

Performance monitoring of housing options and homelessness

Introduction

- At the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (PASC) meeting on 17 November 2022, Members discussed the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to housing options and homelessness.
- Members requested further information that explains how the KPIs presented to the committee show the pressures and demands being placed on the housing register and the housing options and homelessness service.
- Whilst a set of KPIs cannot give a complete picture, they are a good indication of the level and type of need in different parts of the system.
- The data provided is that being presented to PASC, for Quarter 3, 2022 to 2023 (December 2022).

Purpose

- The purpose of this note is to:

- 1) Provide a brief overview of what each of the KPIs shows.
- 2) What good performance would look like.
- 3) How the KPI can show the pressures on the housing register and the service.

The following slides are set out in order of an individual or household's 'journey' through the system, so as to show how the KPIs indicate pressures at different points.

Context

- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 **increased the requirements for all councils** in England to help all eligible applicants, rather than those just in 'priority need'. This created additional demand on homelessness and housing options services.
- The Act added two new duties:
 - Duty to take steps to **prevent homelessness**: this means the council helps households at **risk** of losing suitable accommodation as soon as they are threatened with homelessness within 56 days.
 - Duty to take steps to **relieve homelessness**: this means the council helps homeless households to secure suitable accommodation, regardless of whether they are 'intentionally homeless' or in priority need. All eligible households are offered help to find a home.
- If the above steps do not work and the household becomes, or remains, homeless, then those in priority need retain their right to be rehoused and will be owed a **main homelessness duty**.
- At all stages, households can be offered temporary accommodation; for their homelessness to be discharged into the private rented sector; or be placed on the housing register, the mechanism for allocating applicants with suitable accommodation.
- The emphasis is to prevent homelessness at the earliest stage through tailored support and initiatives to help households retain settled accommodation.

Number of Personalised Housing Plans created

A personalised housing plan (PHP) is developed for anyone who is owed a duty and therefore homeless or threatened with homelessness. Through these plans actions are put in place that can lead to the successful prevention of homelessness. The number of plans created gives an indication of the number of new instances of homelessness or people becoming at risk of homelessness and in need of support from the council. A PHP is created for each new application where a duty is owed.

Please note: data for the current year is shown before the previous year. This is because the graph runs from April to March and the data for April is for 2022.



Number of households on the housing register in all bands

The number of households on the housing register shows the number of those applicants waiting for suitable accommodation either in social housing or for the homelessness to be discharged into the private rented sector. Applicants are placed in a band from A to D depending on need, with band A being those that are in the most urgent need. The number of households on the housing register waiting to be housed is a reflection of need in the local of area and the lack of accommodation to meet all housing need. Note, this is not the number of people who are homeless in West Suffolk.

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Number of households on the housing register in all bands

