

Richmond Housing Department
2020/21 Equalities Information
Housing Advice / Homelessness / Provision of Temporary Accommodation

Introduction

Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 sets out the duties owed by local housing authorities to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Local Authorities have a duty to provide housing advice and assistance to everyone in their local area but the type of advice and assistance depends on whether the person is eligible for assistance (i.e. not subject to immigration control), whether they are actually homeless, whether they are intentionally homeless (they did or did not do something which caused their homelessness i.e. not pay their rent), whether they have a priority need for accommodation and local connection.

In April 2018 the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) came into force. Prior to the HRA much of the assistance provided to homeless applicants was predicated on whether after assessment a priority need was identified. A priority need included having dependent children, a disability and/or other instances of vulnerability. Those assessed as not having a priority need were less likely to be assisted. Within the HRA the emphasis on priority need has now been removed and all local authorities are expected to provide assistance in the form of prevention or relief of homelessness irrespective of the applicant's priority needs if they are facing homelessness within 56 days of approach. Prevention is where an applicant is prevented from becoming homeless, such as the Council mediating with the landlord or host so that the applicant can remain in their accommodation. Relief is where reasonable steps are taken to relieve the applicant of their homelessness such as by helping them secure suitable accommodation of at least 6 months.

In order to monitor homelessness approaches and also local authority performance, the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have introduced a new set of data requirements known as H-Clic which supersedes the previous P1E data returns. Whereas previously the data submitted to MHCLG was a snapshot of a local authority's homelessness cases at the end of each quarter, H-Clic covers all cases that the Council has dealt with and includes case-level details such as client name, gender, national insurance number etc. Such data is treated as mandatory within MHCLG's H-Clic Data Specification document.

Housing Advice Homeless Cases by Ethnic Group (2020-2021)

		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	509	60	105	87	51	146	958
	%	53.13%	6.26%	10.96%	9.08%	5.32%	15.24%	100%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	109	10	17	15	19	29	199
	%	54.77%	5.03%	8.54%	7.54%	9.55%	14.57%	100%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	17	3	5	14	5	6	50
	%	34.00%	6.00%	10.00%	28.00%	10.00%	12.00%	100%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	47	4	5	2	1	2	61
	%	77.05%	6.56%	8.20%	3.28%	1.64%	3.28%	100%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	13	1	0	1	0	3	18
	%	72.22%	5.56%	0.00%	5.56%	0.00%	16.67%	100%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	30	6	13	7	10	4	70
	%	42.86%	8.57%	18.57%	10.00%	14.29%	5.71%	100%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	50	7	8	12	4	5	86
	%	58.14%	8.14%	9.30%	13.95%	4.65%	5.81%	100%

