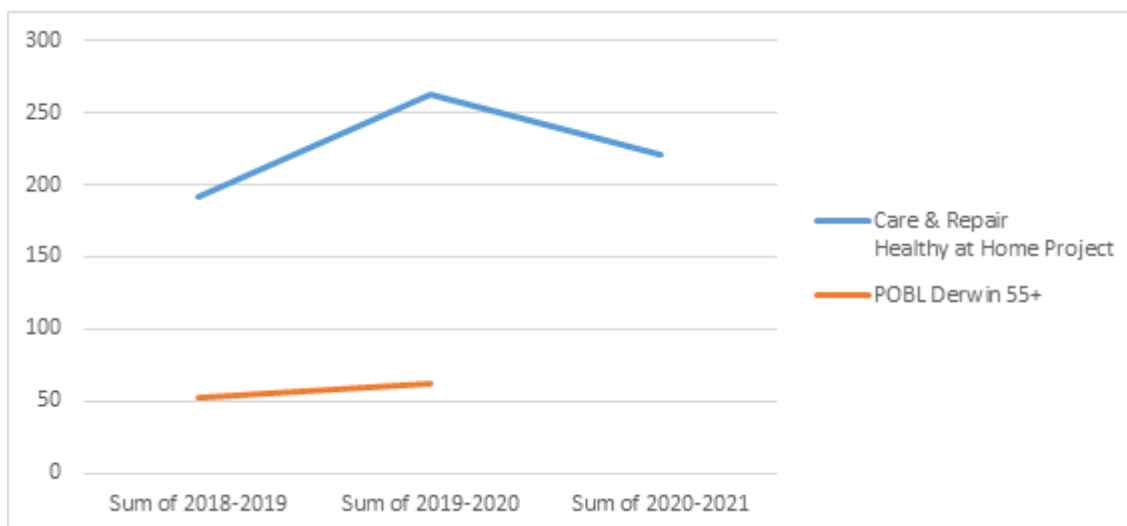


Figure 53: Referrals to Older People's Services 2018- Sept 2021



- 10.2.5.1 The Healthy At Home Project provides a service to reach people who are socially inactive and/or isolated, in addition to assisting with hospital prevention and sustainable independent living. Assistance is provided to clients to gain income maximisation, grants and a Healthy Home Check for additional works/services to sustain independent living. Although there was a slight dip in client numbers for 2020-2021 numbers have remained fairly consistent and so far this looks to continue for 2021-2022.
- 10.2.5.2 POBL's Derwin project provides tenancy floating support is available to anyone above the age of 55 plus who would benefit from housing related support but was merged in 2020 with POBL Lifestyles and is now captured within these projects.

#### 10.2.6 Families Services

- 10.2.6.1 The Family Intervention and Prevention Project (FIPP) is designed to work with families facing eviction or other enforcement action due to anti-social behaviour. The service takes a whole family approach and combines intensive support to confront and change behaviour. Prior to April 2021 this service was provided by MHA with part time (0.75) officer. From April 2021 this service has been delivered by POBL with one full time officer.

Number of Referrals for Family Intervention 2018-Sept 2021

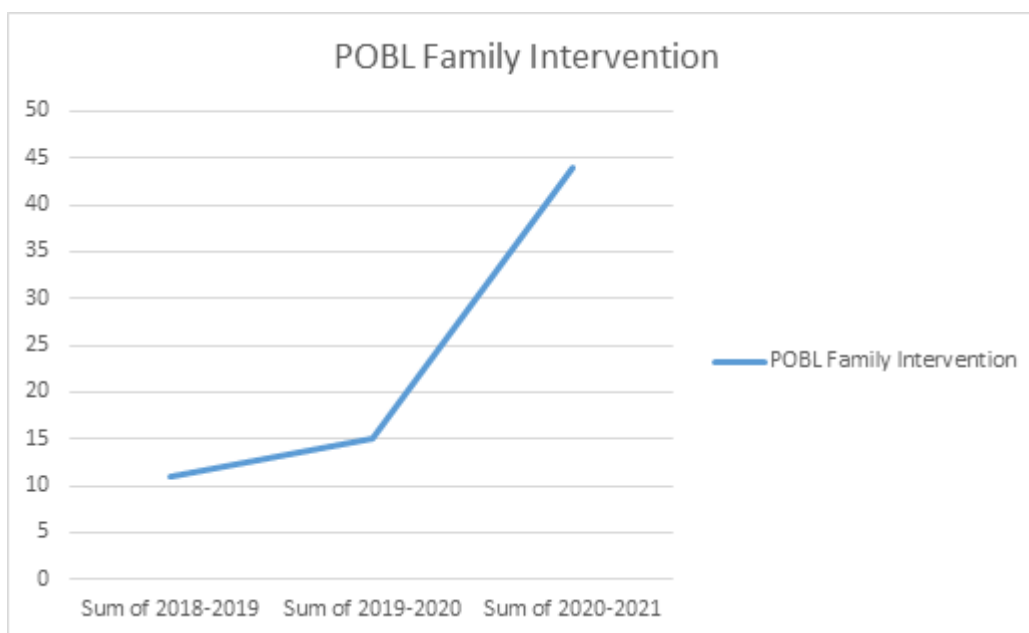


Figure 54: Referrals for Family Intervention 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.6.2 As the graph demonstrates, there was an almost 300% increase in the number of families accessing the service between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. This increase correlates to the national lockdown measures due to the Pandemic and would suggest that there was an increase of ASB during this time, possibly due to families having to remain at home.

### 10.2.7 Generic Services

10.2.7.1 Generic floating support is available to anyone above the age of 16 who would benefit from housing related support. Generic floating support aims to prevent homelessness and tackle tenancy breakdowns and covers all vulnerable people.

10.2.7.2 There has been significant restructuring of generic services in 2020 which has seen a number of services amalgamated. POBL Gwalia TSS, POBL Reach Housing Support, POBL Solas Low Level Floating Support and POBL Lifestyles merged and became POBL Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Service and POBL Tenancy Support Service from 2021. However prior to this for all but one service the number of clients accessing these services rose in 2020-2021, with the highest being the POBL Lifestyles. Whilst part of this increase could be explained by the services absorption of the Over 55s Derwin service, which occurred in this year, the rapid rise is probably also a consequence of the effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

10.2.7.3 This trend is also largely replicated in the non POBL commissioned services, with Llamau TS and the Gateway Universal Credit officer seeing the highest increase in clients from 2019-20 to 2020-2021.

Number of Referrals to Generic services 2018-Sept 2021

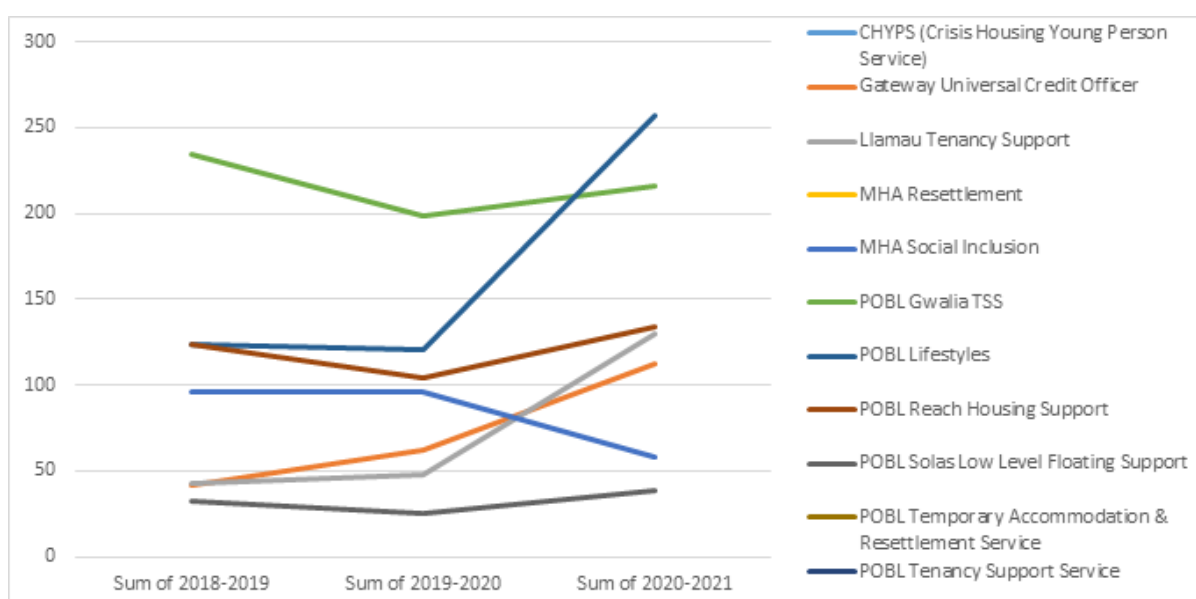


Figure 55: Number of Referrals to Older People's services 2018-Sept 2021

### 10.2.8 Place Based Services

- 10.2.8.1 These projects provide tenancy and/or housing related support to service users whose wellbeing would be enhanced and improved as a result of enhancing their housing needs. The projects deliver housing-related support to vulnerable individuals and their families in one location in Monmouthshire and hold surgeries via One Stop Shops in Monmouth, Abergavenny, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow.

Number of Referrals to Place Based services 2018-Sept 2021

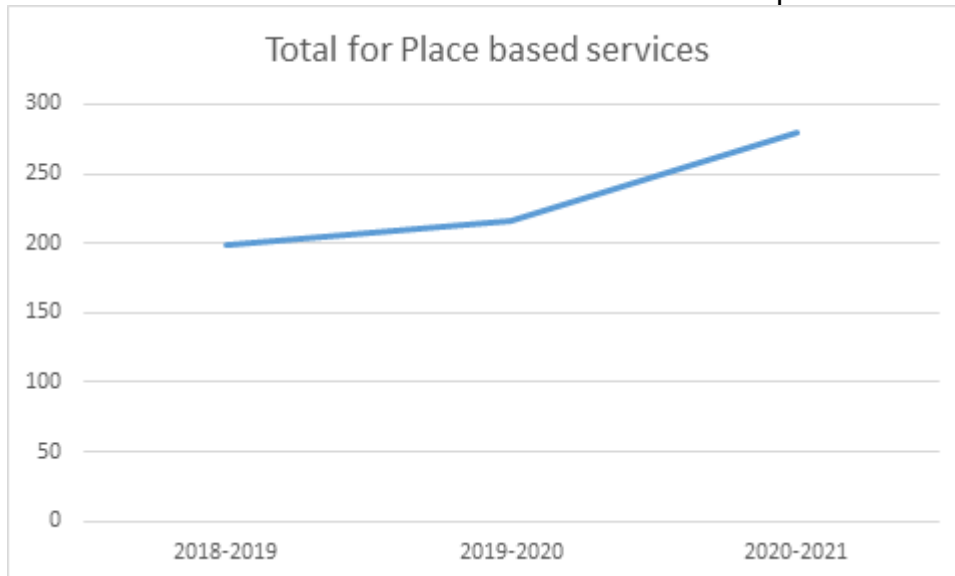


Figure 56: Number of Referrals to Place Based services 2018-Sept 2021

- 10.2.8.2 Up until 2021 the data for all placed based services were collated together, but from this financial year onwards data will be collected for individual sites which will help to demonstrate regional variances in demand. The individual figures for 2020-2021 were added together to achieve a figure that can be compared to previous years. 2020-2021 saw a significant increase in clients which is slightly surprising when it is considered that physical one stop shops will have been closed for significant periods during the pandemic. This demonstrates that mitigating actions taken to ensure clients could still access the support needed worked.