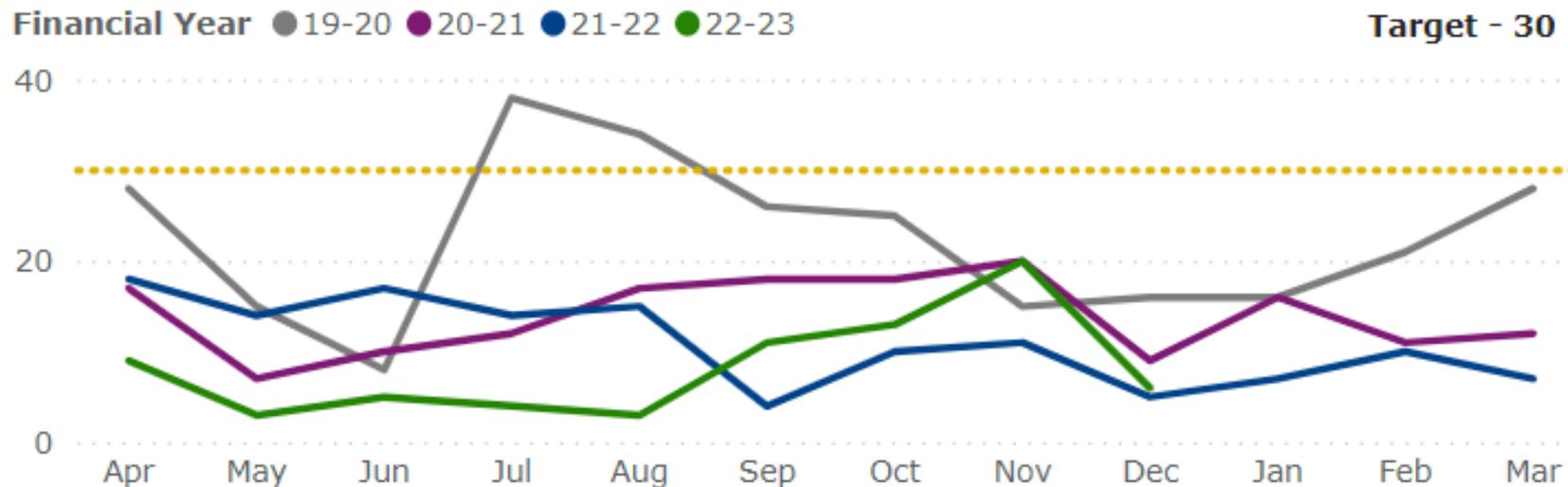
Financial Year ● 21-22 ● 22-23



Number of households prevented from becoming homeless

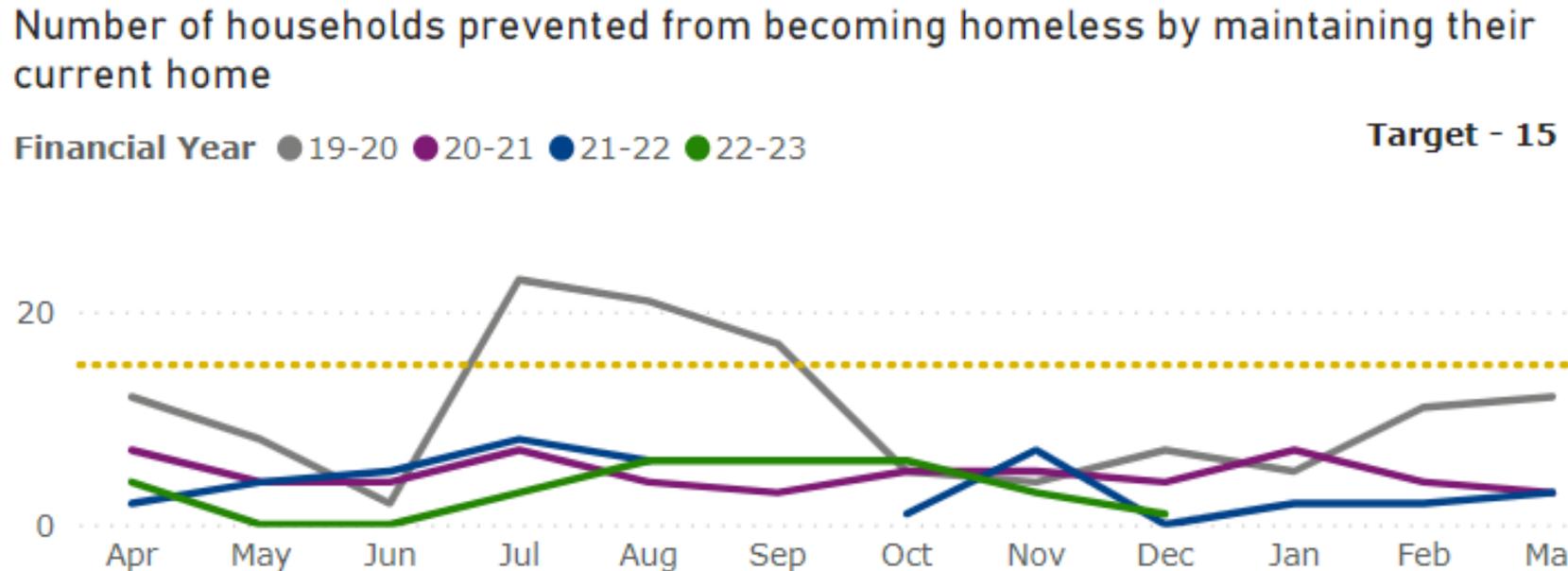
This indicator shows the number of households that, with support from the council, were prevented from becoming homeless either by retaining their home or finding alternative settled accommodation. We would always want to help households at the earliest stage and so a high number of households helped at this stage is a good outcome.

