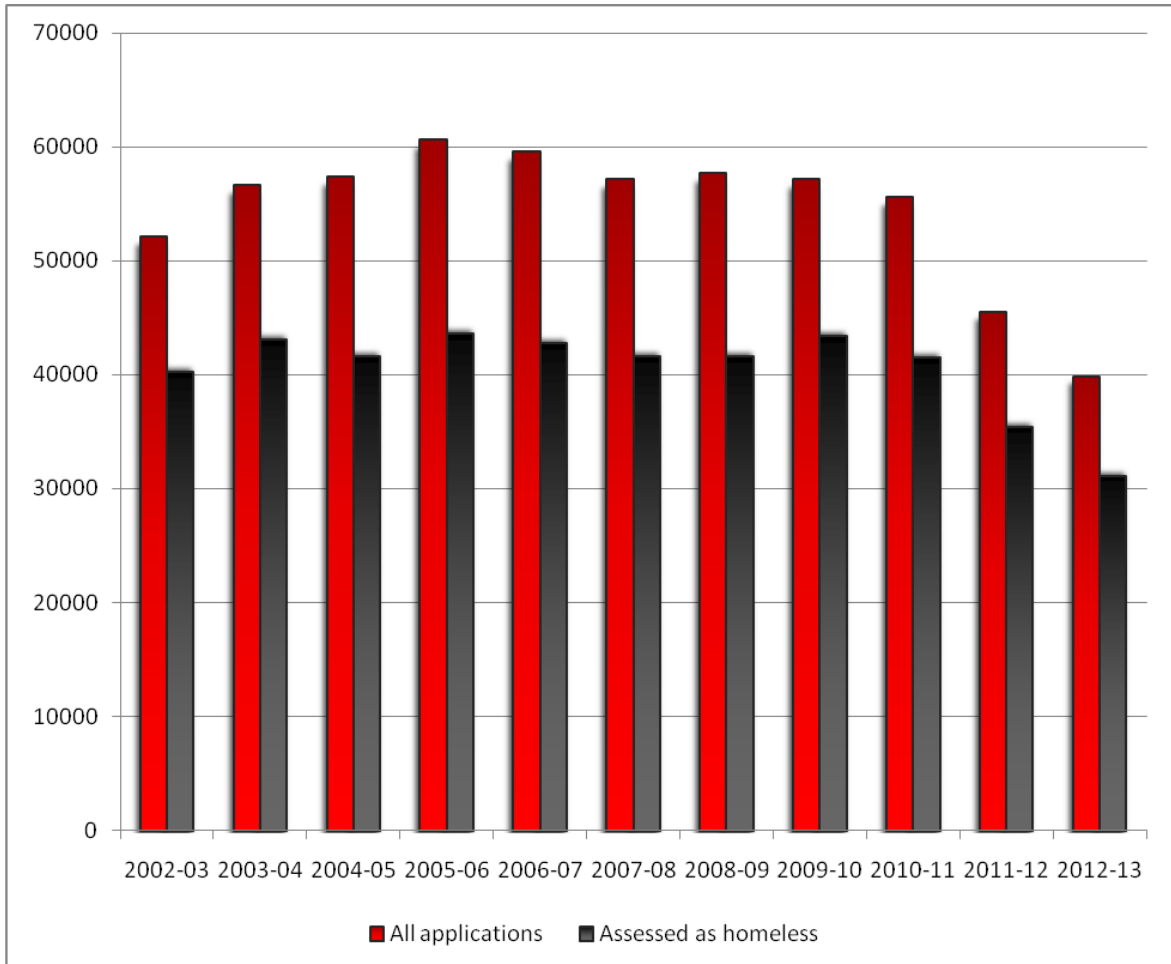


How many people are homeless across Scotland?

Chart 1: Homelessness applications and assessments across the last 10 years, 2002/03 to 2012/13



- Latest figures show that last year (2012/13) 39,827 households made homeless applications to their local authority, with 31,964 being assessed as 'homeless'. This means that 80% of all homeless applications were accepted across Scotland¹. The remaining 20% were deemed to be 'Not homeless' under legislation.

¹ Scottish Government (2013) Operation of Homeless Persons Legislation in Scotland statistics for 2012/13