### 10.2.9 Housing Support Grant funded new projects from Phase 2

- 10.2.9.1 There are 3 projects which were commissioned and have started or are due to start in the financial year 2021-2022 and so there is currently no comparative data.

- **Llamau Assertive Outreach**

- The Assertive Outreach Team provides support to high need individuals at the interim multiple needs accommodation and other temporary residential settings in Monmouthshire. The Assertive Outreach service also provides direct support to any arising rough sleepers identified.

- **POBL Housing First**
  - POBL's Housing First project accommodates highly complex and entrenched clients who have experienced repeated tenancy breakdowns and provides wrap around support to prevent homelessness. This model is in line with Welsh Government strategic objectives and will meet the requirements of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. The Housing First Scheme has worked with 12 clients so far in 2021-2022 and is currently oversubscribed.
- **GDAS outreach worker**
  - This project is expected to start in October 2021 following problems with recruitment. The service will support clients with substance misuse issues in TA and B&B accommodation.
- **Gwent Pathways**
  - POBL offer a floating support service to prolific and priority offenders. The support is focused on resettlement and aims to help people change their behaviour long term.

#### 10.2.10 *HIP*

- 10.2.10.1 The Housing Intervention Panel (HIP) provides a multi-agency forum to identify, consider and co-ordinate multi-agency support to vulnerable individuals and households with multiple and complex needs.
- 10.2.10.2 The key emphasis is to prevent homelessness and to assist those who are actually homeless or threatened with homelessness. However, the Panel will also consider cases where there is anti-social behaviour or where the actions of an individual are having a detrimental effect either to themselves, or to others in the community under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- 10.2.10.3 The aim is for agencies to collectively agree actions that will support individuals and families to avert a crisis or prevent further crisis. In addition to homeless prevention and homelessness it also includes Promoting Personal and Community Safety, Promoting Independence and Control, Promoting Economic Progress and Financial Control, Promoting Health and Wellbeing and stopping any antisocial behaviour or crime and disorder in a community
- 10.2.10.4 Membership
- 10.2.10.5 Membership of the Core Panel of the HIP has increased over the months as the importance and popularity of the Panel has grown. The current Core Membership of the Panel consists of representatives from the Organisations below:
  - Housing Support Gateway
  - Housing Support Providers
  - Housing Options Team
  - Partnerships Team
  - Social Services
  - Adult Safeguarding Team

- Aneurin Bevan Health Board
- Registered Social Landlords operating within Monmouthshire
- Youth Offending Team
- Community Safety Team
- Gwent Police
- Welsh Ambulance Service
- Youth Enterprise Team
- Early Help Panel Co-Ordinator
- HM Prison and Probation Service
- Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service
- Department of Works and Pensions

10.2.10.6 The HIP meets every two weeks to discuss cases of concern. The total number of referrals from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 is 49. The referral agencies and departments are shown below:

Organisation	Number of Referrals
MCC social Services	5
MCC Partnership Team	3
MCC HOT	1
MCC Gateway Team	5
MCC Early Help Panel	1
MCC Councillor	1
MHA	15
Mind	7
Llamau	4
Pobl	2
Compass	1
Gwent Pathways	2
Gwent Police	2
Total	49

Table 37: Referral Sources to HIP April- December 2021

### 10.3 Temporary and Emergency Accommodation- Needs Assessment of those in TA

10.3.1.1 A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted September-November 2021 by partner agencies for all of those currently residing in temporary accommodation, placed by Monmouthshire County Council. As professionals who know the clients best, support workers were asked to report on the level and type (up to 3) of need of each of their clients using the definitions below.

<b>Definitions of Need</b>			
<b>Level of need</b>		<b>Equivalent Support required</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>LOW NEEDS</b>	<b>Less than 1 hour support per week</b>	Likely to be a significant proportion of clients who have no or very low support requirements and who can be supported into settled accommodation with either a low level of support or potentially just signposting
<b>2</b>	<b>MEDIUM NEEDS</b>	<b>Between 1 and 2 hours support per week</b>	Likely to be the majority of clients who will require a Rapid Rehousing service with floating support. May also be the need to include some other professional support in order to support them to live independently in settled accommodation
<b>3</b>	<b>HIGH NEEDS</b>	<b>Over 3 hours support per week</b>	This category is where we would expect to see those who have complex needs and who should be offered, as a default, a form of Housing First support or intensive housing-led intervention.
<b>4</b>	<b>INTENSIVE NEEDS</b>	<b>Potentially 24/7 support requirements</b>	These should be clients who are unable to live independently at this moment in time, perhaps due to concerns around risk to self or others or perhaps even choice. Our expectations would be that professionals are engaged from a health and social care sectors, moving into settled accommodation must continue to be objective.

Table 38: Definitions of Level of Need as a guide for Support Workers conducting the Needs Assessment

<b>Need Type</b>
Families with Support Needs

Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse
People over 55 years of age with Support Needs
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV,Aids)
People with Criminal Offending History
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)
People with Learning Disabilities
People with Mental Health Issues
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities
People with Refugee Status
People with Alcohol Issues
People with Substance Misuse Issues
Single Parent Families with Support Needs
Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 54)
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse
Young People who are Care Leavers
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)
Black Minority Ethnic
Gypsies and Travellers
Frail Persons
Vulnerable Two Parent Families
Migrant Workers

*Table 39: Type of Need options used by Support Workers in conducting Needs Assessment*

### 10.3.2 Demographics

10.3.2.1 A total of 207 people were assessed as part of this evaluation of needs.

10.3.2.2 Of the 207 clients there are more than double the number of males (143) than females (63). As part of the assessment support workers recorded the bedroom need for clients currently in TA. 148 clients are in need of a 1 bed property, of which 109 are Male. 32 clients are in need of 2 bed accommodation (17 female, 13 male and 1 trans), and 14 are in need of 3 bed accommodation (7 male and 7 female). 22 clients are recorded as having a pet or pets which is often a barrier to moving on to private rented or supported accommodation.

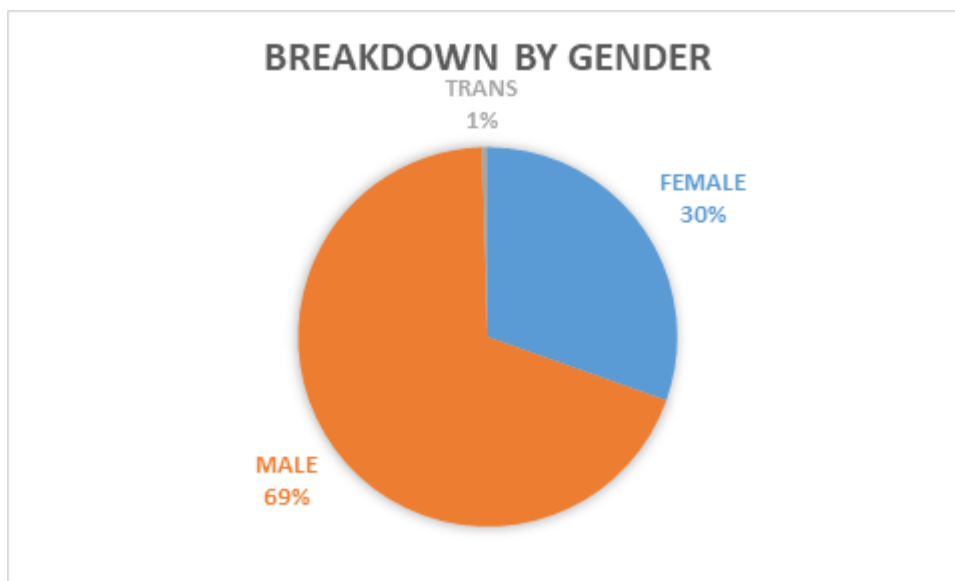


Figure 57: Gender Breakdown of those captured in the Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.2.3 The age breakdown shows that younger residents (those under the age of 40) make up a significant proportion of those requiring emergency accommodation, with the age category 30-39 being particularly overrepresented, closely followed by 16-24 year olds. The number of clients under 40 is almost double the number of those over. This data would suggest that moving forward Monmouthshire needs to focus support and resources towards the younger population to prevent homelessness.