Number of households prevented from becoming homeless



Number of households prevented from becoming homeless by maintaining their current home

This links to the previous indicator where we prevent households from becoming homeless. This indicator shows the number of households that received support so they could maintain their current home as this is usually the best outcome. We would want to see high numbers of prevention by maintaining their current home for this indicator.



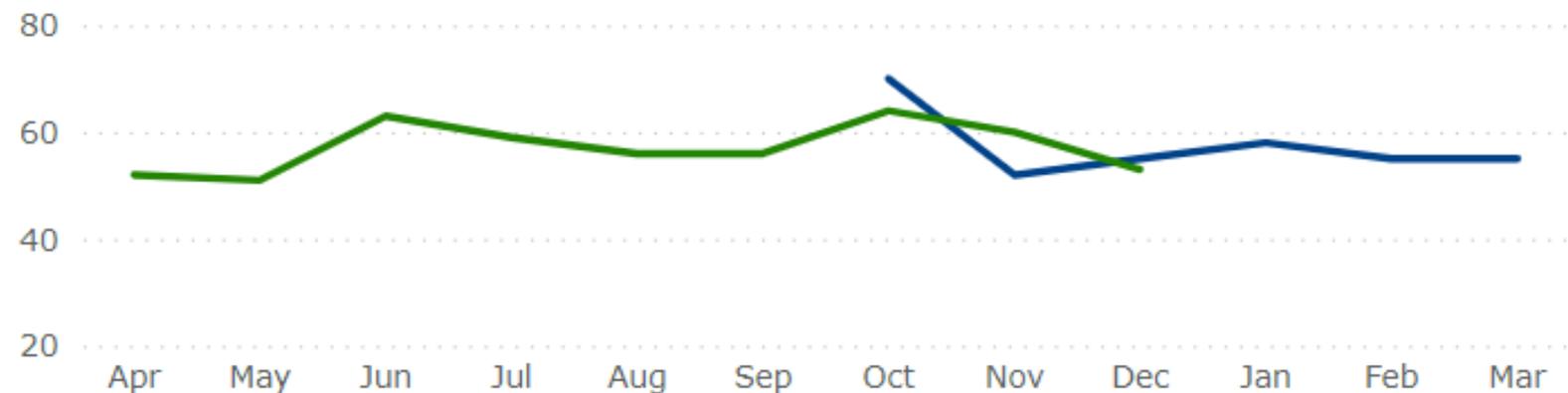
Number of young people (aged between 16 and 25, both singles and in families) identified as experiencing homelessness

This indicator shows the number of young people identified as experiencing homeless. A lower number shows a better outcome because it means fewer young people are homeless. Tailored support and pathways are available for young people at risk of homelessness.

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Number of young people (aged between 16 and 25, both singles and in families) identified as experiencing homelessness