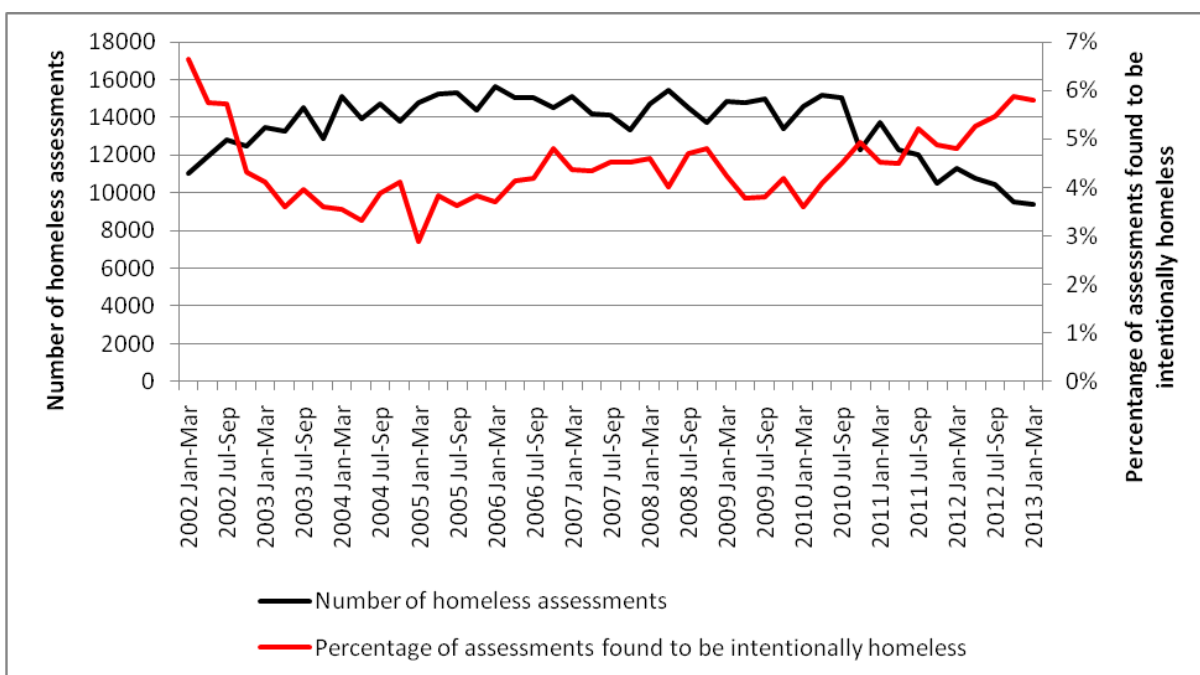
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 introduced specific duties for local authorities towards homeless households. Application numbers reached a peak in 2005/06 at 60,684 before falling in the past 5 years. While it is positive to see that the number of people applying, and being found as, statutorily homeless is falling, it is important to recognise that this is only recorded homelessness and does not show the full picture of those with housing problems.
- Local Authorities have introduced a housing options² model in the last few years to try and prevent homelessness whenever possible. This means that councils are offering a range of options – including formally applying for assistance under homelessness legislation - to respond to households looking for assistance with their housing situation. The recent reduction in applications and assessments is being attributed to this changing practice. From April 2014, a mandatory data collection system, PREVENT1, will be in place, meaning that, from that date all households who approach local authorities with a housing issue will be recorded.
- The annual homelessness data published in August 2013 is the first set of homelessness data that has been published for 2013 (January to March), i.e. the first set of data since the removal of the priority need test³. Up until the end of 2012, people applying to their local authority as homeless were assessed according to whether they had a 'priority need', for example whether they had dependent children. From 1st January 2013, *all* unintentionally homeless people have the right to settled accommodation. At this stage it would be difficult to draw any conclusions about the impact of this legislation in the short or long term but future data sets may show some changes to those applying and being assessed as homeless.

² Shelter Scotland (2013) What are my options: Delivering a person centred housing and homelessness advice service in Scotland

http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_library/policy_library_folder/what_are_my_options_delivery_a_person_centred_housing_and_homelessness_advice_service_in_scotland

³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/homeless/activity>

Chart 2: Proportion of households found to be ‘intentionally’ homeless, 2002-2013

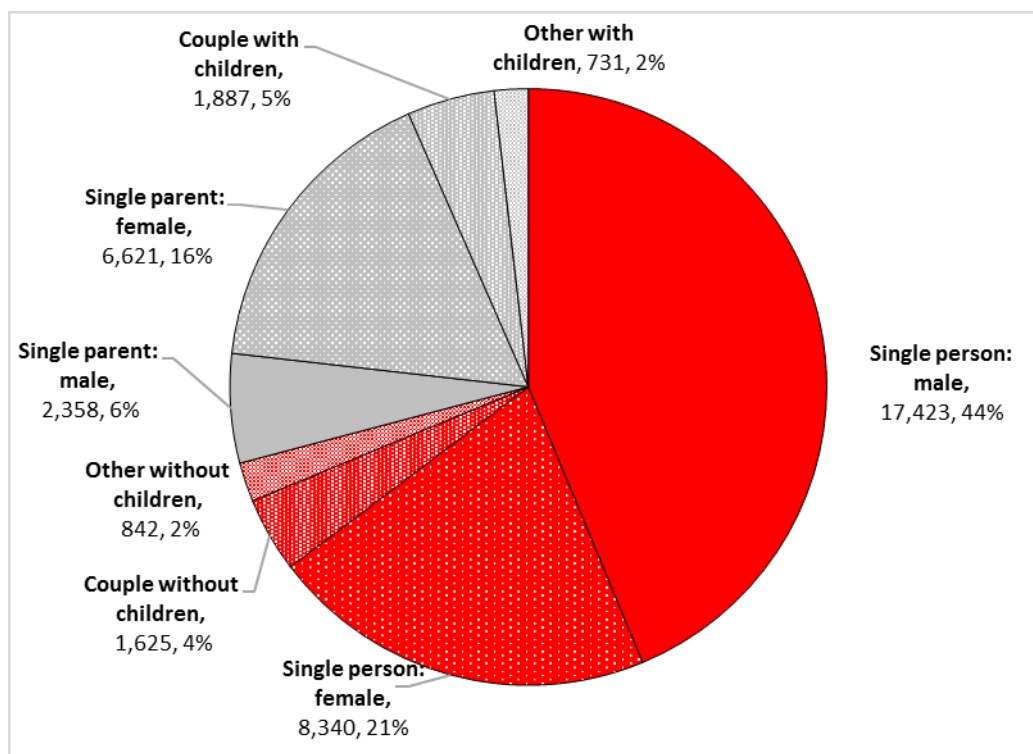


- The number of households assessed as ‘intentionally’ homeless (and therefore not qualifying for statutory local authority assistance) is rising⁴. Most recent figures, covering the period January to March 2013 show that 439 households were assessed as intentionally homeless, which represents 6% of all households assessed as homeless. This proportion has doubled since the same period in 2005.