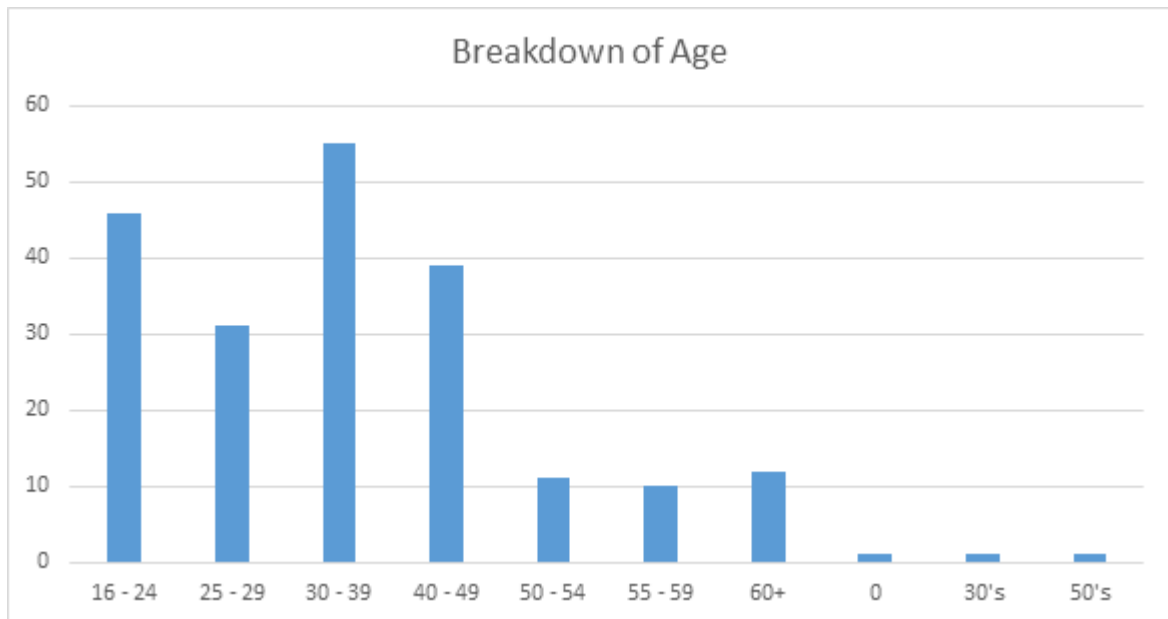


Figure 58: Age Breakdown of those captured in the Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.2.4 As we do not have comparative data for the years prior to 2021 we cannot identify any trends. However, these figures are undoubtedly affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. One theory for the high levels of younger residents in TA could be due to the likelihood of this age group being negatively impacted financially, but also potentially relationship and family breakdowns due to the pressure of subsequent lockdowns.

### 10.3.3 Type of Need

10.3.3.1 Support workers were asked to select the lead need for clients they are currently working with from the set list above and where appropriate record a secondary and third need.

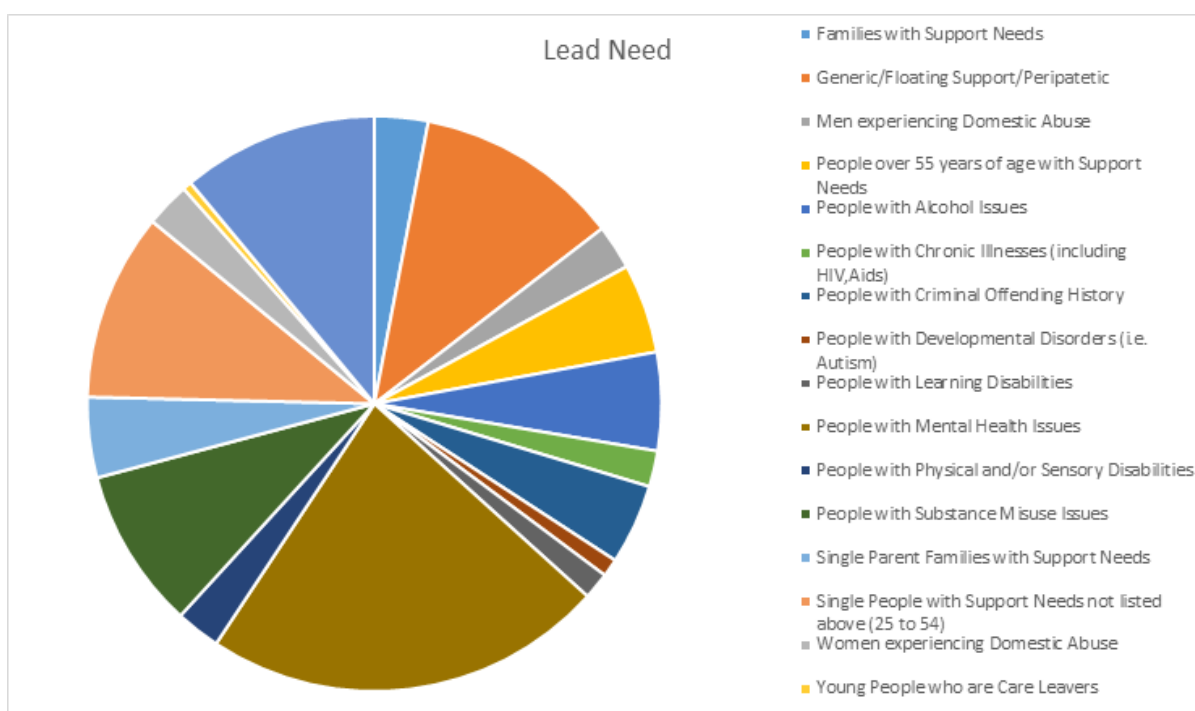


Figure 59: Spread of Lead Need amongst those in TA Needs Assessment

10.3.3.2 Out of the 207 cases 199 had a lead need recorded. The most commonly identified lead need was mental health with 45 cases, or 23%. The following most common lead needs are Generic (23 cases, 12%), Young People with support needs (22 cases, 11%), Single people with support needs not listed (21 cases, 11%) and People with Substance misuse issues (18 cases, 9%). People with alcohol issues have been recorded separately to those with other substance issues but should these be amalgamated there are a total of 29 cases or 15% of the total, the second highest need type behind mental health.

10.3.3.3 Of the top 5 lead needs recorded all except Single people with support need not listed are also the most common secondary needs recorded, and moving to tertiary need Mental health, Generic and Substance Misuse are the most occurrent.

## Frequency of Need Recorded separated into Lead, Secondary and Tertiary

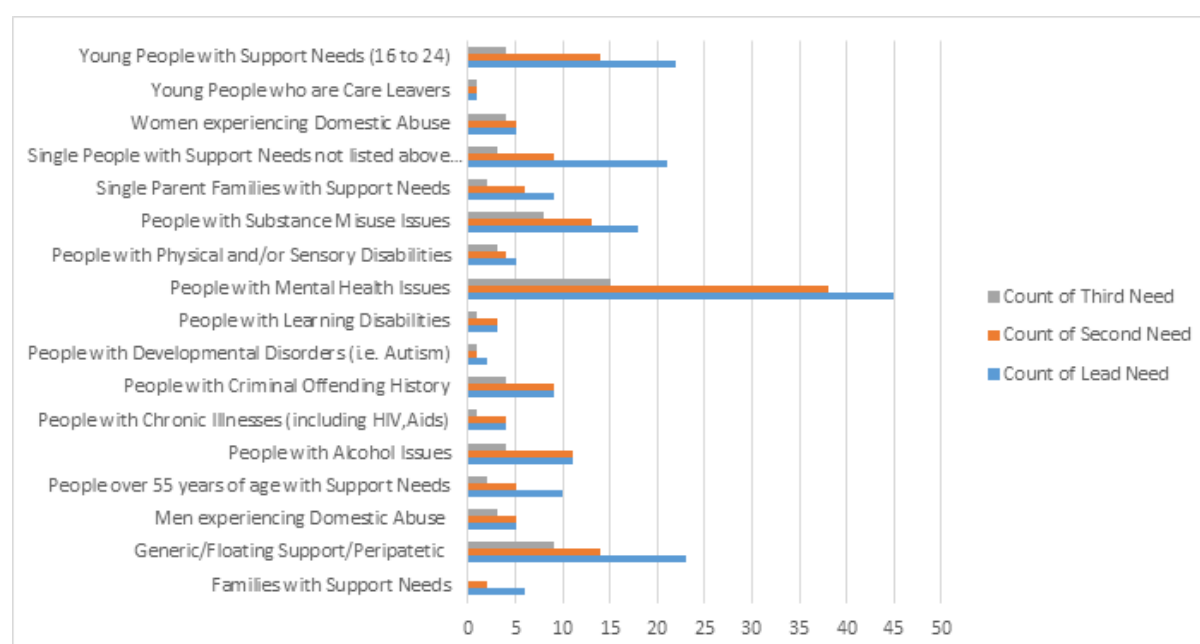


Figure 60: Frequency of Need Recorded separated into Lead, Secondary and Tertiary

10.3.3.4 A total of 408 support needs are recorded across lead, secondary and tertiary need for the 207 clients. The below chart demonstrates the most commonly occurring support needs. Again, Mental Health numbers are particularly dominant, along with generic, young people and substance misuse.

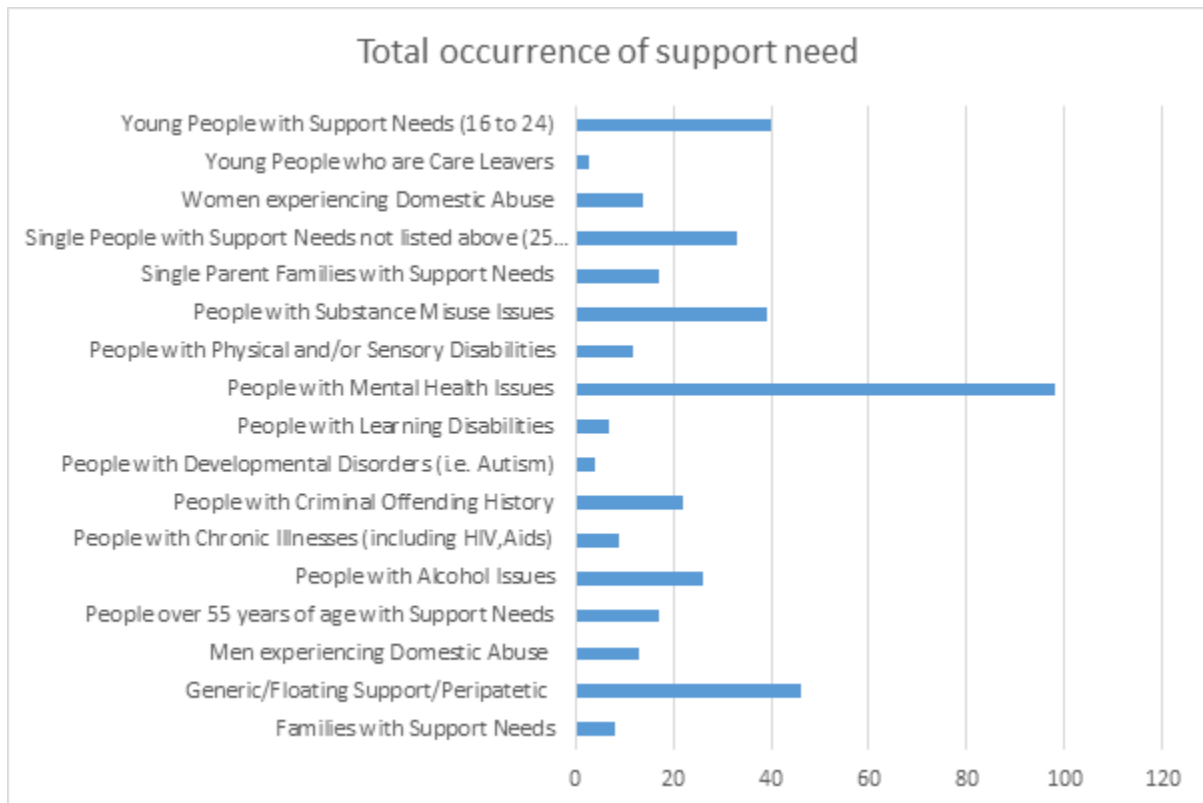


Figure 61: Total occurrence of Need Recorded

Need Type	Occurrence (1st, 2nd and 3rd need)	% of total
Families with Support Needs	8	2.0
Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic	46	11.3
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse	13	3.2
People over 55 years of age with Support Needs	17	4.2
People with Alcohol Issues	26	6.4
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV,Aids)	9	2.2
People with Criminal Offending History	22	5.4
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)	4	1.0
People with Learning Disabilities	7	1.7
People with Mental Health Issues	98	24.0
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	12	2.9
People with Substance Misuse Issues	39	9.6
Single Parent Families with Support Needs	17	4.2

Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 54)	33	8.1
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse	14	3.4
Young People who are Care Leavers	3	0.7
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)	40	9.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 40: Total Occurrence of Need Type and as a Percentage of total

10.3.3.5 The prevalence of Mental Health, Young People and Substance Misuse needs across the assessment highlights areas that Monmouthshire Housing Support need to focus on with the help of partner agencies.