Financial Year ● 21-22 ● 22-23

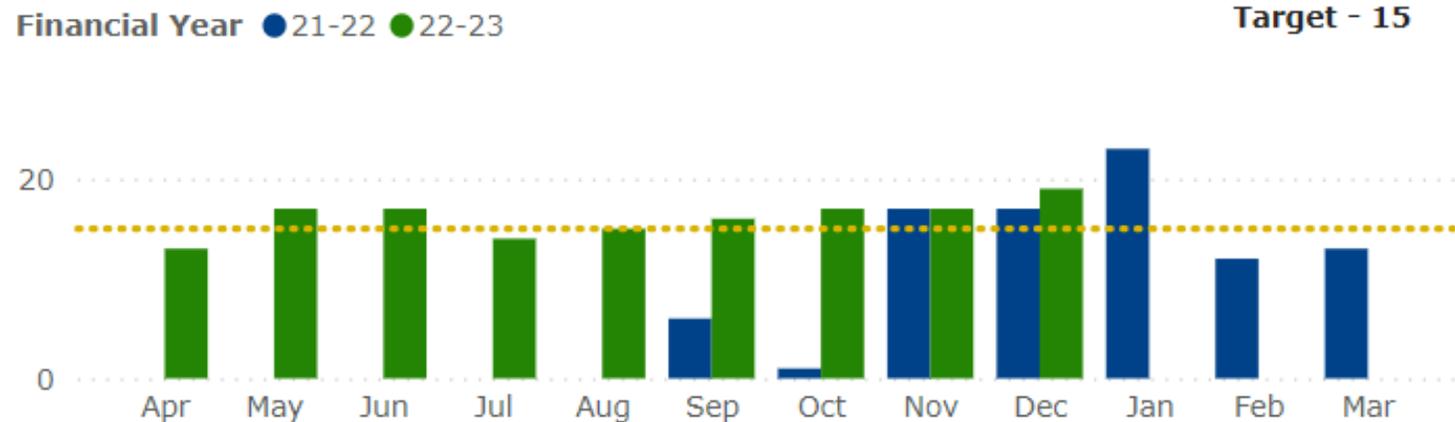


Number of households relieved from homelessness by securing accommodation for six months or more

At the relief stage, a household is already homeless and our aim would be to help households before this stage. This indicator shows how many households were relieved from homelessness by being provided with accommodation for six months or more, including in the private rented sector. Higher numbers show that more households are being provided with secure accommodation which is a positive outcome.

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Number of households relieved from homelessness by securing accommodation for six months or more

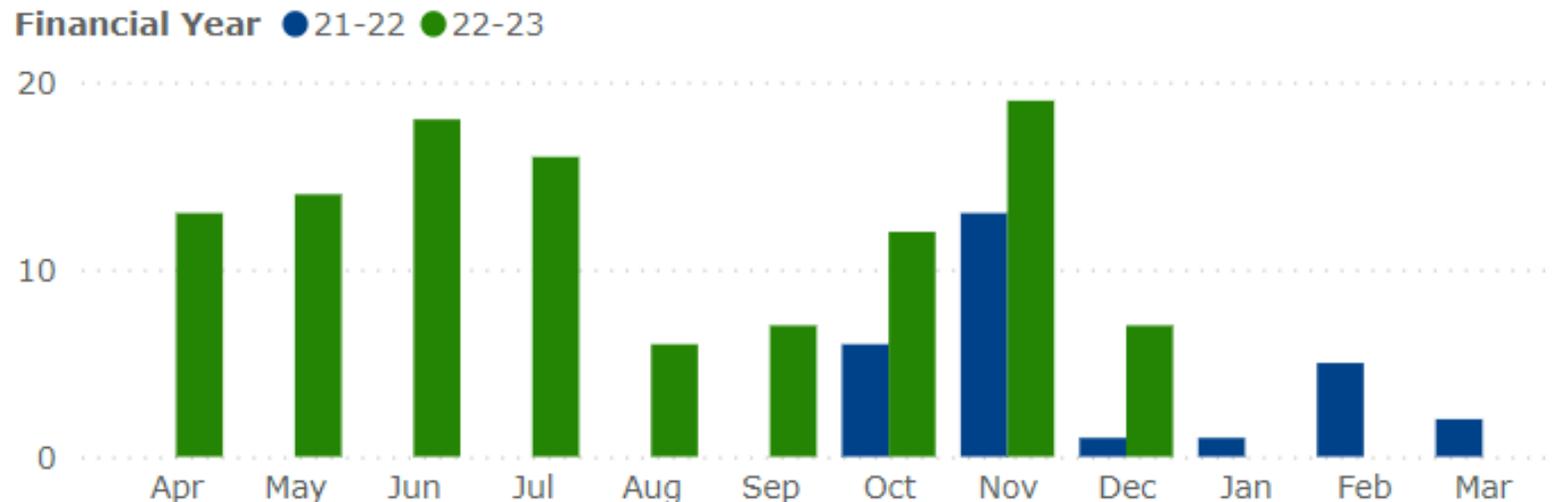


Number of homelessness duties discharged into the private rented sector

Whether at the prevention or relief stage, the discharge of homelessness duties has advantages for households and the council. As such a higher number is a good outcome. It enables more people to be helped into suitable properties, therefore reducing the pressure on social housing and expensive temporary accommodation and widening the available options.