⁴ Intentionality is defined within Section 26 of the [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 1987](#). A person is intentionally homeless if he/ she deliberately did or failed to do anything which led to the loss of accommodation which it was reasonable for him/ her to continue to occupy.

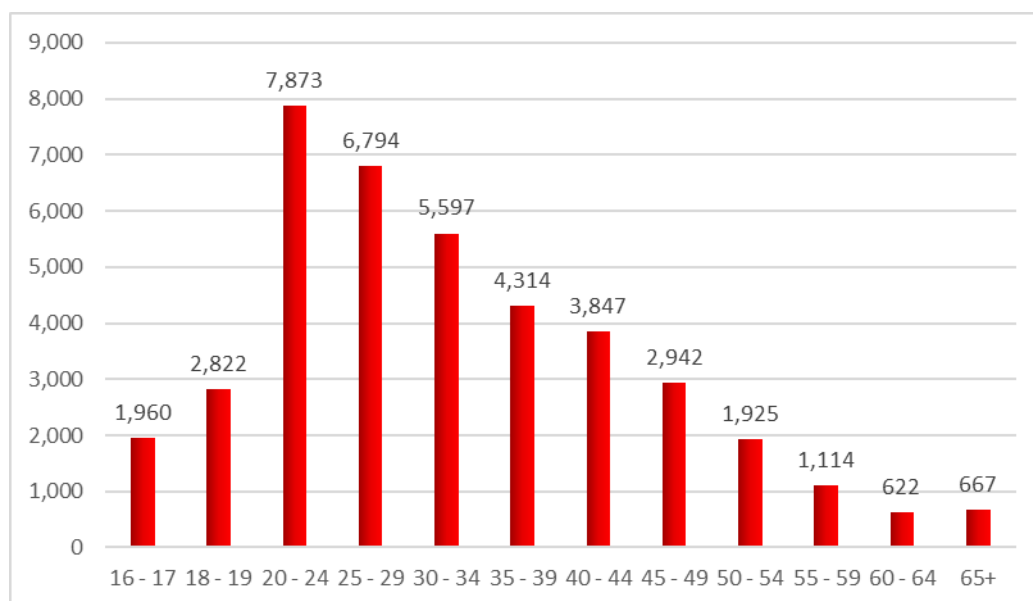
Who is homeless in Scotland?

Chart 3: Homeless applicants by household type, 2012/13



- This chart shows that the vast majority of households applying as homeless (65%) are single people and within this, the largest group is single males who represented 17,423 (44%) of all homeless applications.
- A total of 11,597 (29%) of households who made homeless applications in the last year have children. Within this group, over half (57%) are households headed by single females.

Chart 4: Homeless applications by age, 2012/13

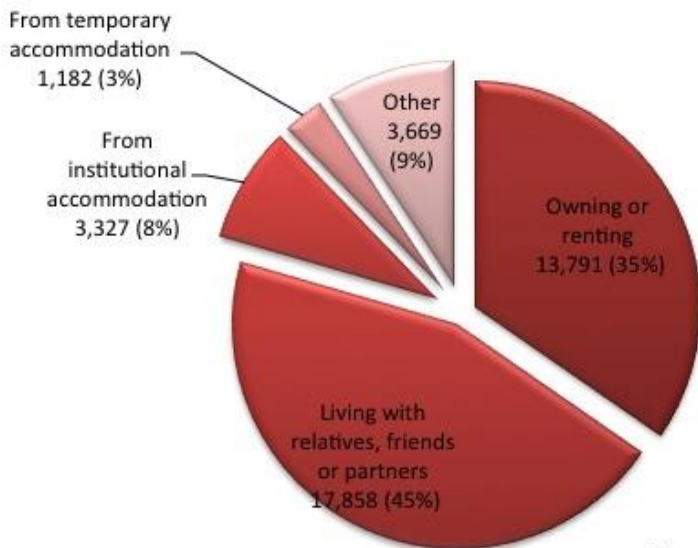


- Chart 4 shows that younger people, aged 16-34 years, make up 62% of all homeless applications.
- Young people in the age group 16-24 are vastly over represented in the homeless population. They represent 32 per cent of all homeless households but only four per cent of all households in Scotland are headed by a young person under 25⁵.
- The smallest group is those aged 65 years and over who represent 1.7 % of all homeless applications but 17% of the population⁶.
- The trends in age of homeless applicants have remained similar over the last ten years.

⁵ SCROL (2001) S05 Age of Household Reference Person (HRP) by sex and living arrangements.