#### 10.3.4 Level of need

10.3.4.1 Using the definitions above (Table 36) to gauge the level of needs support workers recorded the following need level breakdown for clients in TA.

<b><u>SUPPORT NEEDS</u></b>	
Level	Number of clients
LOW	50
MEDIUM	108
HIGH	38
INTENSIVE	10
BLANK	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>

Table 41: Breakdown of Level of Need from Needs Assessment (TA)

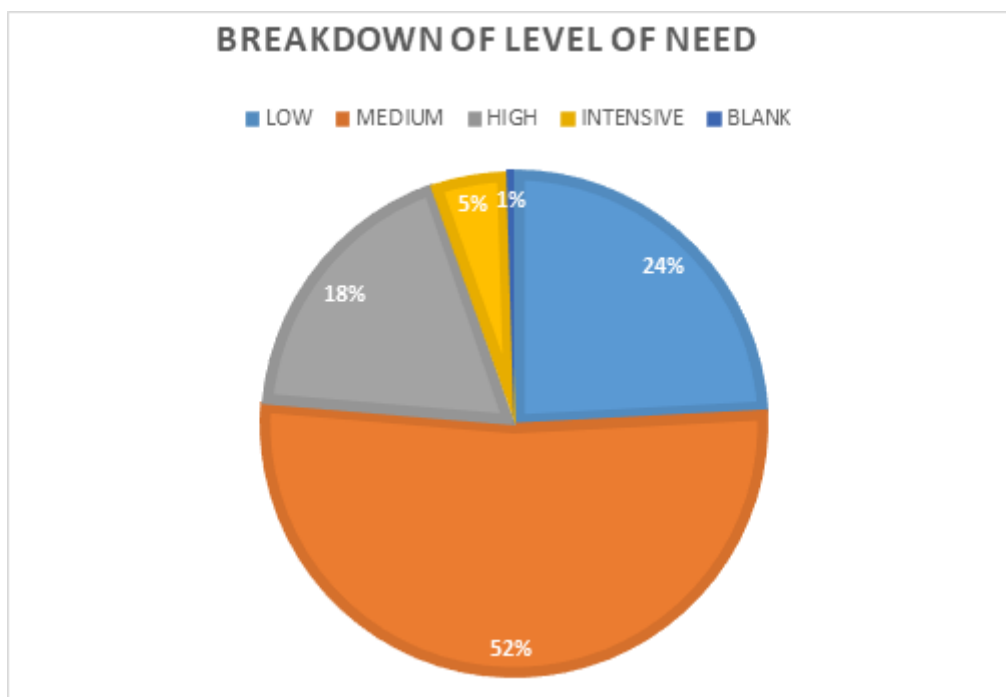


Figure 62: Breakdown of Level of Need from Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.4.2 Unsurprisingly the majority of clients captured in this snapshot are deemed to have a 'medium' level of support need/s, the majority of whom will be in a position to maintain a tenancy with floating support. However, there is a notable number of people with high to intensive needs- almost as many as there are those deemed to have low level support need/s. This is a concern to Monmouthshire Housing Support as at present, excluding Housing First, support services funded through the HSG are set to support those with low to medium needs. Outside of Housing First which has so far worked with 12 individuals this financial year, and is currently oversubscribed, Monmouthshire does not have a high/ intensive supported provision. At present it is not clear where the most suitable move on accommodation would be for this cohort.

### 10.3.5 In Focus

#### 10.3.5.1 Mental Health

10.3.5.2 As has been noted above, Mental Health is by far the most occurring support need recorded for those in TA at present. Monmouthshire HSG currently funds 3 mental health projects provided by Mind in a floating support model, and Mind also run supported accommodation for those with low-medium level mental health needs. There are currently 28 bed spaces split between properties in Abergavenny and Cheptsow. At present the data shows that there are currently 36 clients in TA with a lead need of Mental Health who are entitled to a one bedroom property- a significant number of these will be single people who would be suitable for supported housing.

Mental Health Lead Need	
Intensive	1
High	5
Medium	24
Low	15
Total	45

Table 42: Level of Need for those identified as having a Lead Need of Mental Health

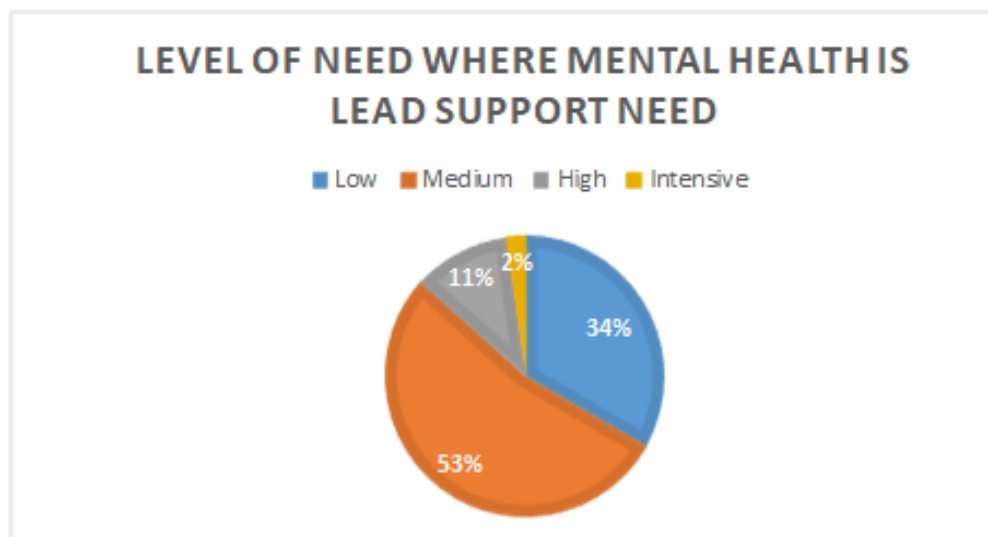


Figure 63: Level of Need for those identified as having a Lead Need of Mental Health

10.3.5.3 As with the general level of need data, the majority of those with Mental Health identified as a lead need are deemed to have 'medium' support requirements a proportion of which, along with those identified as having 'high' and 'intensive' needs, would not meet the criteria of the low- medium support need mental health services currently available.

10.3.5.4 The demographics of those who were recorded as having a Lead Need of Mental Health show that Males under the age of 40 are overrepresented and slightly above the trend of overall demographics for this cohort.

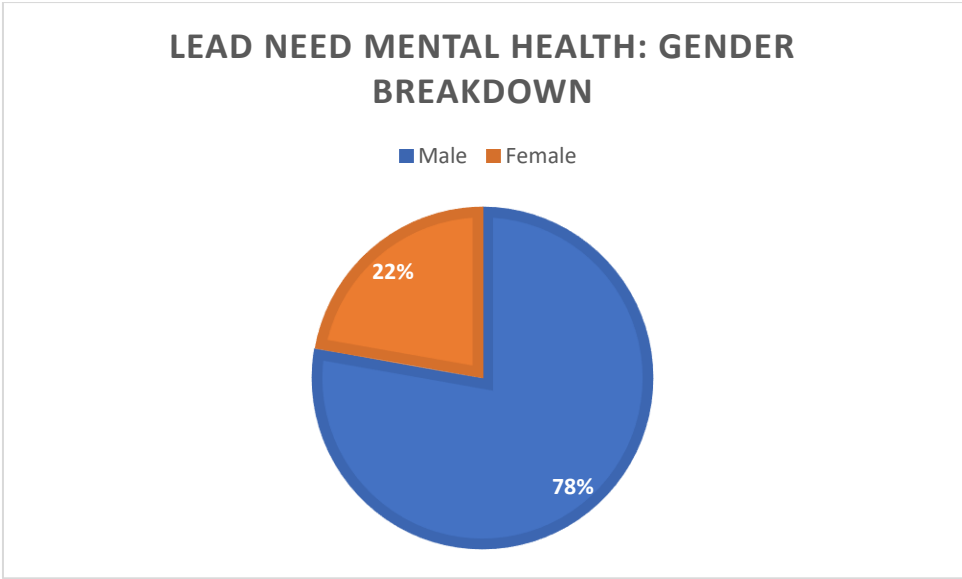


Figure 64: Gender breakdown of those with Lead Need of Mental Health

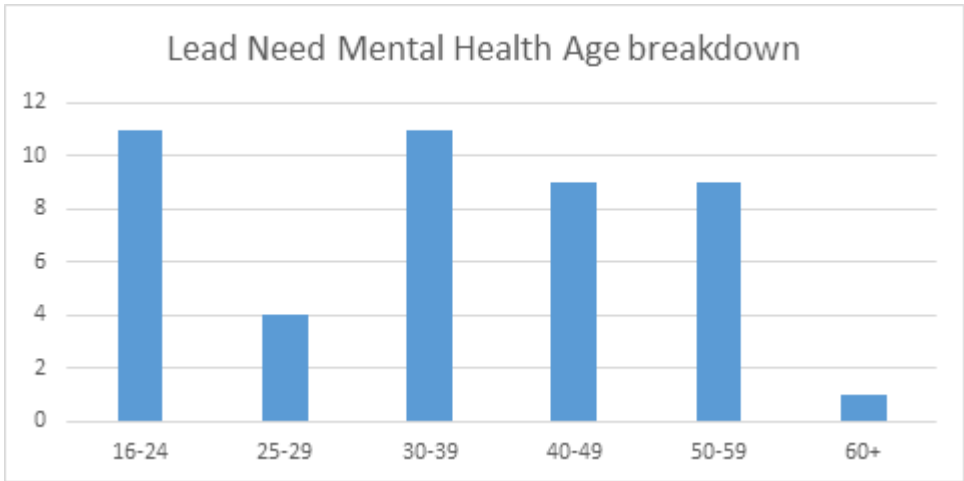


Figure 65: Age breakdown of those with Lead Need of Mental Health



#### 10.3.5.5 Young people (16-24)

10.3.5.6 Monmouthshire currently commissions supported accommodation for young people across 3 sites and are currently restructuring one of these sites to accommodate young people with higher needs. At present all sites cater for young people with low to medium support needs.