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Number of homelessness duties discharged into the private rented sector



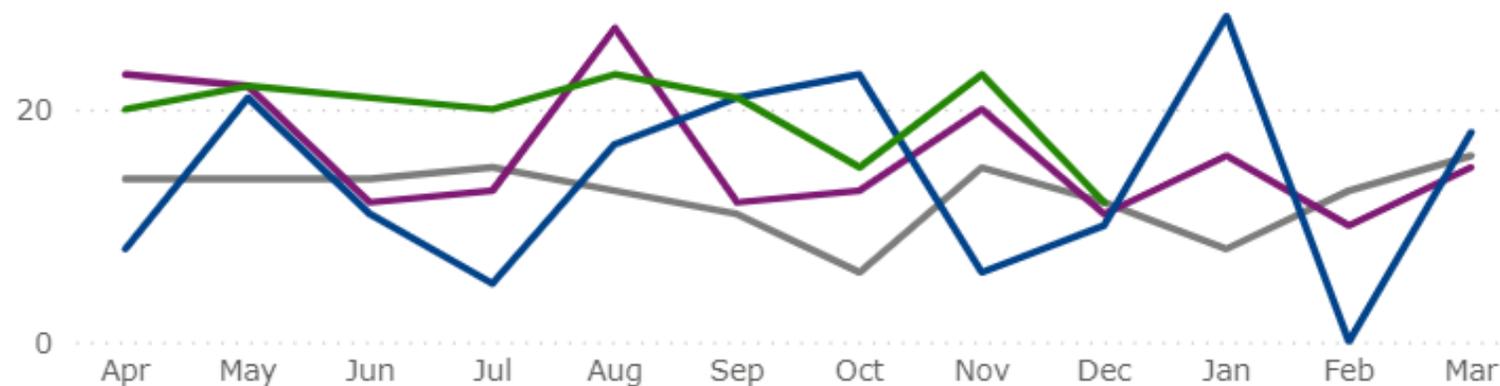
Number of households owed the Main Homelessness Duty

This indicator shows how many households were owed the main homelessness duty. The main duty applies when a household becomes, or remains, homeless, and the prevention and relief duty stage has not resulted in resolving the homelessness. Those in priority need retain their right to be rehoused and are owed a main duty. Non priority households will not be entitled to further help.

We would always want to help a household before being owed a main duty because it means their homelessness could not be resolved earlier.

Number of households owed the Main Homelessness Duty

Financial Year ● 19-20 ● 20-21 ● 21-22 ● 22-23



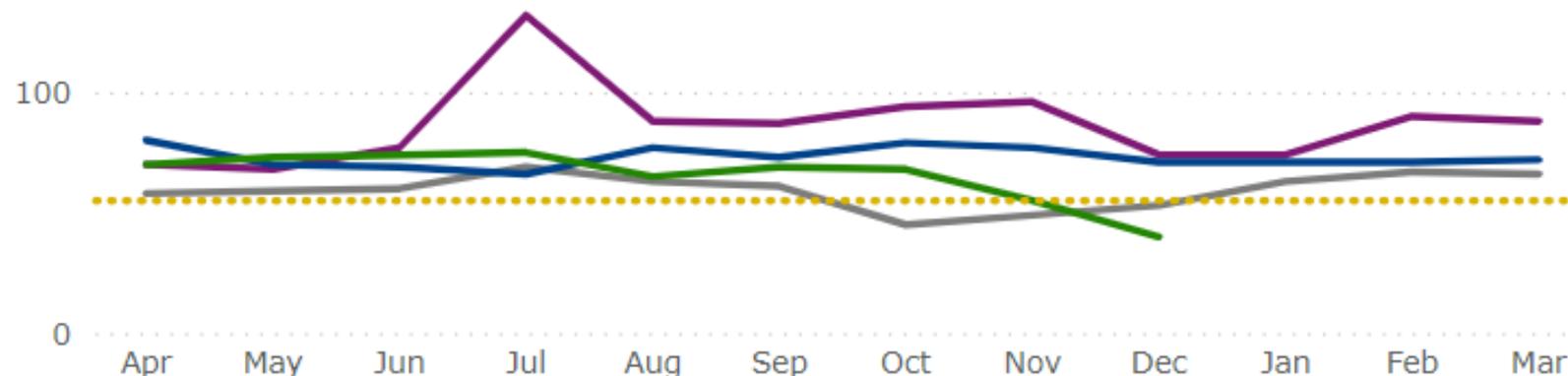
Number of households in temporary accommodation as at last day of the month