⁶ Scotland Census (2011) <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/en/>

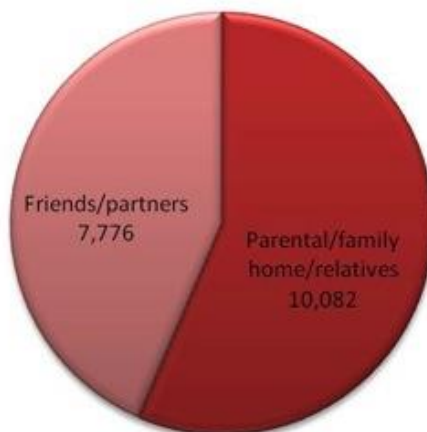
What are the previous circumstances of homeless applicants?



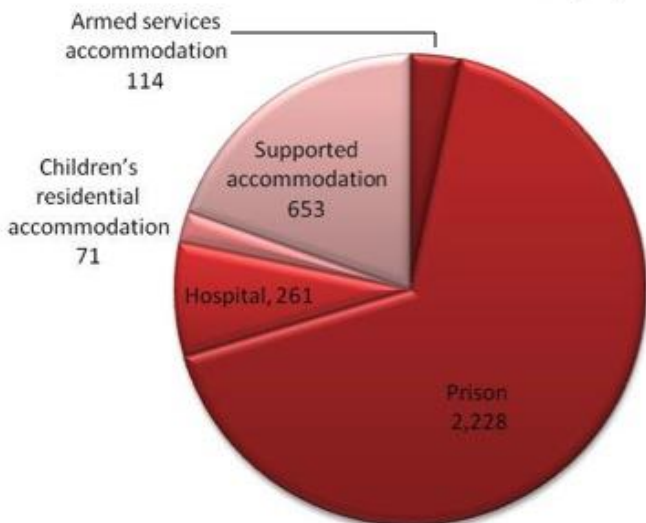
Owning or Renting - Breakdown of Tenure (35%)



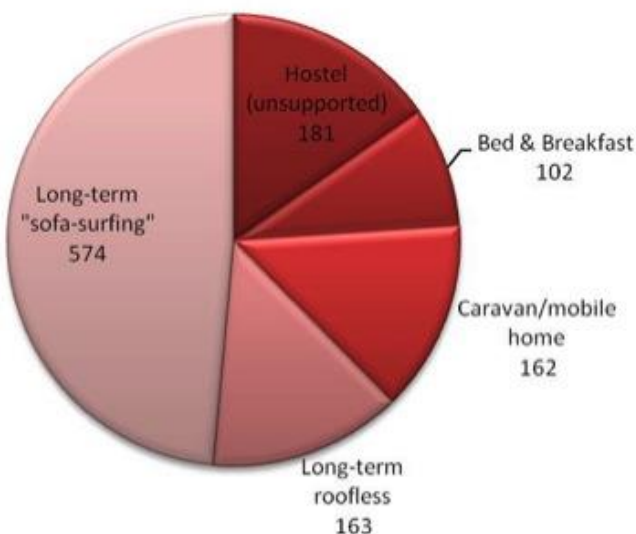
Lived with family or partners (45%)



From Institutional Accommodation (8%)



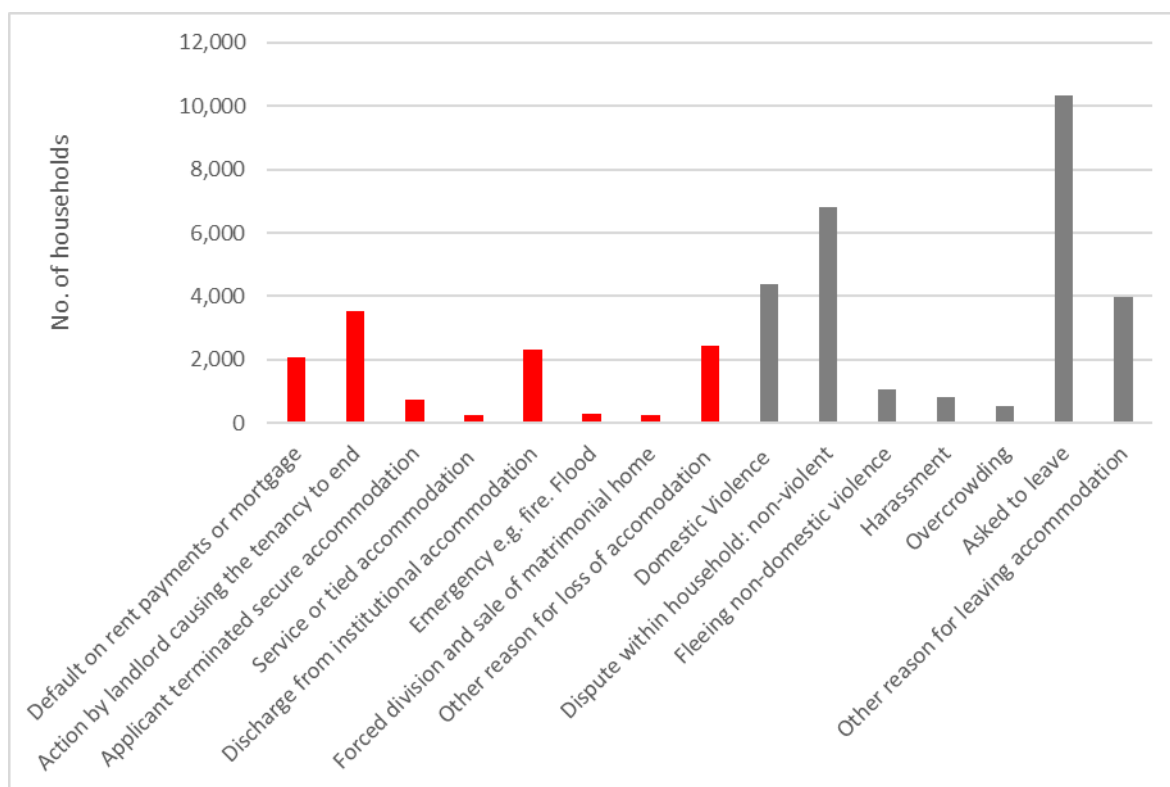
From Temporary Accommodation (3%)