10.3.5.7 The assessment has shown that young people aged between 16-24 are greatly overrepresented in this cohort. Being a young person in and of itself is not necessarily a support need, but when mixed with other needs can add a level of complexity and vulnerability which corresponds to the approach in support that is required. The data below (Table 43, Figure 66) illustrates the level of needs amongst all of those under the age of 25 and is not limited to those whose needs (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>) were recorded as 'Young person with support needs'.

Young person with Support Needs	
LOW	7
MEDIUM	25
HIGH	12
INTENSIVE	2
Total	46

*Table 43: Level of Need amongst all Young People*

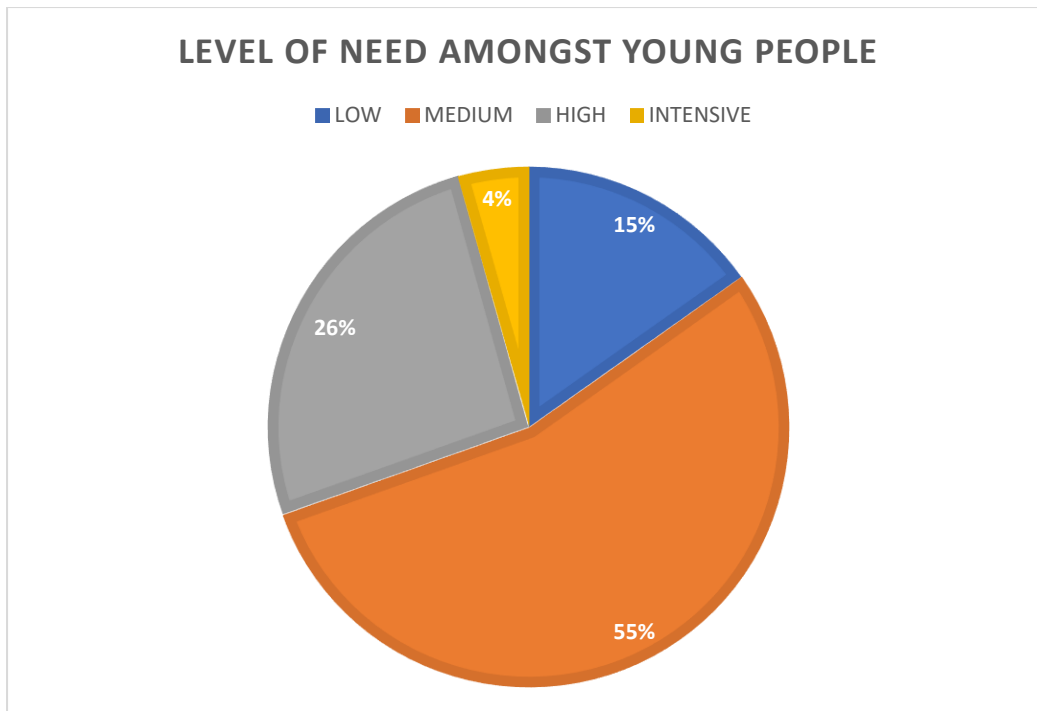


Figure 66: Level of Need amongst all Young People

10.3.5.8 Again, and in line with general trends, the majority of those under 25 are deemed to have 'Medium' needs, but a sizable minority have 'High' or 'Intensive' support needs and will require a higher level of support than housing support services are currently able to provide.

10.3.5.9 Amongst the 46 young people in this cohort the most occurrent lead need is 'Young Person with Support needs' (22) followed as above by 'People with Mental Health' (11), however when secondary needs are considered an additional 14 young people are recorded as having a Mental Health issue. The demand for mental health support is covered above.

#### 10.3.5.10 Substance Misuse

10.3.5.11 The third most occurrent need in this assessment is those with substance misuse issues, with 18 clients having this recorded as their lead need. Of these the number of males is 5 times that of females, at 15, with the number of over 30s double that of under.

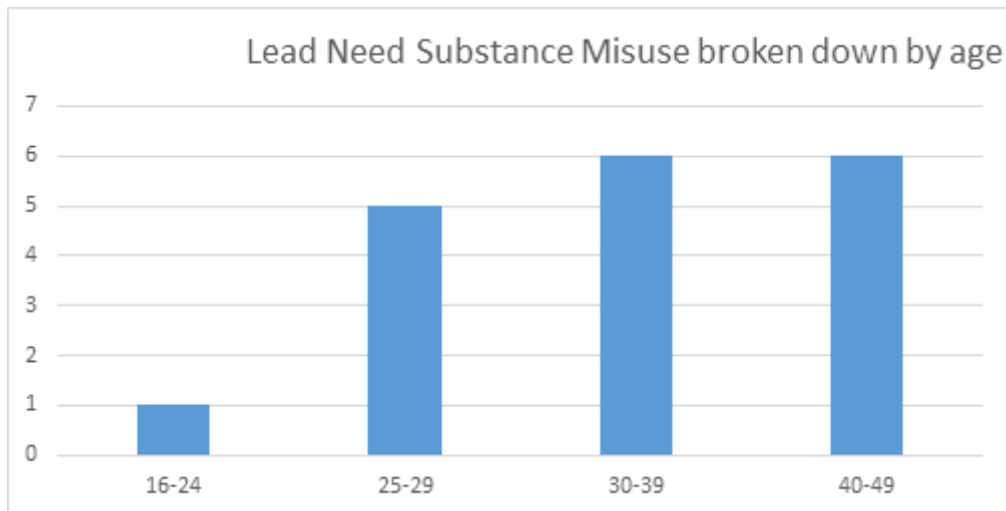


Figure 67: Those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse broken down by Age

Level of Need	Number
Low	2
Medium	8
High	4
Intensive	4

Table 44: Level of Need Breakdown of those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse

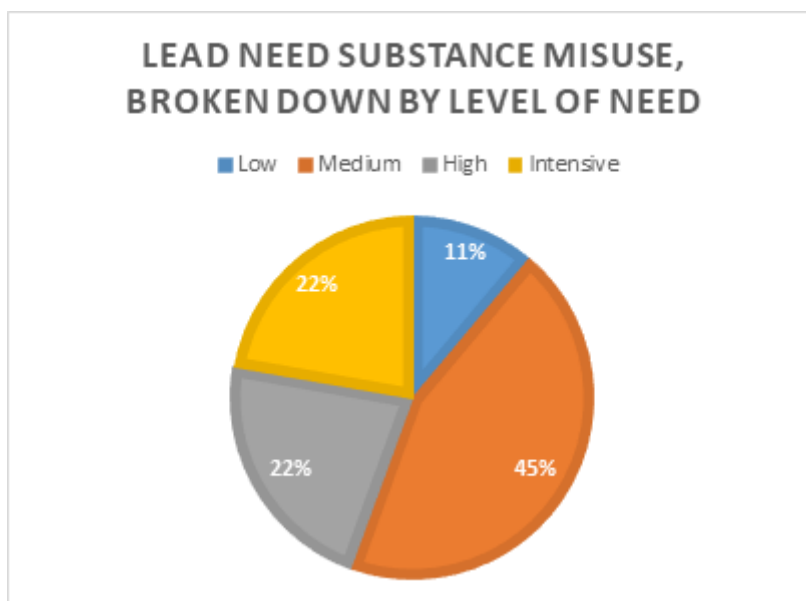


Figure 68: Level of Need Breakdown of those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse

10.3.5.12 Out of the support needs looked at here in focus, the proportion of those deemed to have 'High' or 'Intensive' level of need is highest as shown below.

10.3.5.13 Monmouthshire have commissioned a Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) outreach worker to support those residing in TA with substance (including alcohol) issues which is due to start pending recruitment but does not currently have any supported accommodation with the resources to work with this cohort.

10.3.5.14 Substance misuse often exists in comorbidity with mental health (also known as *dual diagnosis*) and can present additional complex support needs. With this in mind it is pertinent to look at the needs data to see how many cases have a combination of Mental Health and Substance Misuse across lead and secondary need.

10.3.5.15 A total of 10 clients were recorded as having this combination, 9 male and 1 female. Again the data shows a higher proportion of 'high' and 'intensive' level of need.

Level of Need	Number
Low	2
Medium	4
High	3
Intensive	1

Table 45: Level of Need breakdown for those with both Mental Health and Substance Misuse Needs recorded

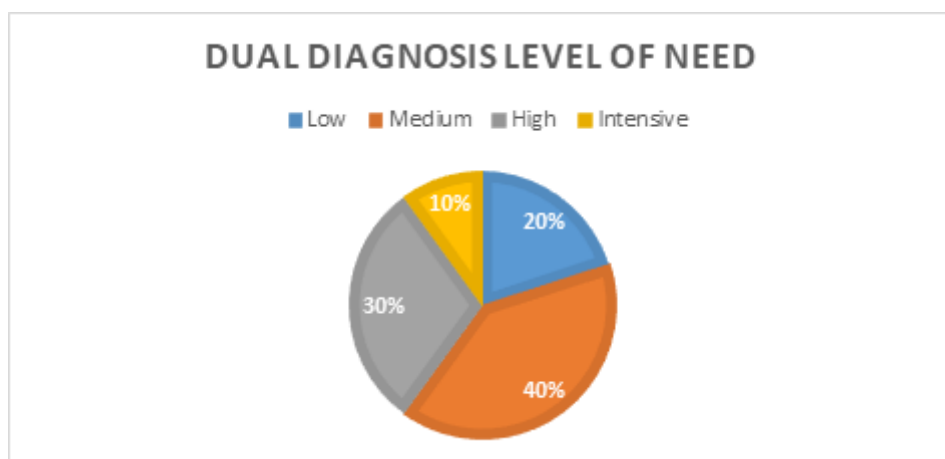


Figure 69: Level of Need breakdown for those with both Mental Health and Substance Misuse Needs recorded

10.3.5.16 This would suggest that those with Substance Misuse issues and Dual Diagnosis in this cohort have a higher proportion of high and intensive needs. It is also a need that is not currently met by a HSG funded provider.