This indicator shows the number of households in temporary accommodation. Successful homelessness preventions mean there is less need to use temporary accommodation so we would want to see low numbers for this indicator. The aim is to support households to remain in more settled accommodation. As set out in earlier slides, we would want to support households into settled accommodation and avoid the use of temporary accommodation and bed and breakfasts (as set out in the next slide).

Number of households in temporary accommodation as at last day of the month

Financial Year ● 19-20 ● 20-21 ● 21-22 ● 22-23

Target - 55



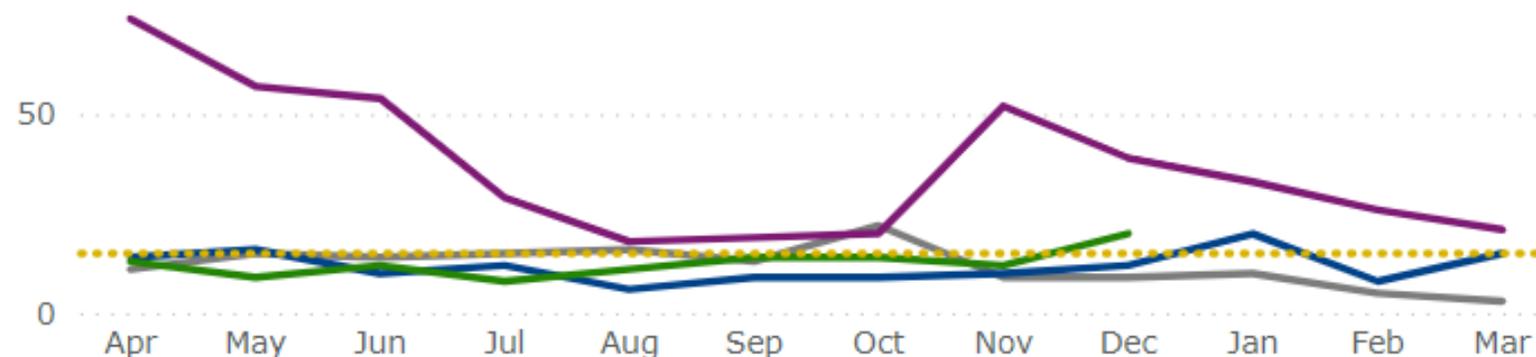
Number of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation as at last day of the month

This indicator shows how many households are accommodated in bed and breakfasts. Successful homelessness preventions and reliefs mean there is less need to use bed and breakfast so we would want to see low numbers for this indicator. It also means lower spend for the council. The aim is to only use this accommodation in emergency situations when an individual or household presents as being homeless.

Number of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation as at last day of the month