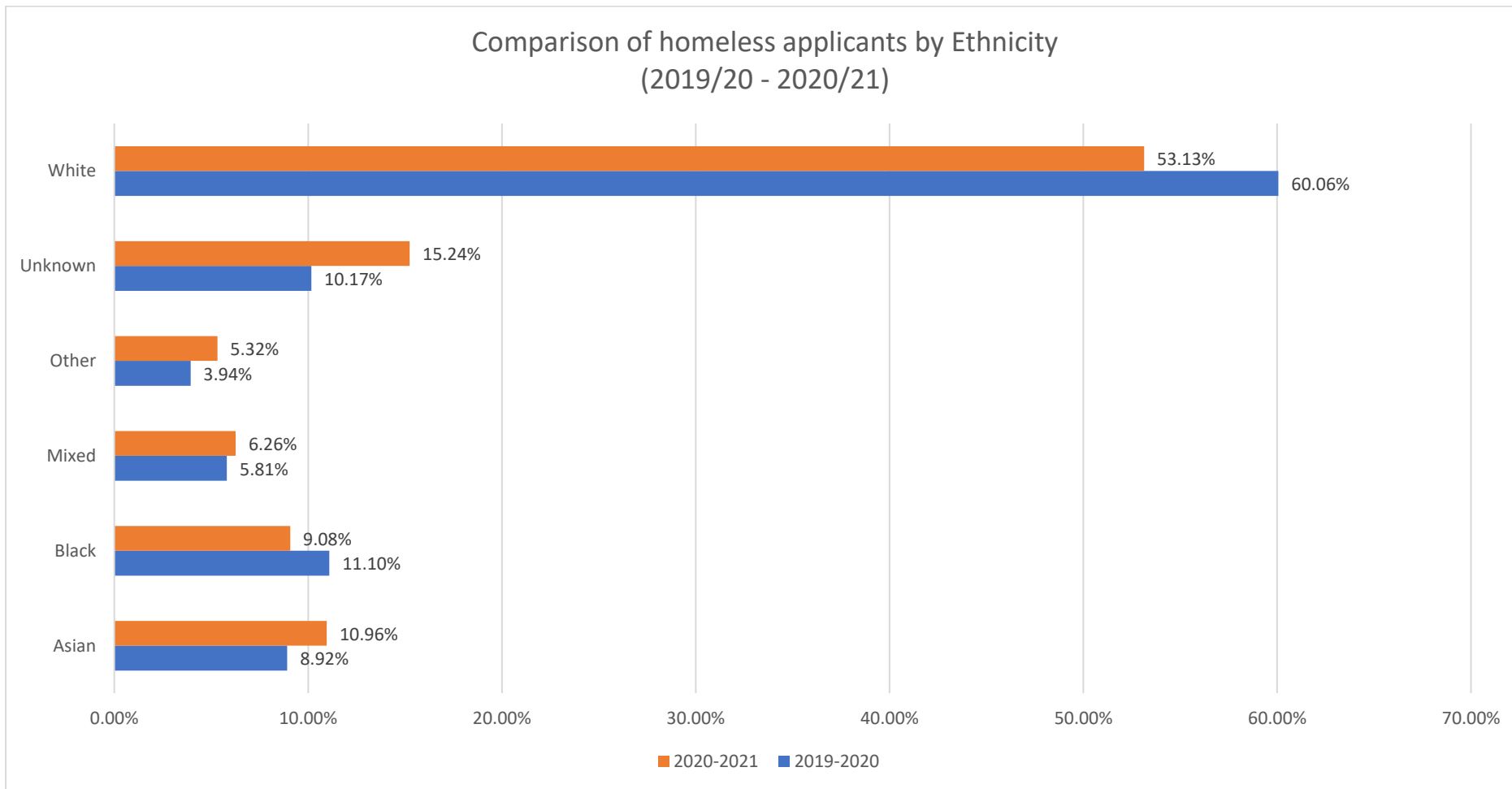
* these are cases where the Council has either prevented or relieved an applicant's homelessness by securing suitable accommodation of more than 6 months. These do not include all of the council's prevention schemes due to the availability of ethnicity data

The percentage of applicants from the white ethnic group (53.13%) is lower than the overall borough demographic (86%)¹. All other ethnic groups have a higher proportion of homeless approaches when compared to the borough demographic, with the black ethnic group showing the greatest difference by making up 9.08% of all homeless approaches while representing 1.5% of the borough demographic.

During 2020/21, the number of households who were accepted as homeless was – in most instances – proportionate to the number of households presenting as homeless for each ethnic group. However, the white and black ethnic group receive a higher proportion of acceptances (58.14%/13.95%) when compared to the number of homeless applications received (53.13%/9.08%).

¹ Richmond statistics and census 2011 information

For the percentage of homeless cases prevented, the white ethnic group were the largest group in this category, making up 77.05% of all homeless preventions while representing 53.13% of homeless approaches. Contrary, the black ethnic group made up 3.28% of homeless cases prevented while representing 9.08% of homeless approaches.



The percentage breakdown of homeless applications in the white and black ethnic groups has respectively dropped from 60% and 11% in 2019/20 to 53% and 9% in 2020/21. All other ethnic groups have seen a percentage increase in the number of homeless applications in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20.

Housing Advice and Homelessness Cases by Gender *

		Female with Children	Female without Children	Male with Children	Male without Children	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	229	272	43	414	958
	%	23.90%	28.39%	4.49%	43.22%	100%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	69	46	10	74	199
	%	34.67%	23.12%	5.03%	37.19%	100%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	2	6	1	6	15
	%	13.33%	40.00%	6.67%	40.00%	100%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	29	13	4	15	61
	%	47.54%	21.31%	6.56%	24.59%	100%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	8	3	1	6	18
	%	44.44%	16.67%	5.56%	33.33%	100%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	23	19	4	24	70
	%	32.86%	27.14%	5.71%	34.29%	100%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	34	17	13	22	86
	%	39.53%	19.77%	15.12%	25.58%	100%

* each gender category represents the lead applicant (male or female), and each category may include joint applicants or spouses / partners

The largest gender groups were households without children, representing 71.61% of homeless approaches, compared to 28.39% for households with children. However, despite households without children having a larger proportion of homeless approaches, they had a lower proportion of homeless cases prevented (45.9%) when compared to households with children (54.1%).