10.3.5.17 In this assessment substance misuse and alcohol issues are recorded separately, but when these figures are combined they occur a total of 65 times across lead, secondary and tertiary need.

#### 10.4 HSG Needs Assessment and Outcomes data

10.4.1.1 All HSG funded services are required to provide a breakdown of the clients they are supporting, and the outcomes achieved for monitoring purposes. Comparable to the needs assessment conducted on those in TA, all service users are allocated a lead, secondary and tertiary need (though not level) and the outcomes for these clients recorded. This data for April- September 2021 has been analysed as below and provides a wider context of support needs for those threatened with homeless as well as those who are homeless.

10.4.1.2 Those who were captured as part of the TA needs assessment will also feature within these stats.

##### 10.4.2 Need Type

Support Need Type	Lead need	Secondary Need	Tertiary Need	Total
Domestic Abuse	149	128	41	318
Families with Support Needs	44	32	13	89
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	70	49	12	131
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	80	35	14	129
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	15	15	5	35
People with Criminal Offending History	22	16	9	47
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	8	8	3	19
People with Learning Disabilities	17	10	4	31
People with Mental health Issues	361	200	89	650
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	91	86	43	220
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	28	23	13	64
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Drugs and Volatile substances)	30	14	8	52
Single parent Families with Support needs	25	18	5	48
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	73	41	22	136
Young People who are Care Leavers	5	5	0	10
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	64	36	14	114
Total	1082	716	295	2093

Table 46: Occurrence of each Support Need Type across Lead, Secondary and Tertiary need

10.4.2.1 As was found in the TA needs assessment, Mental Health is resoundingly the most common Lead need, and need that appears most frequently across primary, secondary and tertiary needs recorded. Similarly need for DA support is high, and this fits with the figures from the HSG data which shows a sharp increase in engagement across DA services from 2020 onwards.

10.4.2.2 What hasn't previously been captured however is the level of demand for support from those aged over 55.

Need type	Age 55+			
	Lead Need	Second Need	Third Need	Total
Domestic Abuse	14	12	5	31
Families with Support Needs	5	5	3	13
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	14	12	5	31
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	75	33	13	121
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	10	10	3	23
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	1	1		2
People with Learning Disabilities	2	2	1	5
People with Mental health Issues	73	48	21	142
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	81	77	38	196
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	6	4	2	12
Single parent Families with Support needs	1	1		2
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	4	2	1	7
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	2			2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>587</b>

Table 47: Occurrence of Support Need Type across Lead, Secondary and Tertiary Need for Over 55s

\*Cells in Light Pink highlight the most occurring needs. Cells highlighted in yellow show inputting errors.

- 10.4.2.3 Looking into the needs of the Over 55s more closely (Table 47), outside of the generic needs category a high proportion of those over 55s have a support need relating to mental health and/ or a physical or sensory disability.
- 10.4.2.4 As a support need Mental Health is covered extensively and appears consistently high across age ranges and gender. However, within this age group a significant number have a support need around disabilities. The HSG funding does not commission a service dedicated to those with physical or sensory disability but it may be prudent to liaise with stakeholders such as Adult Social Care should this be a continuing trend.
- 10.4.2.5 When considered alongside the needs assessment of those in TA and those who have approached the Council or become homeless without recourse to stay elsewhere, there is an underrepresentation of over 55's. This would suggest that this age group are less likely to find themselves homeless, possibly due to the support received successfully preventing this, or the resources Monmouthshire has with regards to age restricted accommodation stock.
- 10.4.2.6 At the other end of the spectrum those with Substance Misuse issues as a lead need are overrepresented in those in TA (Table 40) when compared to this wider data (Table 46). Overall, of all those accessing support from HSG the lead need of Substance Misuse ranks as one of the lowest. The data suggests that those with this as a lead need are more likely to find themselves homeless and in need of emergency and temporary accommodation. HSG has not had a commissioned service for those with substance misuse issues throughout the time period analysed here, but the commission of a GDAS outreach worker is pending.
- 10.4.2.7 When breaking down the lead needs by gender more women are accessing HSG support services than men- the opposite to that seen in the breakdown of TA (Figure 57, Table 48). Those with a lead need of Domestic Abuse and Single parent families are more likely to be female whereas those with lead needs of Offending, Substance Misuse or Generic needs are more likely to be male (Table 48).
- 10.4.2.8 Again, in comparing this to the isolated data around those in TA there is an overrepresentation of men in TA than amongst the wider support data. As has been noted, there are significantly more males than females in TA (Figure 57). This could be that the support needs where there is a stronger male skew are more pervasive in contributing to homelessness, or that support services are not able to cater to this cohort as effectively as for females, or a combination of the two.

Breakdown Lead need by Gender where recorded	Gender	
	F	M
Lead need type		
Domestic Abuse	139	10
Families with Support Needs	26	16
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	20	50
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	44	33
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	7	8
People with Criminal Offending History	2	20
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	3	5
People with Learning Disabilities	9	8
People with Mental health Issues	181	179
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	53	38
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	10	18
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Drugs and Volatile substances)	8	22
Single parent Families with Support needs	23	2
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	25	48
Young People who are Care Leavers	4	1
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	38	24
Total	592	482

Table 48: Breakdown Lead need by Gender where recorded

#### 10.4.3 Outcomes

Outcome category	Outcome Achieved	Number of people
Promoting personal and community safety	Feeling safe	368
	Contributing to the safety and well-being of themselves and of others	286
Promoting independence and control	Managing accommodation	594
	Managing relationships	270
	Feeling part of the community	127
Promoting economic progress and financial control	Managing money	476
	Engaging in educational learning	66
	Engaging in employment/voluntary work	79
Promoting health and well-being	Physically healthy	215
	Mentally healthy	386
	Leading a healthy and active lifestyle	105

Table 49: Type and Number of Outcomes



- 10.4.3.1 Of the 1082 people recorded by support services to have a lead need, 1042 people were supported in the period April-September 2020 and 1030 people achieved positive outcomes as a result of the support they received, and 12 are continuing to work with support. These figures suggest that approximately 40 people did not engage to proceed with support.
- 10.4.3.2 A significant number of those supported achieved a positive outcome around Mental Health, and also to feel safe (Table 49) which demonstrates that HSG support services are working successfully to address the county's most prominent support needs, but that the continuing demand would indicate that an expansion of these services would be welcomed.
- 10.4.3.3 What hasn't been recorded in the survey of needs amongst those receiving support, or at least explicitly, is the demand for support around finances. Managing money is the second highest outcome achieved (Table 49). Budgeting, benefit advice, help into employment and training and income maximisation are shown here to be necessary services to support residents to maintain tenancies and ensure that any periods of homelessness are brief and unrepeatable- all the more so in the context of unstable income and benefit changes through the Pandemic and beyond.
- 10.4.3.4 Just under half of those supported during this 6 month snapshot were successfully supported to manage their accommodation, and this is supported by the figures recorded below (Table 50).

Status	Homelessness Status at start	Homelessness status at exit
Homeless	164	34
At threat of Homelessness within 56 days	61	6
In interim accommodation	191	105
Need support to remain in own home	470	149
Maintaining stable accommodation independently (6mths +)		251
Total	886	545

Table 50: Homeless Status at the Beginning and End of Support

- 10.4.3.5 The number of homeless households, or those facing homelessness are significantly reduced following intervention of support. Those requiring support to remain in their own home are clearly receiving the support appropriate to build resilience and empowerment to remain independent. HSG support services are clearly successful in preventing homelessness for vulnerable households with support needs.

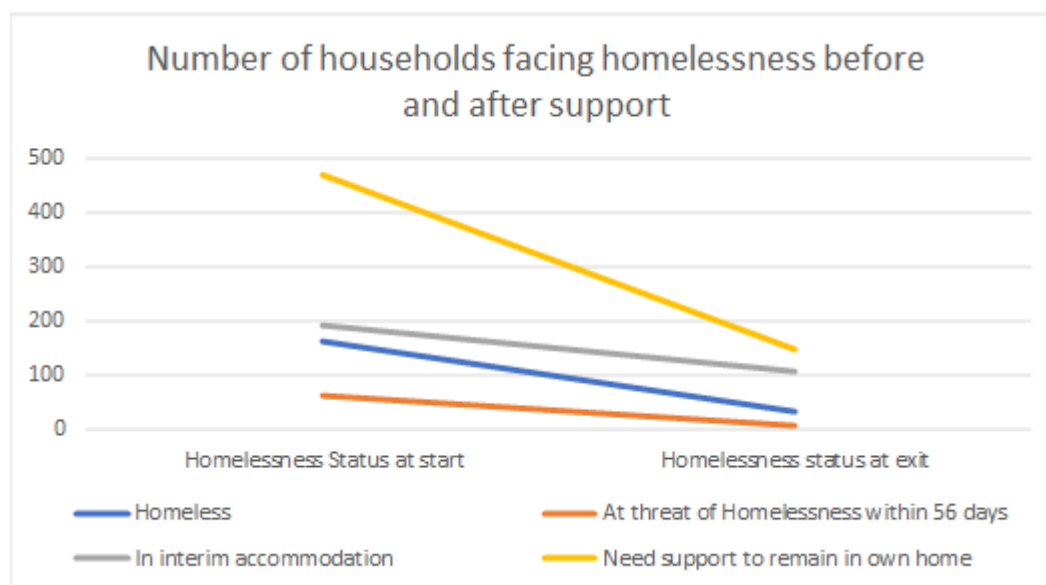


Figure 70: Number of Households Facing Homelessness at the Beginning and End of Support

#### 10.4.4 HIP

10.4.4.1 The HIP panel has frequently been referred to as an example of good practice by stakeholders. The panel brings together a range of appropriate agencies fortnightly to discuss highly complex cases where a multi-agency approach is required. Due to the complexity of the cases outcomes are not captured statistically, however there are a number of positive testimonies which are testament to the power of the panel. The anonymised cases below are a sample of these.