Financial Year ● 19-20 ● 20-21 ● 21-22 ● 22-23

Target - 15

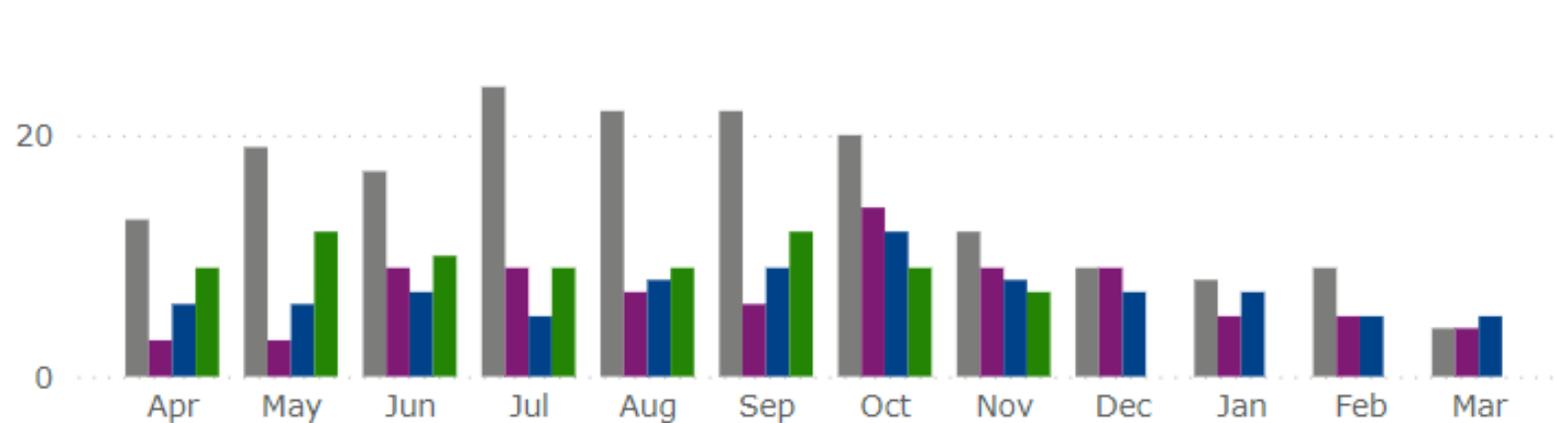


Number of rough sleepers

This indicator shows the number of people who are sleeping rough. When an individual is sleeping rough it is because their homelessness could not be prevented or relieved and other accommodation options have failed or been rejected. There might be other factors that are contributing to their rough sleeping such as personal reasons, substance misuse or mental ill-health. A low number is good for this indicator as we would always want to avoid the situation where a person is sleeping rough. The figure for December is zero.

Number of rough sleepers

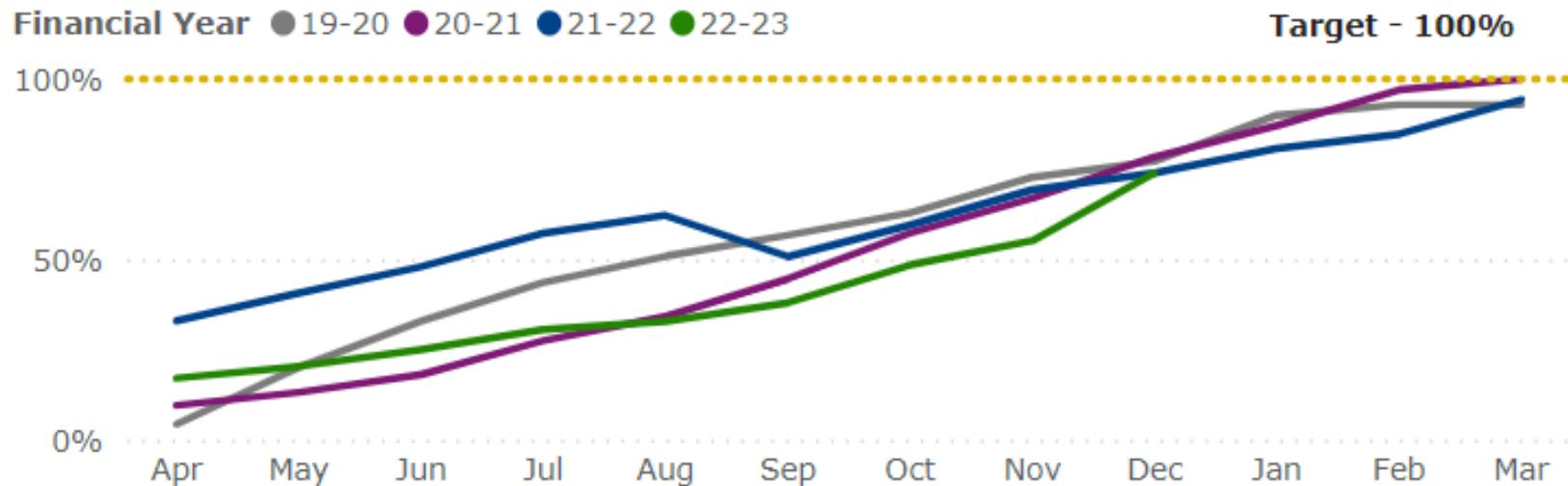
Financial Year ● 19-20 ● 20-21 ● 21-22 ● 22-23