A similar trend is found when looking at the percentage of accepted homeless cases, with the households with children having a larger proportion of positive decisions (54.65%) when compared to the households without children (45.35%). These differences between the gender groups are certainly due to the gender groups with children having a priority need of dependent children within their households.

Households in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group as of 31st March 2021

Households in Temporary Accommodation *		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total	
2020/21	Total no. in temporary accommodation	No.	159	13	33	29	17	34	285
	%	%	56%	5%	12%	10%	6%	12%	100%
	B&B / Hostel (not self-contained)	No.	24	2	6	3	1	5	41
	%	%	59%	5%	15%	7%	2%	12%	100%

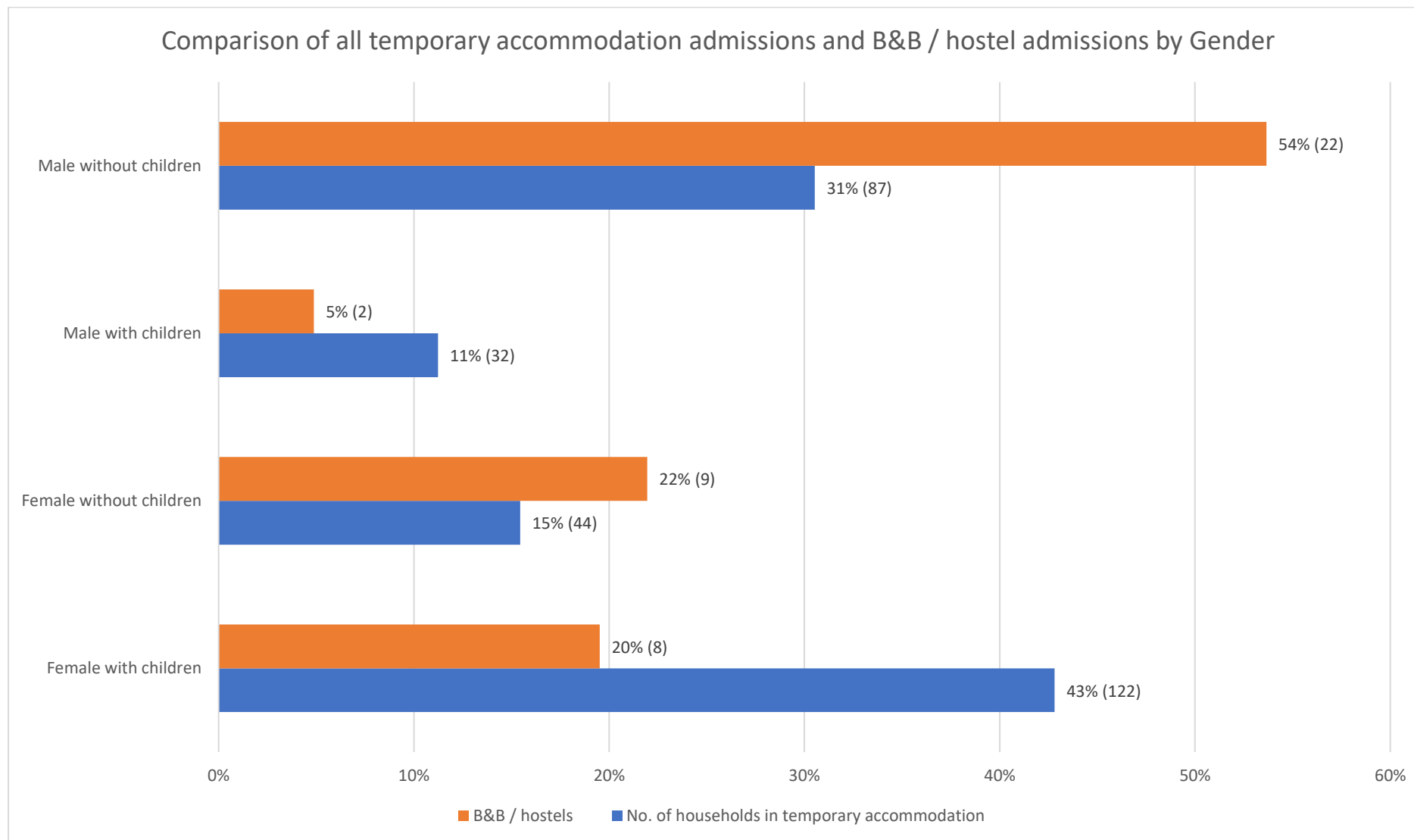
* this does not include households who have arranged temporary accommodation themselves (homeless from home cases)