- The above diagrams show the previous housing circumstances of those who applied as homeless in the year 2012/13. The top pie chart shows the main groupings of where applicants previously lived, with the pie charts below giving further detail of each category.
- **Living with relatives, friends and partners**
 - Of those who applied as homeless, the largest proportion of applicants (17,858 or 45%) previously lived with families, relatives or partners highlighting the effect of relationship breakdown on a housing situation.
 - Of those, the largest proportion, 10,082, were previously living with their parents or relatives, with 7,776 with a friend or partner.
- **Owning Or Renting**
 - Of the 13,791 who were previously in their own or rented home before applying as homeless, the largest proportion (49%) came from the private rented sector. 4,764 applicants were previously in the social rented sector, renting from housing associations or local authorities.
- **From institutional accommodation**
 - A total of 3,327 applications were from those who have been in prison, hospital, young people's care, the armed services or other supported accommodation immediately before making an application.
 - The high number (2,228) from prison is of particular concern in terms of future stability and possible reoffending. Prisoners who have problems with both employment and accommodation on release from prison have a reoffending rate of 74% during the year after custody, compared to 43% for those without these issues.⁷
- **From Temporary Accommodation**
 - Of the 1,182 who had previously been in temporary accommodation before being assessed as homeless, almost half (574) had been long term 'sofa surfing', with others in unsupported hostels (181), long term roofless (163), caravan/mobile home (162) and bed and breakfasts (102).

⁷ Ministry of Justice (2008) Factors linked to reoffending: a one-year report
<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/FactfileJune2012.pdf>

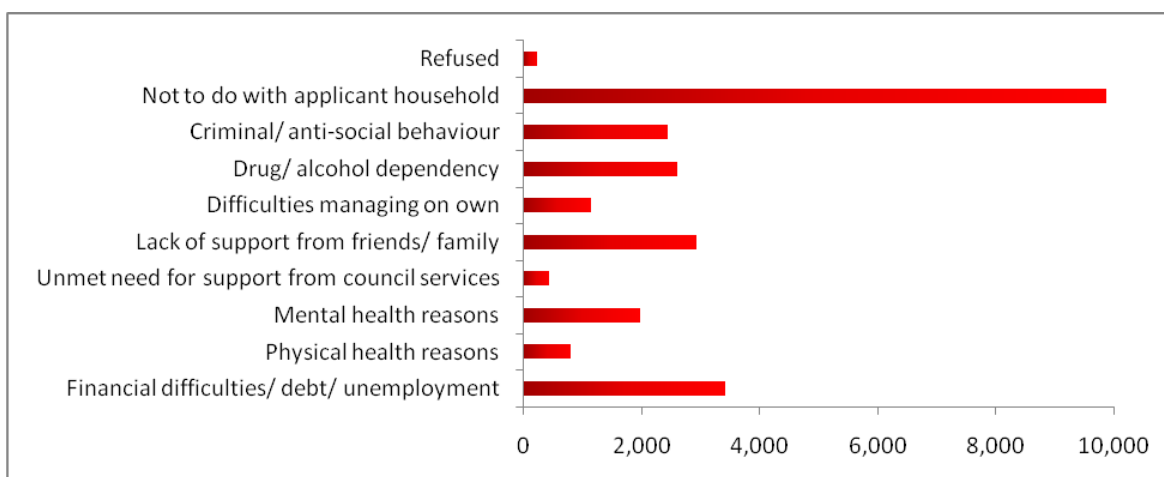
Chart 6: Main reasons for becoming homeless, 2012/13