- “A” was referred in November 2020 by Aneurin Bevan Health Board. “A” has a diagnosis of ASD and had been evicted from a couple of properties due to ASB, homophobic and racist abuse which had involved the police. “A” was housed at in B&B accommodation by HOTS and supported by Pobl Lifestyles. Pobl Lifestyles referred “A” to residential care where they are now happily settled with 24-hour care.
- “B” was referred in March 2021 as the family were experiencing ASB in their block of flats as well as a rodent infestation. The family needed to move quickly and so the HIP arranged for the Homeasearch team to be emailed a list of Police calls to the property, the Minutes of a recent CASP meeting and for Homeasearch to then consider a Banding change for “B”. Since going to Panel the banding has been changed to 2A and backdated to September 1st 2019. The Family successfully bid for 3-bedroom property in July 2021 and are delighted.
- “C” was re-referred to Panel in April 2021. Case of self-neglect, alcoholism, suspected financial abuse by a Neighbour. A DTR form was completed and Safeguarding Team investigated. A care package was put in place. Unfortunately, the Police were not able to investigate the suspected financial abuse as “C” denied any exploitation.

## 10.5 HSG data conclusion

- 10.5.1.1 Aside from a handful of services the number of residents accessing support dipped during the Coronavirus Pandemic 2020-2021 (Table 35, Figure 49). At first glance this might seem surprising, as it would intuitively been expected that the demand for support would have been higher. However, the lockdown of communities in March 2020 in response to COVID-19 saw an unbelievable response from both support providers and the citizens of Monmouthshire. During this period of time housing associations expanded their remit and sought to check in on all tenants- not just those who were receiving support. In the community 60+ CV19 volunteer groups convened almost instantly across the county, made up of multiple residents who recognised a fundamental 'need to help others' and to help sustain life at all costs. This rapid expansion of informal support most likely provided a level of pre-emptive assistance that helped families to avoid or delay crisis and approach formal support provisions.
- 10.5.1.2 It is expected, with the support of the data for the first half of 2021-2022 (Table 35), that for many services the demand will significantly increase as Wales continues to emerge from the pandemic and its social and financial implications reverberate through communities.
- 10.5.1.3 Looking across the HSG support data Mental Health issues feature prominently (Table 46), something which is supported anecdotally through the stakeholder workshops. The significant number of vulnerable adults requiring support with poor mental health far outweighs the support currently available, particularly for those with higher to intensive needs. Floating support and supported accommodation delivered by MIND would benefit from expansion to help with this increasing demand. However, there are limits to what HSG projects can achieve when issues can overlap with the need for medical treatment and specialist care. The HSG team will welcome any future partnership working with local Mental Health Teams to address this increasing need.

- 10.5.1.4 Young people (16-24) and those with substance misuse issues are overrepresented amongst those who access emergency and temporary accommodation through Monmouthshire County Council when the wider support data is considered (Figure 58, Table 40, Table 46). These two support needs also have a higher proportion of 'high' and 'intensive' needs and indicate that residents with these needs are more likely to become homeless. The Council's HSG team currently funds 2 supported accommodation provisions for young people through Pobl and are currently restructuring an additional facility to provide supported accommodation specifically for those with higher needs. However, it is clear from the data that the demand continues to outweigh the provision. For those with substance misuse issues a dedicated assertive outreach worker from the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) has been procured and is due to start imminently but there are no suitable accommodation provisions for this cohort. The council aspires to a 24 hour staffed provision for those with high and intensive needs to complement the Housing First model, the need for which has also been raised by stakeholders, but at present HSG does not have the available finances to fund this.
- 10.5.1.5 As a county with an aging demographic it is not surprising that HSG projects support a significant number of over 55s, many of these with sensory or physical disability (Table 47). As this trend is not replicated within TA it can be assumed that interventions by support services, as well as the accommodation stock for older people, is successfully preventing homelessness.
- 10.5.1.6 98% of those supported by HSG funded projects from April to September 2021 achieved a positive outcome (Table 49). As well as Mental Health support, HSG providers supported residents to achieve positive outcomes around Managing money and Managing Tenancies. The success of this support in reducing homelessness can be evidenced by the decrease in those either homeless or facing homelessness following intervention.
- 10.5.1.7 To ensure the best outcomes are achieved for those with high and complex needs the Council has created the Housing Intervention Panel (HIP), a multi-agency forum where partner agencies are able to work on cases collaboratively and effectively. This has been heralded by stakeholders as an example of good practice and has delivered positive results.

## Chapter 11: Qualitative Data

### 11.1 Themes from Stakeholder Workshops and Questionnaires

The qualitative data below was captured at Stakeholder events, 5 of which were hosted by MCC with a mixture of partner agencies in attendance, and from the stakeholder questionnaire which was sent to individual professionals. This feedback

was structured into SWOT/PESTL analysis and trends can broadly be broken down into the below themes.

11.1.1.1 There was a consensus through the PESTL that services are currently operating in a context of rising costs and diminishing income. In particular services are bracing for the impact the increase in energy costs and the removal of the £20 per week UC uplift. The pandemic has also seen housing in Monmouthshire more in demand, with house prices and rents rapidly increasing. LHA rates were also acknowledged to be significantly out of line with market rents. In addition to this Monmouthshire has a number of restrictions to building or remodelling properties due to the high levels of phosphates found in the local rivers.

#### 11.1.2 *Communication:*

##### 11.1.2.1 Strengths

- General consensus that partnership working had improved, largely due to the change in working brought about by the pandemic. There has been more of an appetite for all agencies to work together flexibly and creatively to meet the challenges of the last 18 months. The HIP was mentioned several times as an example of good practice in this area which allows professionals to come together to seek creative solutions, and also serves as a preventative resource.
- Communication with PRS landlords has improved due to procuring TA over the last 18 months.
- The use of various digital platforms for communicating with service users is a positive advancement, especially for Monmouthshire being a semi-rural area. The increased use of MS Teams has in some ways made collaboration easier between partner agencies.

##### 11.1.2.2 Weaknesses

- Whilst the increase use of technology to communicate with residents has had positive results it's limitations should also be recognised. As a rural county Monmouthshire does not have consistency in infrastructure with regards to internet and mobile signal and so some people risk becoming isolated from services. Similarly, some residents would have a preference in face to face working to build trust and a relationship with services. All services would like to see a blended approach to communicating with residents to meet individual preferences and needs moving forward.
- Services noted that there has been a decline in the quality of information coming through on the referrals from Gateway. This is contributing to a culture of clients becoming retraumatised by having to repeat their issues and challenges every time they move between services. The lack of robustness of the referrals can also do service users a disservice as they may not be allocated to the correct service for their needs and having to go through the system again.
- As Monmouthshire is such a decentralised county without a central focal point it poses a challenge to disseminating information. It was generally felt during

the workshops that Monmouthshire could do more to promote its services, both so that those who may need them know where they can access information, and to raise awareness around homelessness as an issue.

#### 11.1.2.3 Opportunity

- To continue and develop the multi-agency partnership working that has emerged from the pandemic and to broaden the services included, for example, to community resources. In particular making connections with health colleagues as we move forward from the pandemic. There was a feeling that there has been a history of silo working between housing services and health, and that this area still needs to see an improvement in partnership working.
- To build a centralised hub where residents can get easy read information and advice whether that be online, or in person, or both. To avoid confusion for the service user it would be ideal to provide a central point of contact. A centralised system such as this would also benefit support staff, as although there are a number of services on Monmouthshire staff are not always aware of them all.

#### 11.1.3 Staffing

##### Strengths

- It was acknowledged that staff across all services had shown dedication, compassion and professionalism in the face of extreme pressures brought about by the pandemic. Staff have had to work and adapt very quickly and have largely risen to this challenge.

##### 11.1.3.1 Weaknesses

- Staffing remains an issue across the sector in line with national trends. Services are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit staff and retention rates are currently poor. The stresses of working during the pandemic was identified as taking its toll on the wellbeing of staff, but also the emerging competition from other sectors luring staff with increases in pay and additional bonuses.

#### 11.1.4 Accommodation and support

##### 11.1.4.1 Strengths

- Services supporting young people has grown through the youth work approach encouraged by WAG. As a result support services are now able to better identify and support young people at risk of homelessness which strengthens prevention.
- The HOTs team have been restructured and expanded to include Prevention officers which will now help to broaden the remit of prevention, support people earlier and avoid a 'revolving door' of clients. The role of specialist benefit support workers has also been a good tool in preventing homelessness, particularly with clients who may not engage with other services.
- The HOTs team have been creative and flexible in their approach, taking risks with initiatives such as becoming guarantors for those wanting to access the PRS.

- Questionnaire responses also praised the work of Homesearch and RSLs. Social housing providers were considered to provide support to those at risk of tenancy breakdown.

#### 11.1.4.2 Weaknesses

- The theme that overwhelmingly dominated discussions around weaknesses is resources. It was widely acknowledged that Monmouthshire has a lack of accommodation of all types- larger properties for families, single units, specialist supported and move on accommodation. The private rented sector in Monmouthshire is small and expensive (over the LHA rates in most cases) and there was a feeling amongst participants that landlords are reluctant to take homeless clients, particularly those with support needs.
- The shortages of suitable, appropriate accommodation have caused stagnation in TA and B&B which support services in turn felt were contributing to a backlogs in services as they were supporting households for longer periods.
- Stakeholders identified an unmet need amongst service users in the county who experience mental health issues. Mental health issues appear to have a high prevalence amongst the homelessness community in Monmouthshire and services felt that there is a distinct lack of support options for this cohort. Alarming, one group identified that for some residents criminalisation was the only means of accessing mental health support.
- Participants noted a lack of housing options for those with medium to high needs, as there aren't any provisions suitable to ex-offenders, those with entrenched drug and alcohol misuse issues, and as above, those with medium to high mental health needs. At present the county does not have a dedicated GDAS worker for TA due to the challenges of recruitment (see below), and there is no current framework for dual diagnosis teams. Although WAG would like to move away from shared accommodation, for some residents this would be a positive solution for the short to medium term. The idea of specialist 24 hour supported hostel provision was raised in a number of the focus groups as support services have identified a larger number of complex cases coming through the system.
- Where there is supported accommodation, providers have identified barriers for those who find employment, as their rent quickly becomes unsustainably high. This can create a disincentive for residents to go into employment and an additional barrier to securing move on accommodation due to a build-up of arrears.

#### 11.1.4.3 Opportunities

- There is scope to work with adult social care to improve services for those who are neurodiverse.

### 11.1.5 *Transport*

#### 11.1.5.1 Weaknesses

- Monmouthshire does not have developed public transport links which causes a number of issues for homeless residents.