The white ethnic group is the largest group accommodated (56%) for all temporary accommodation placements, which is below the borough demographic (86%) for this ethnic group. The black ethnic group represents 10% of all households accommodated, which is much larger than the borough demographic as members of the black ethnic group constitute approximately 1.5% of the population. The percentage of households in B&B / hostels between the ethnic groups does not vary much when compared to the total percentage of households in temporary accommodation, although there is a slightly higher percentage of households in the white, Asian ethnic group in a B&B / hostel when compared to the total number of households in temporary accommodation.

Households in Temporary Accommodation by Gender as of 31st March 2021

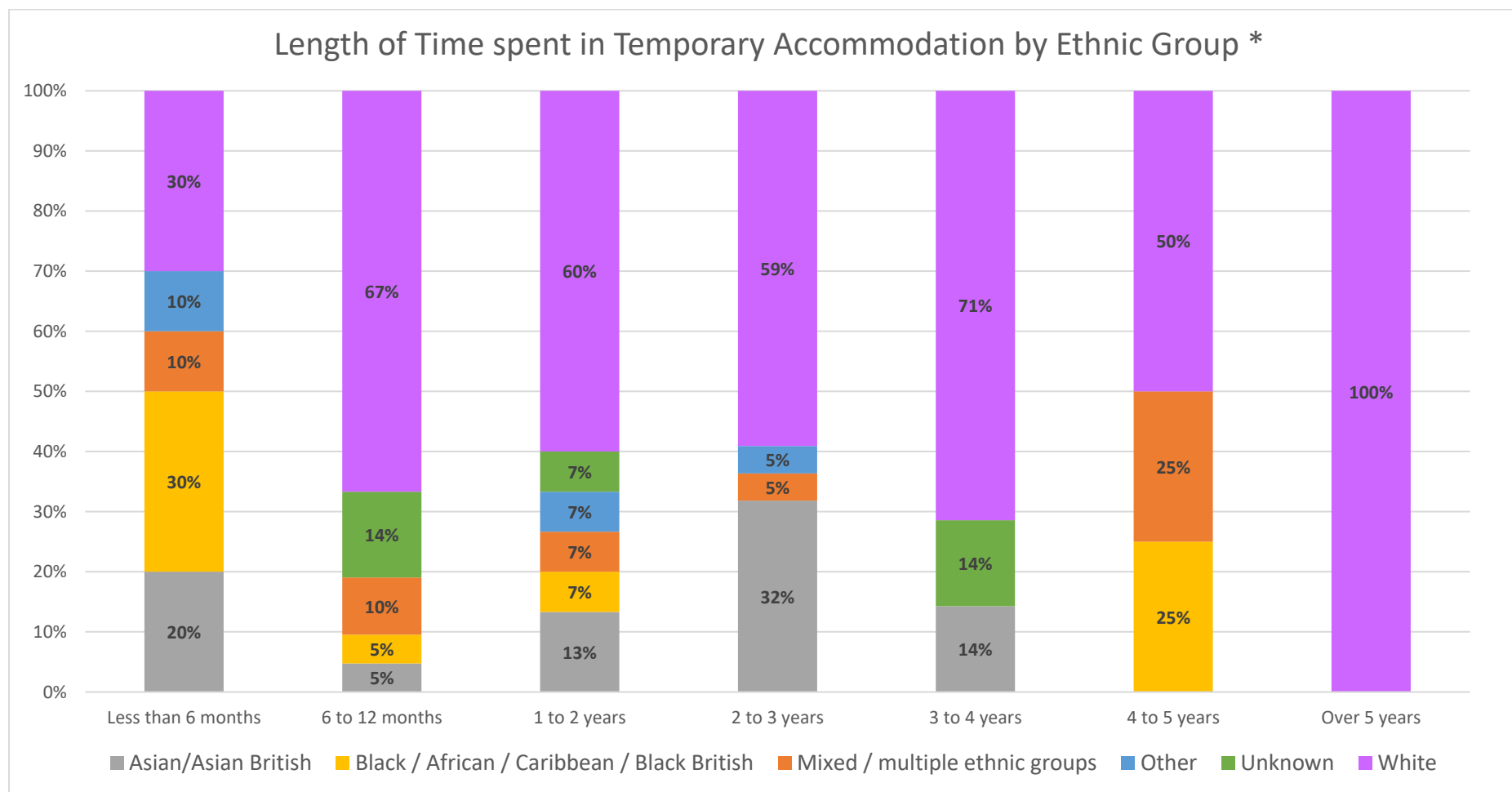
Households in Temporary Accommodation		Female with children	Female without children	Male with children	Male without children	Total	
2020/21	Total no. in temporary accommodation	No.	122	44	32	87	285
	%	%	43%	15%	11%	31%	100%
	B&B / Hostel (not self-contained)	No.	8	9	2	22	41
	%	%	20%	22%	5%	54%	100%