■ Accommodation no longer available
 ■ Left accommodation

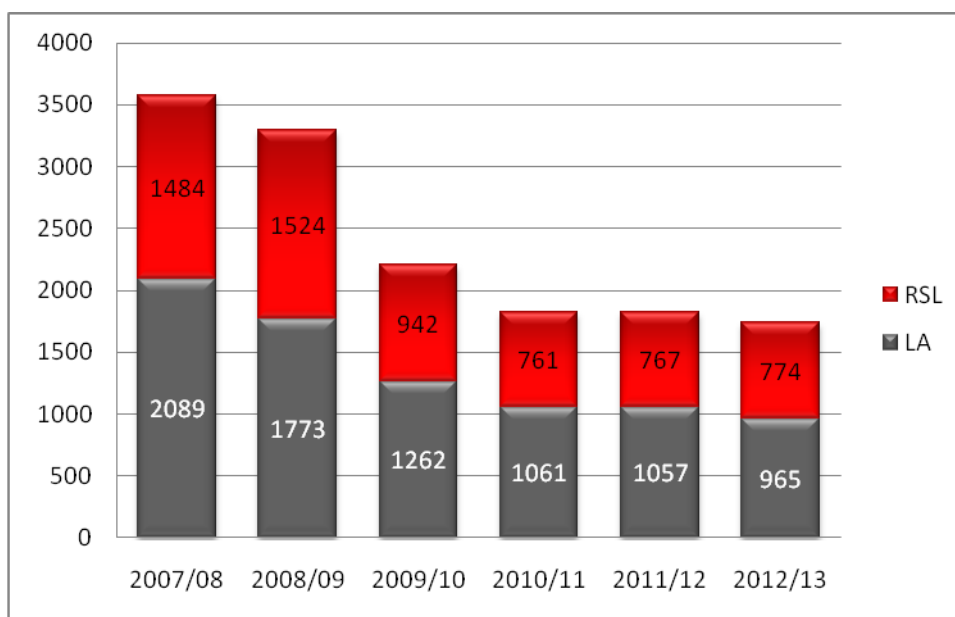
- Chart 6 shows the main reasons for households applying as homeless in the year 2012/13.
- Looking at people who left their accommodation, the main reason cited was ‘being asked to leave’, with 26% of applicants stating this as their reason for their primary reason for becoming homeless.
- 28% of applicants stated that they left their accommodation due to disputes with the household, 4,392 of these were violent or abusive disputes.
- The reasons for becoming homeless differ between previous tenancy types, for example for those leaving the private rented sector, 40% of tenants left due to ‘other action of landlord’ likely to be the termination of a short assured tenancy. For those in the social rented sector, this was reason much smaller at 8% reflecting the different security in each tenure.

Chart 7: Secondary reasons for failing to maintain accommodation, 2012/13



- Half of all the applicants responded to a question looking at secondary reasons why they failed to stay in their previous accommodation. Half of these, almost 10,000 applicants, responded that the reason for leaving the household was outwith their control e.g. the landlord selling the property, harassment or other circumstances to do with others in the previous household.
- With the recent recession and the impact of Welfare Reforms, the number of people who cited financial difficulties, debt and unemployment as the reason they failed to maintain their accommodation, is not surprising. It is possible that we will see these factors increasing in future statistical releases.
- For those who own their own homes, official repossession figures are not published in Scotland, however the most recent homelessness figures show an increase of 75 applications (16%) for those applying as homeless due to a default on their mortgage. This is against the trend of falling numbers in general for those applying as homeless, highlighting the increasing prominence of the issue.

Chart 8: Number of social sector evictions, 2007/08 – 2012/13 ⁸



- There has been ongoing work across policy and practice to reduce social sector evictions as a result of rent arrears and as chart 8 shows, evictions by local authorities (LAs) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have declined by 51% in the last 5 years.
- Shelter Scotland monitors eviction trends in further detail in our series of reports tracking social sector evictions across Scotland⁹.
- With the changes around housing benefit however, there is serious concern that evictions for rent arrears could increase with the potential for subsequent homelessness risk.

⁸ Housing Statistics for Scotland (2013)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/Evictions>

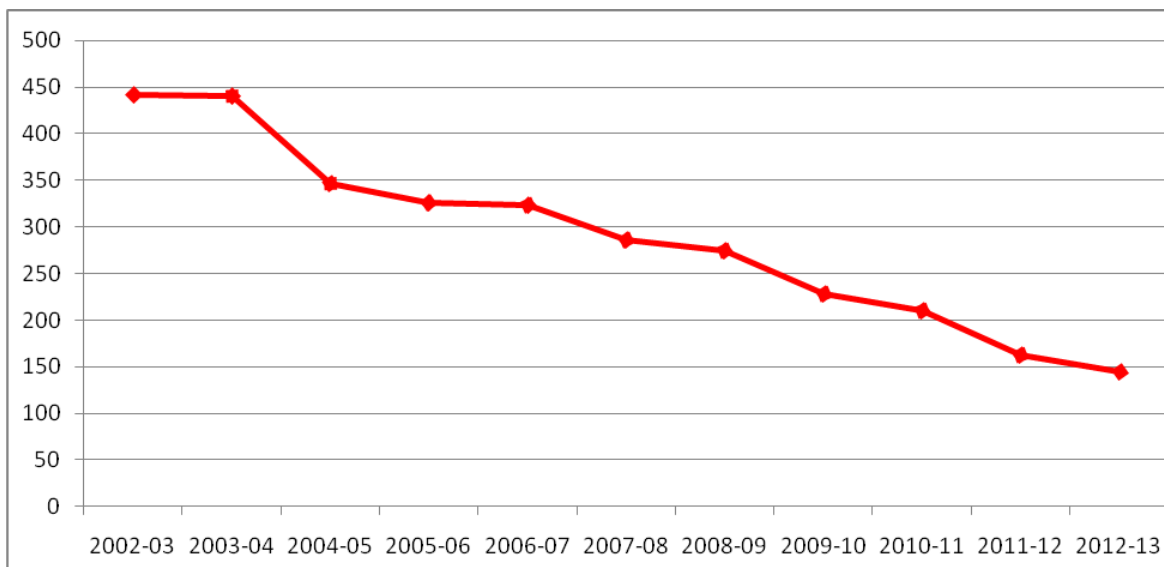
Scottish Housing Regulator RSL Annual Statistical return (2013)