- Supported accommodation providers raised the problems they have faced when trying to support clients to medical appointments and for emergency treatment. Some clients are not able to get the treatment they need due to these logistical barriers.
- Similarly, further education establishments are spread throughout Monmouthshire and beyond, and the lack of regular and affordable transport to the campuses poses a real barrier to those seeking to obtain further qualifications.

#### *11.1.6 Legislation, policy and processes*

##### *11.1.6.1 Strengths*

- Staff are now more aligned to PIE practices and it is considered that services are now working with the individual in mind and have been tailoring support to meet individual needs.

##### *11.1.6.2 Weaknesses*

- Participants discussed the funding processes for services and identified that this tends to be on a short-term basis which makes it difficult for them to develop long term solutions to issues. Services do not feel that they can work with longevity when funding can be removed or changed regularly.
- It was mentioned that the way that services are funded fosters gatekeeping of individual pots of funding, rather than encouraging services to pool resources to address needs. Homelessness services rely very heavily on HSG funding, and it would be good to see other services such as health contribute on joint programmes that will achieve multilateral goals.
- Uncertainty around WAG's intentions with regards to statutory requirements such as intentionality and priority need, and what will happen to those in TA/B&B should this change.

##### *11.1.6.3 Opportunities*

- Practices in other LAs were mentioned, including the Tenancy Training offered by Cardiff City Council which may ease the concerns of private sector landlords in placing homeless households in their properties.

#### *11.1.7 Community*

##### *11.1.7.1 Weaknesses*

- There has historically been a lack of appetite in the communities for homeless accommodation. Plans for homeless accommodation has frequently been met with resistance and has caused friction between the community and the council.

##### *11.1.7.2 Opportunities*

- The pandemic awoke the public to often hidden societal issues such as homelessness and encouraged communities to come forward and support each other. It was identified that this culture of 'good will' may provide opportunities to bring the public onside and encourage private landlords to work



with services. As with the recent Afghan refugees resettlement, there may be an appetite to go to directly to the public for help.

#### **11.2 Feedback from Service User workshops**

Service users accommodated in one of Monmouthshire's supported projects and a B&B used to accommodate those approaching as homeless during the Covid pandemic were asked a series of questions on their experiences. Below is a summary of their responses.

### 11.2.1 B&B participants

- 11.2.1.1 The majority of participants accessed the Housing Options Team through other agencies, usually with the support of a key worker or healthcare professional. This delayed the process for service users to access the housing support that they needed and gave the appearance of the system being convoluted.
- 11.2.1.2 Once in contact with the HOTs team participants relayed being put off by the attitude of staff and finding it difficult to meet the legislative requirements around eligibility and local connection. This however has changed during the pandemic, and some participants stated that they would not have received the housing support they have outside of these special arrangements. Those with pets felt they faced an additional barrier due to a lack of emergency and temporary accommodation provision that will accept animals.
- 11.2.1.3 Once in contact with the HOTs team participants relayed being put off by the attitude of staff and finding it difficult to meet the legislative requirements around eligibility and local connection. This however has changed during the pandemic, and some participants stated that they would not have received the housing support they have outside of these special arrangements. Those with pets felt they faced an additional barrier due to a lack of emergency and temporary accommodation provision that will accept animals.
- 11.2.1.4 Once having submitted a homeless application and engaging with the process responses were generally positive but identified ways the process could have been made easier. A lack of clarity of information was identified and participants noted that they would have appreciated more 'straight answers' around their homeless application. Although a number of participants described approaching the HOTs team through other support agencies it was considered that these agencies could have communicated better- particularly with Probation and Criminal Justice departments.
- 11.2.1.5 Overall feelings on the homelessness process was not positive, with participants describing feeling 'lost', 'broken', 'vulnerable', 'shit' and as 'less of a person' and that the experience had negatively affected their mental health. Service users were largely satisfied with the accommodation they had received and spoke well of support services but did not rate contact with Monmouthshire council well. The aspirations of the service users from this workshop was to be accommodated in suitable accommodation (largely 1 bed units) near to their support networks.

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#### 11.2.2 Supported accommodation participants

11.2.2.1 On the homelessness process those in supported accommodation felt that there needs to be more advertisement of services available to people who are homeless in Monmouthshire. However the overall experience was described as 'swift' though frightening.

11.2.2.2 Those residing in supported accommodation responded positively when asked about the support they receive and the accommodation they are residing in. They identified that communication was the tool that they felt was most important. Those residing in supported accommodation also identified that the cost of the accommodation for those working acts as a disincentive for people to seek employment and take opportunities.

### 11.3 HSG Feedback

11.3.1 Due to resource constraints, exit interviews are conducted by phone with a sample of service users recently closed to support services. Service users are asked to rate their experience based on the two questions below and are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience.

Clients were asked...	Support had made things worse	Support had made no real change to their life	Support had made their life a bit better	Support has made life a lot better	Support had made life significantly better	Total
to rate their overall experience of receiving support from HSG funded projects and changes it had made to their everyday life.	0	8	8	17	15	48
since support how do you rate your ability to live independently and	1	12	7	20	8	48

manage your own home?						
Total	1	20	15	37	23	

Table 51: Responses from HSG Support Service Exit Interviews

11.3.2 The table above illustrates the responses gathered between May and December 20221. Contacting those within the sample can be challenging, as staff have found that a number of service users have either changed their telephone number or are reluctant to answer calls from unknown numbers. Despite this, over 50% of those contacted resulted in a complete interview. Feedback on the efficacy of support is overwhelmingly positive- 83.3% of responders asserted that their experience was positive and had brought changes to their life (question 1) and 72.9% of responders felt that the support received had increased their ability to live independently (question 2).

11.3.3 Some of the main themes that came from the interviews where that people had benefited a great deal from someone to talk to, especially in the period of lockdowns.

11.3.3.1 Lots of clients felt they had been able to address their debt which had been a big part of their daily stresses.

11.3.4 The questionnaire didn't ask about banding but the majority had mentioned that they had been helped with new banding on the housing register.

11.3.5 Service users were asked about barriers they faced during the support process during their exit interviews, a selection of which are shown below.

- [I] Found it really difficult to find support when I needed it, didn't know where to go, and would like to have seen helpful numbers on a bus stop or something.
- I had 3 different workers in 3 months, (Found it really had telling lots of different workers my story).
- I wasn't in a good place when support was being offered and didn't answer the phone so people gave up on me and support ended.

11.3.6 When asked to provide a brief outline of how support has helped to achieve something that was important to service users the responses broadly followed the themes of the statements below.

- I have had support previously, but nothing like this, my worker was down to earth and we got on well, she was always there for me.
- I am dyslexic and have had lots of support to read and write which has made me understand things better, especially when it comes to having contact with my children.
- Helped with benefits after my breakdown and losing job. I became a full time carer and needed to get on housing register, I have had help with foodbanks when we have got into a difficult situation and support has been fantastic.
- Support has helped me get a flat, Help with DA, help with Social Services.
- I am slowly learning to do things for myself with support.
- It has greatly helped with family relationships.

## **11.4 Housing Options Feedback**

- 11.4.1 Customer feedback forms provide the Local Authority with invaluable feedback about the current status quo regarding the initial contact with Housing Options and the subsequent placements into temporary accommodation. Responses remain low to medium across the service with room for an updated system of collecting and measuring responses given. Feedback received via questionnaires across the two services overall were positive or very positive, with 95% of clients being satisfied or very satisfied with the service from Housing Options; and 91% very satisfied or satisfied with allocated temporary accommodation.
- 11.4.2 The overarching positive themes from Housing Options was that the service was prompt; quick and reliable, and that individuals in the team were easy to speak to, kind and understanding.
- 11.4.3 The challenges raised related to communication with the Team who were “not easy to contact” due to a lack of phone numbers, or communication being by email.
- 11.4.4 In temporary accommodation clients in the main felt listened to; that staff were friendly; fast and helpful.
- 11.4.5 Challenges clients raised were around the location of some of the B&Bs being outside of a main town when people don't drive; and the rent in house share is expensive for those who were working, or wished to work. Other comments were about the accommodation itself, which some felt was small and sometimes slow to be maintained after requests were made for improvements.
- 11.4.6 None of the responses has come as a surprise, with work already underway to improve communications with people during their first point of contact with the team. Video and face-to-face calls are being developed within local hubs to enable clients to feel comfortable with their approach to the service.
- 11.4.7 A minimum standard review of all accommodation started pre-pandemic, and with the move towards Rapid Rehousing and self-contained temporary accommodation, the points raised about current properties should be met with the improvements planned in the near future.

## Chapter 12: Conclusion

- 12.1.1 What the preceding chapters are showing is that these are challenging times for households and the Council when confronted with dealing with homelessness in the County.
- 12.1.2 For many households it is around accessing affordable housing in whether it is through home ownership or renting within both the PRS and SHS while for others it is having the appropriate support to maintain existing accommodation.
- 12.1.3 The Council too has a number challenges, The Statement of Need highlights that the profile of homeless need and the requirements to meet this need has changed significantly over the last two years. Whilst there has essentially been minimal change in the number of applications, the need and demand for a range and type of temporary, supported and permanent homeless accommodation has risen significantly, particularly in relation to young people, single people and those experiencing mental health and substance misuse issues, a high proportion of which require medium to high housing support provision. In part, this can be attributed to the challenges of the local housing market, including a contracting private sector, which impacts detrimentally on the housing options available to low income and vulnerable households. For example, both social housing and private rented housing is difficult to access.
- 12.1.4 The increase in demand for homeless temporary, supported and permanent accommodation has highlighted three issues, firstly, the importance of homeless prevention and identifying scope to strengthen further existing arrangements. In addition, there is a need to identify additional permanent housing solutions both in the social and private rented sector due to the inability to rely on 'normal/typical' turnover to facilitate move on from temporary accommodation, particularly one bedroomed accommodation.
- 12.1.5 Secondly the need for additional and a greater range of supported housing and housing support provision to help people, particularly those with medium to high complex needs, both to maintain their existing accommodation whilst also preparing for independent living.
- 12.1.6 Lastly, there is a need for additional self-contained temporary accommodation, as per Welsh Governments standards) to facilitate a phased reduction and eventual elimination in the use of B & B and shared temporary housing. The continued use of such accommodation has a detrimental effect on those being housed by this means and creates an unsustainable cost for the Council.
- 12.1.7 The Statement of Needs assessment has also highlighted the relevance and importance of collaborative working. The current delivery of homeless services is based on a wide range of partnership working, which provides a strong platform upon which to continue building and strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new and innovative arrangements. A key focus will be to continue to explore opportunities within Monmouthshire County Council and between the Council and Registered Social Landlords, support providers, the Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Welsh Government.