The largest proportion of applicants in any type of temporary accommodation are households with children. The combined total of these groups is 154 households which equates to 55% of all households in temporary accommodation. Below is a graph comparing all temporary accommodation placements to only B&B / hostel temporary accommodation placements.



The largest proportion of applicants accommodated in B&B / hostels that is not self-contained is households without children. A total of 31 households make up this group which equates to 76% of the B&B / hostel placements. This is to be expected since B&B placements are only offered to households with children on a short-term basis if no other accommodation is available.

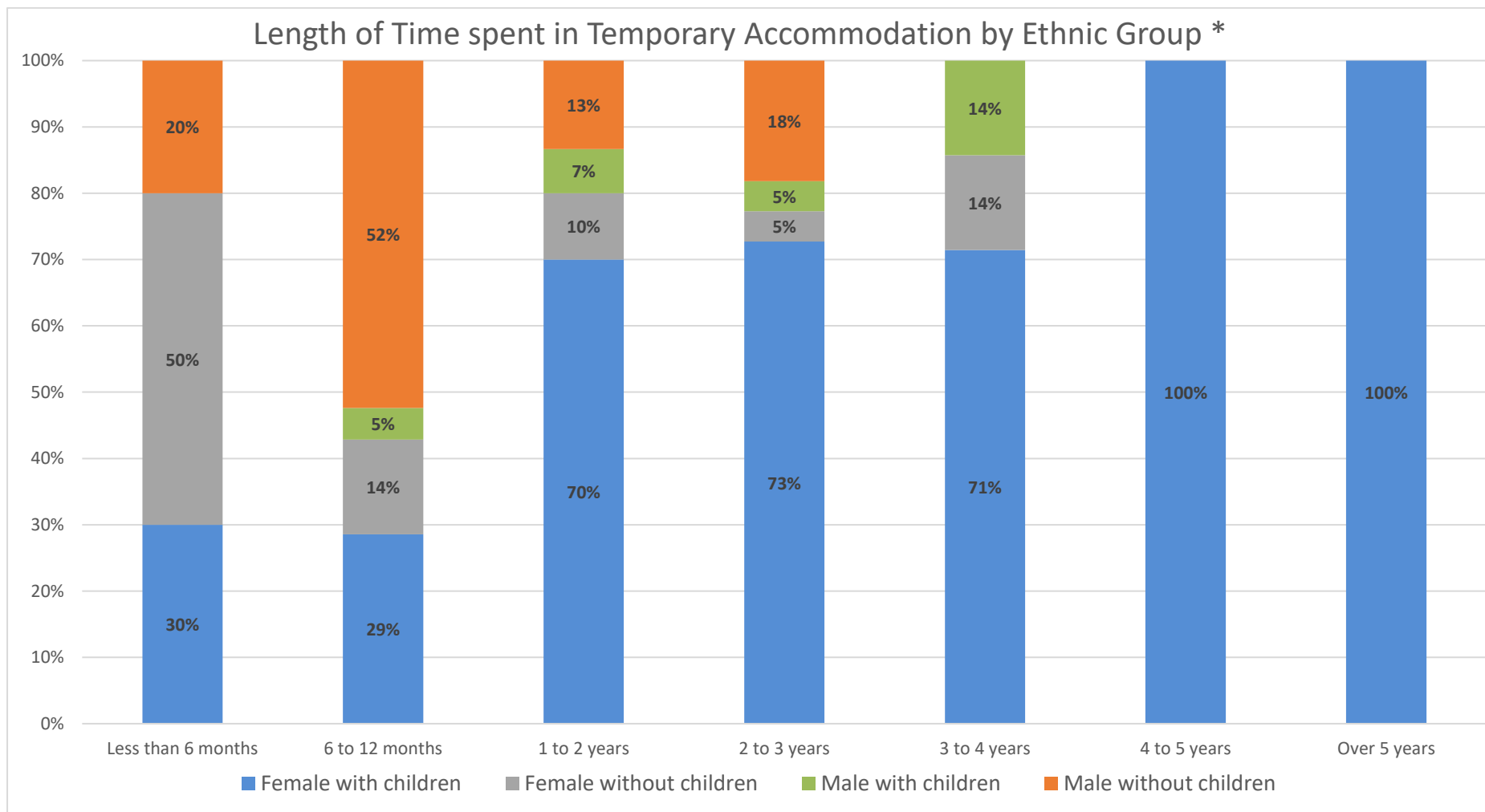
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group