<http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/publications/performance-tables-%E2%80%93-rent-arrears>

⁹Shelter Scotland (2013) Evictions by Social Landlords in Scotland 2011-12

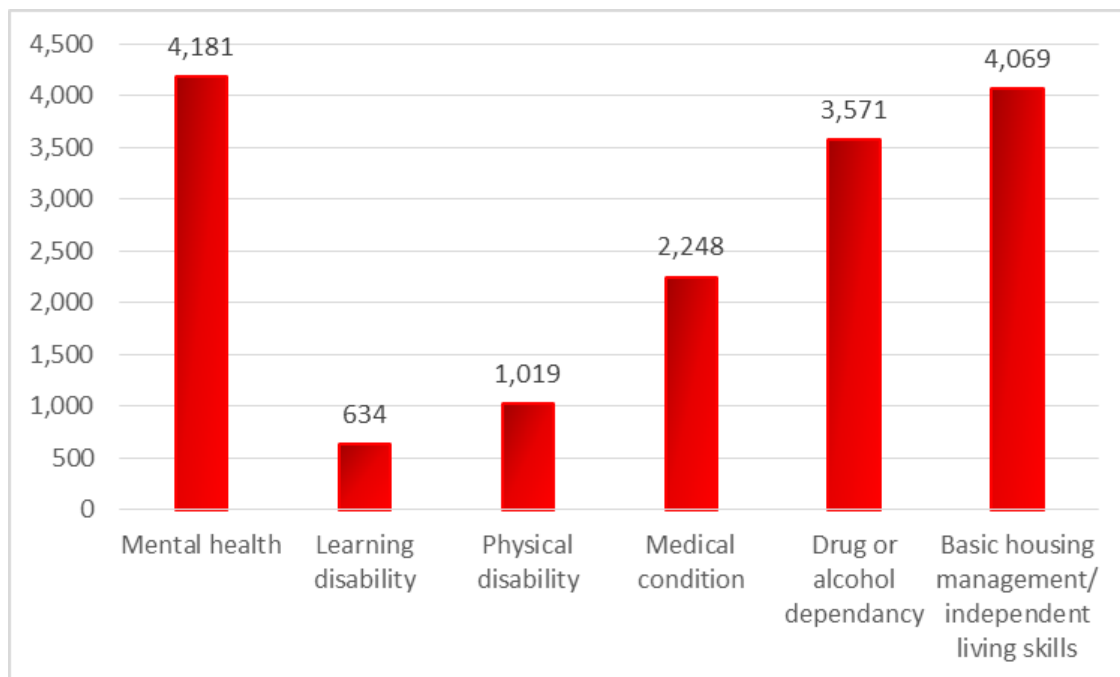
http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_library/policy_library_folder/evictions_b_social_landlords_in_scotland_2011-2012

Chart 9: Homeless applicants who slept rough the night before going to the council, 2002/03 to 2012/13



- Chart 9 shows the average number of people a month for each year who stated they slept rough the night before applying as homeless. This indicates a decline in rough sleeping across the last ten years. This is a statistical indicator of a specific incident of rough sleeping, but it does not show the whole picture. The actual numbers of people sleeping rough could be higher since these statistics only capture the group who are engaging with statutory homeless services and slept rough directly preceding their application.
- There is very limited data available on rough sleepers as there are no official counts in Scotland. There is work ongoing to address this in some council areas, however by its nature, counting rough sleeping accurately is very difficult to do.
- Another group who are not officially recorded are the ‘hidden homeless’. This includes rough sleepers, but also, for example, those who are long term ‘sofa surfing’ who do not approach their local authority or other services for assistance and therefore do not appear in official statistics.