Percentage of Discretionary Housing Payment used (year to date)

Discretionary housing payment (DHP) is financial support provided by the council for households that are struggling to pay the rent or do not have enough money for rent in advance in order to prevent homelessness. The council works with Anglia Revenues Partnership to ensure effective allocation of DHP for those experiencing difficulties. DHP is used proportionately throughout the year in order to help as many households as possible.

Percentage of Discretionary Housing Payment used (YTD)



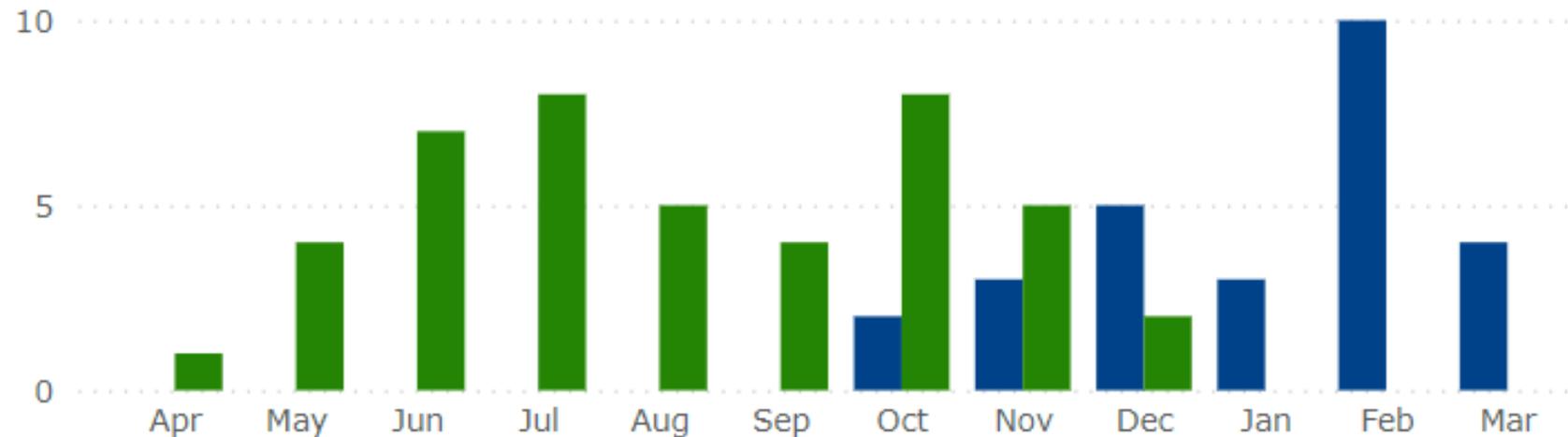
Number of rent deposit bonds provided

A rent deposit bond is an agreement put in place between the council, tenant and landlord in the private rented sector. It is a guarantee that the council are financially liable should any damage be caused to the property in the duration of the fixed term tenancy. A higher number is good because it means that more households are being supported to sustain tenancies and prevent housing crisis in the private rented sector. It leads to households maintaining settled accommodation and preventing the risk of homelessness.

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Number of rent deposit bonds provided

Financial Year ● 21-22 ● 22-23



Number of landlord incentives paid

The West Suffolk Lettings Partnership works with landlords and estate agents with the aim of increasing the number of properties in the private rented sector to meet demand. This indicator shows the number of landlord incentives paid and a higher number means good performance and more households being helped.

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Number of housing units delivered (one month lag)

This indicator shows the number of new housing units completed across West Suffolk. A higher number is good because it means more housing is being delivered. Suitable housing is needed to meet a range of households' needs that leads to sustainable and settled housing.

Number of housing units delivered (one month lag)

Financial Year ● 19-20 ● 20-21 ● 21-22 ● 22-23