* length of time spent in temporary accommodation is measured from the date a household was admitted into temporary accommodation to the date they left temporary accommodation as a result of being made a final offer of permanent accommodation

The white and black ethnic groups represent the largest groups for the least amount of time spent in temporary accommodation, representing 30% each of those accommodated for less than 6 months. The mixed and black ethnic group each represented 25% of households accommodated for 4 to 5 years, while respectively representing 5% and 10% of all households accommodated. Although the white ethnic group represent 100% of households accommodated for over 5 years, this 100% representation reflects only one household.

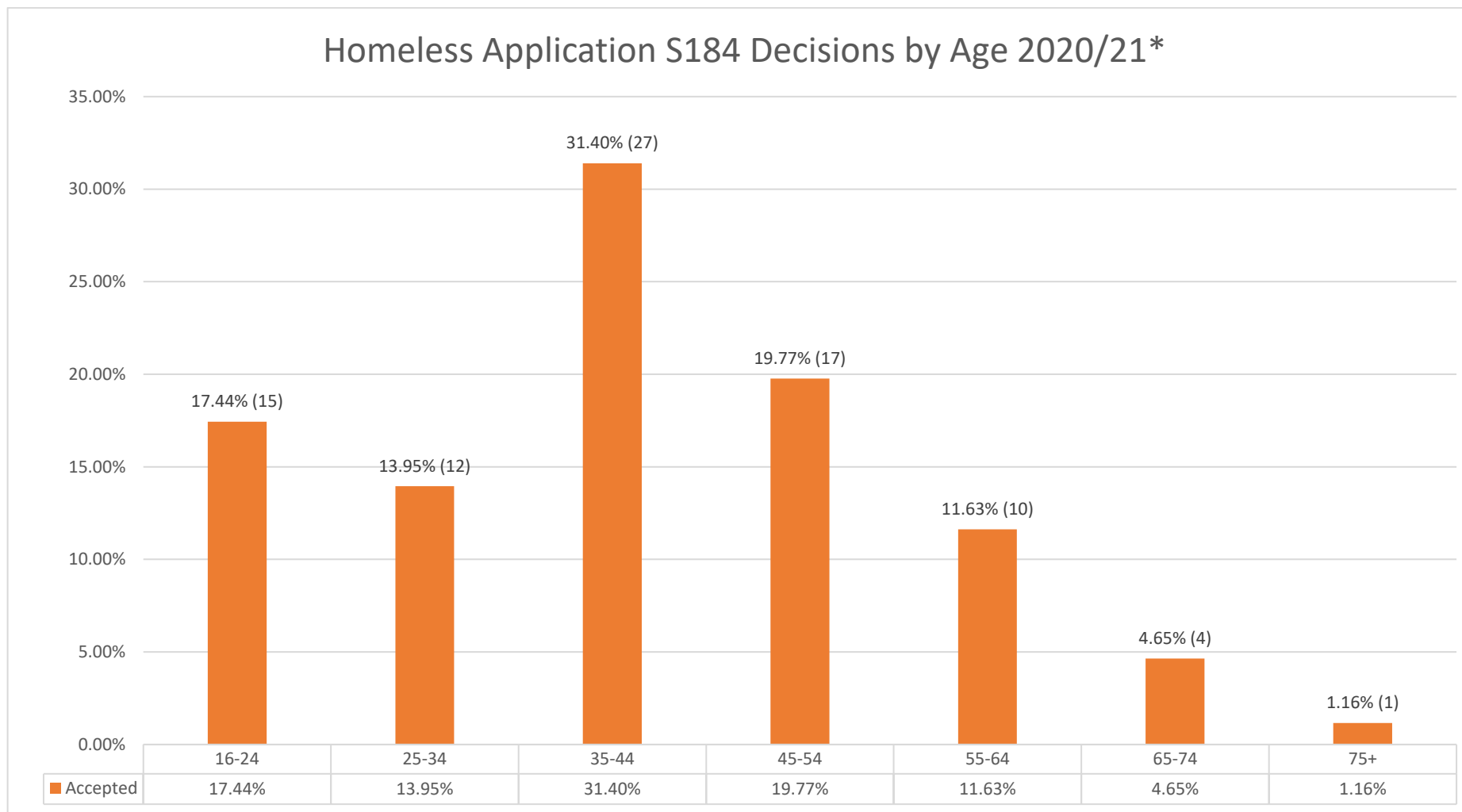
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Gender



* length of time spent in temporary accommodation is measured from the date a household was admitted into temporary accommodation to the date they left temporary accommodation as a result of being made a final offer of permanent accommodation

The group that spent the least amount of time in temporary accommodation were those groups without children, representing over 70% of those applicants accommodated for 6 to 12 months. This is due to these households having more flexibility over permanent placements. Overall, females with children spend the most amount of time in temporary accommodation, which is to be expected considering this is the largest group admitted into temporary accommodation and will often require larger accommodation.

Homeless Decisions by age



*Age of applicant at date of decision notice

The largest percentage of decisions issued were to the 35-44 age group equating to 31.40% of all section 184s served, which is slightly over proportion to the percentage of homeless approaches (23%) for this age group. The age group with the greatest difference was the 25-34 age group, who received 13.95% of all section 184s served while representing 28% of homeless approaches.

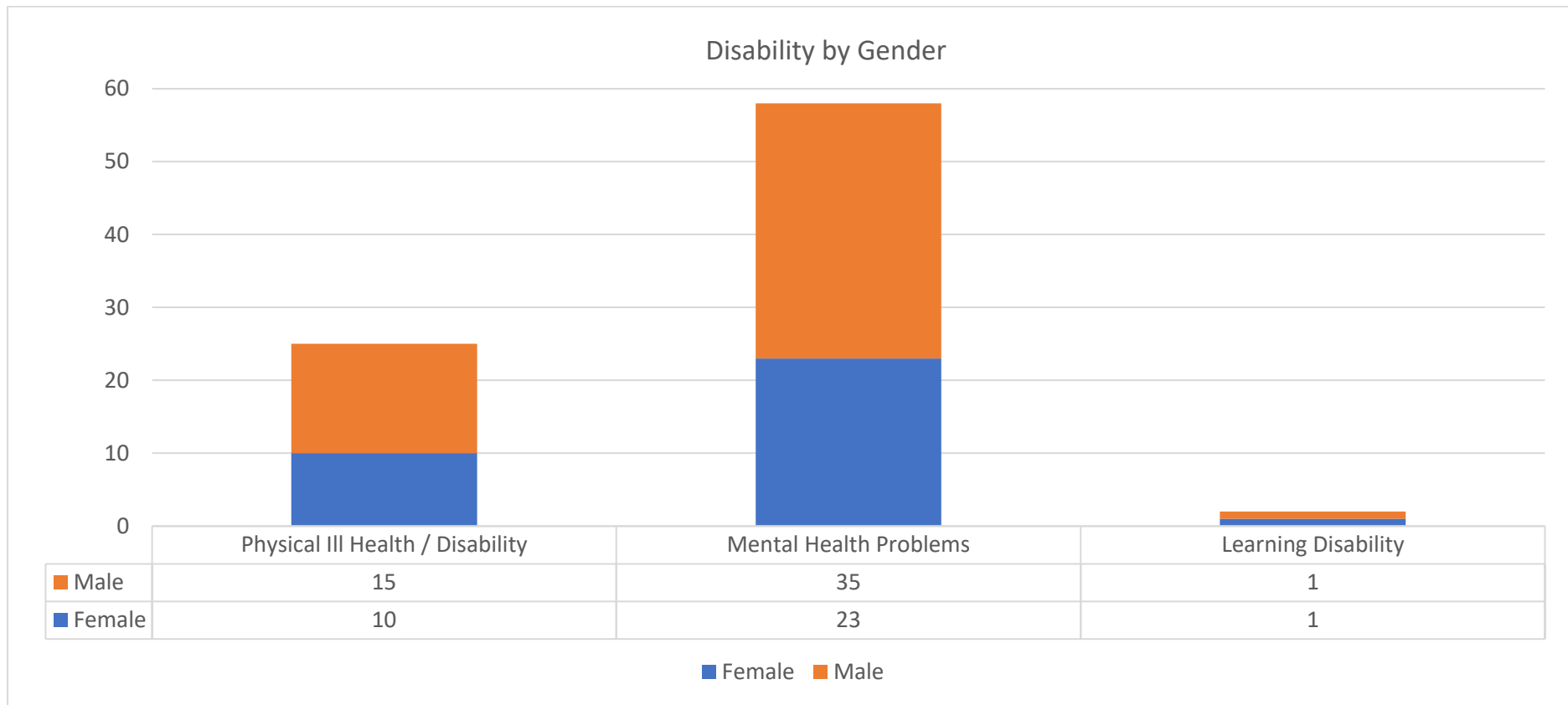
Accepted Housing Duty by Age

Age	Accepted Housing Duty (2019/20)	Percentage of Accepted Cases	Accepted Housing Duty (2020/21)	Percentage of Accepted Cases	Direction of travel
16-24	10	13%	15	17%	↑
25-34	25	31%	12	14%	↓
35-44	22	28%	27	31%	↑
45-54	12	15%	17	20%	↑
55-64	8	10%	10	12%	↑
65-74	2	3%	4	5%	↑
75+	1	1%	1	1%	—
Total	80	100%	86	100%	

The total number of accepted s184 decisions issued in 2019/20 has increased by approximately 7.5% when compared to the previous year. This increase is likely due to negative s.184 decisions being reduced due to the coronavirus pandemic. The only age group to have a decrease in the number of positive s.184 decisions was the 25-34 age group, which represented 31% of positive s.184 decisions in 2019/20 compared 14% during 2020/21. The 35-44 age group were the largest age group with positive s.184 decisions, representing 31% of all households. It should be noted however that the overall number of applicants across the age groups is relatively small, meaning small changes can show greater percentage differences.

Disability

Since the advent of the HRA in April 2018, there has been emphasis on local authorities to identify support needs of applicants' and/or household members. It should be noted that an applicant that has not had a disability identified during the initial HRA assessment may subsequently have a disability identified during the main duty assessment. These have been factored into the tables below.



The most common disability identified is for applicants who are experiencing mental health issues which account for 68% of all disabilities. Learning disability is the lowest identified disability, with 1 male and 1 female identified as having a learning disability.

Disability identified at HRA Assessment and Disability Confirmed at Main Duty

Priority Need Identified at HRA Assessment		Female	Male	Total
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	7	11	18
	%	38.89%	61.11%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	17	29	46
	%	36.96%	63.04%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	0	1	1
	%	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Priority Need Confirmed at Main Duty				
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	3	4	7
	%	42.86%	57.14%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	6	6	12
	%	50.00%	50.00%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	1	0	1
	%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
* not assessed as such at HRA Assessment				

The chart above shows the percentage breakdown of identified disabilities at HRA assessment and confirmed at main duty assessment. The majority of identified disabilities are found within male applicants who represent on average 60% of all identified disabilities. The majority of applicants have their disability identified during the HRA assessment.