Chart 10: Support needs of homeless households, 2012/13

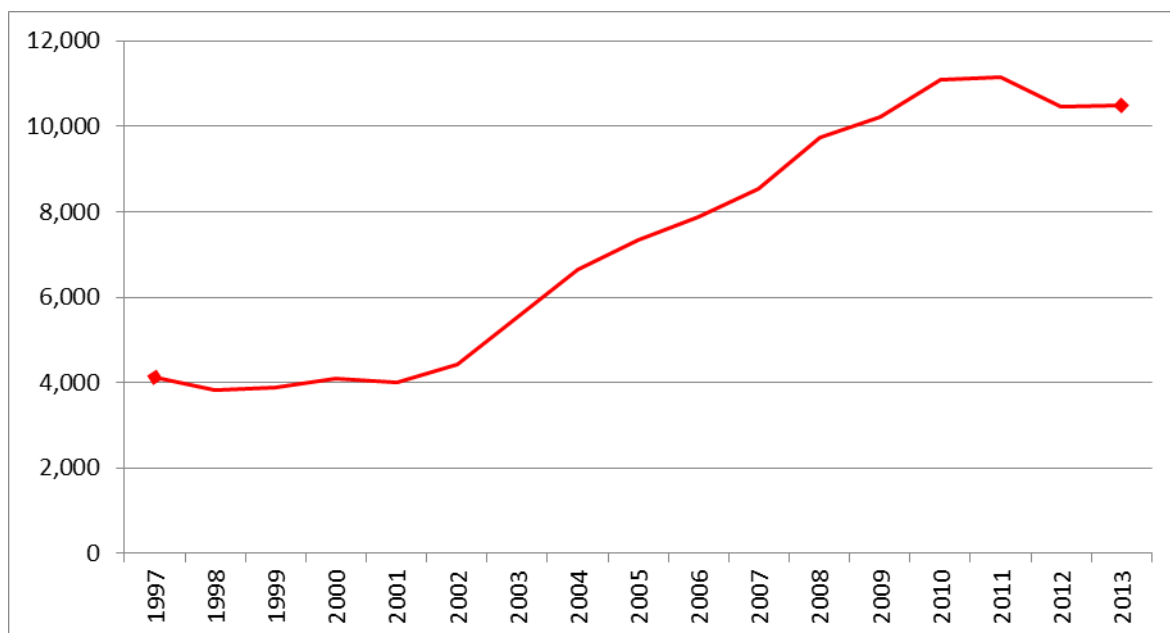


- Of the 31,964 applications assessed in 2012/13, 10, 830 were found to have one or more support needs.
- The two main support needs identified amongst this group are: basic housing management and independent living skills, and support with mental health problems.
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 made it a duty for local authorities to provide housing support and advice to all homeless applicants¹⁰. This came into force on 1st June 2013 and therefore the data for this has not been published. The first publication of these statistics will be released in January with the existing statistics monitoring for the Operation of Homeless Persons Legislation in Scotland.

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2013) Guidance for local authorities on their support duty
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/3279/0>

Temporary Accommodation

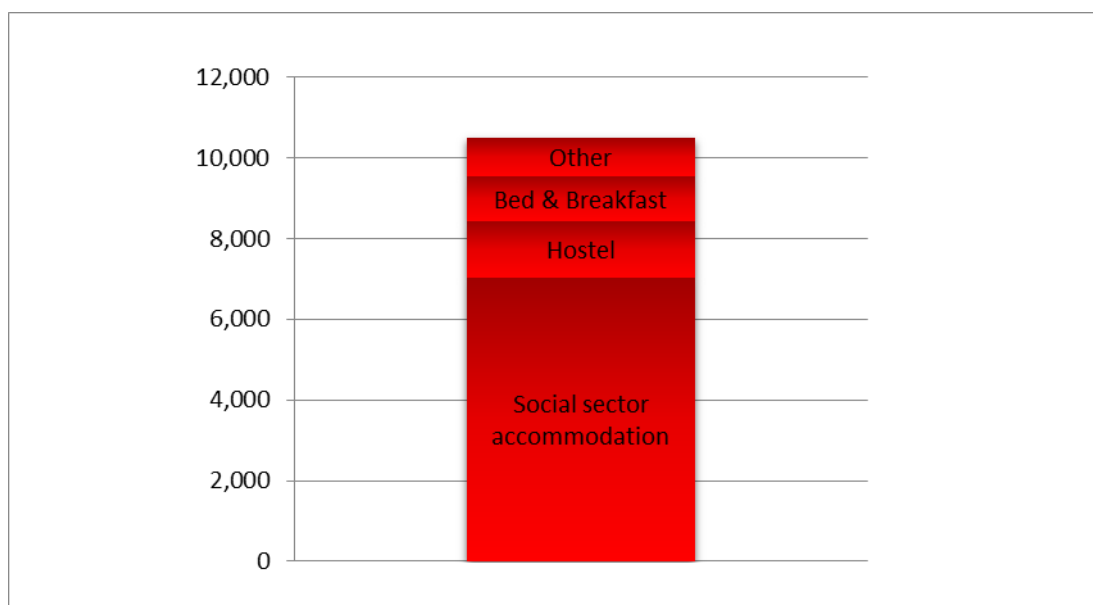
Chart 11: Numbers of households in temporary accommodation, 1997-2013



- Table 11 shows the growth in the use of temporary housing for homeless households over the past 18 years. This rise is partly because of expanded duties to homeless households but also as a result of ‘bottlenecking’ because of the lack of availability of permanent housing. This has meant an increasing reliance on temporary accommodation, particularly in the last ten years. The tailing off in the last three years can be explained by the fall in those assessed as homeless in the last four years.
- Temporary accommodation should be offered to a homeless applicant while their application is being assessed if they have nowhere to stay¹¹.
- This increasing reliance on temporary accommodation is concerning given the insecurity and lack of consistent standards in the housing type, and the considerable cost to local authorities.

¹¹ The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 amended the 1987 Act requiring all local authorities to provide temporary accommodation to all homeless applicants while permanent accommodation is found. In the case of non priority need cases, information and assistance was provided to help secure permanent accommodation, however with the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 removed the priority need distinction, meaning that all unintentional homeless households, since 1st January 2013, have the right to permanent accommodation.

Chart 12: Types of temporary accommodation resided in, 2013



- There are currently 10,494 households in temporary accommodation which includes 4,574 children¹². 67% of this temporary accommodation is in social sector housing, with the remainder in hostels, bed and breakfasts and other accommodation, mainly from private landlords.
- There is currently no data published on the length of time people are staying in temporary accommodation. However the new Social Housing Charter¹³ stipulates that local authorities should report to the Scottish Housing Regulator on how long households are in temporary accommodation, therefore data will be available later next year. With the increasing shortage of housing stock (see Fig 17) however, it is probable that some people are spending longer periods in temporary accommodation.

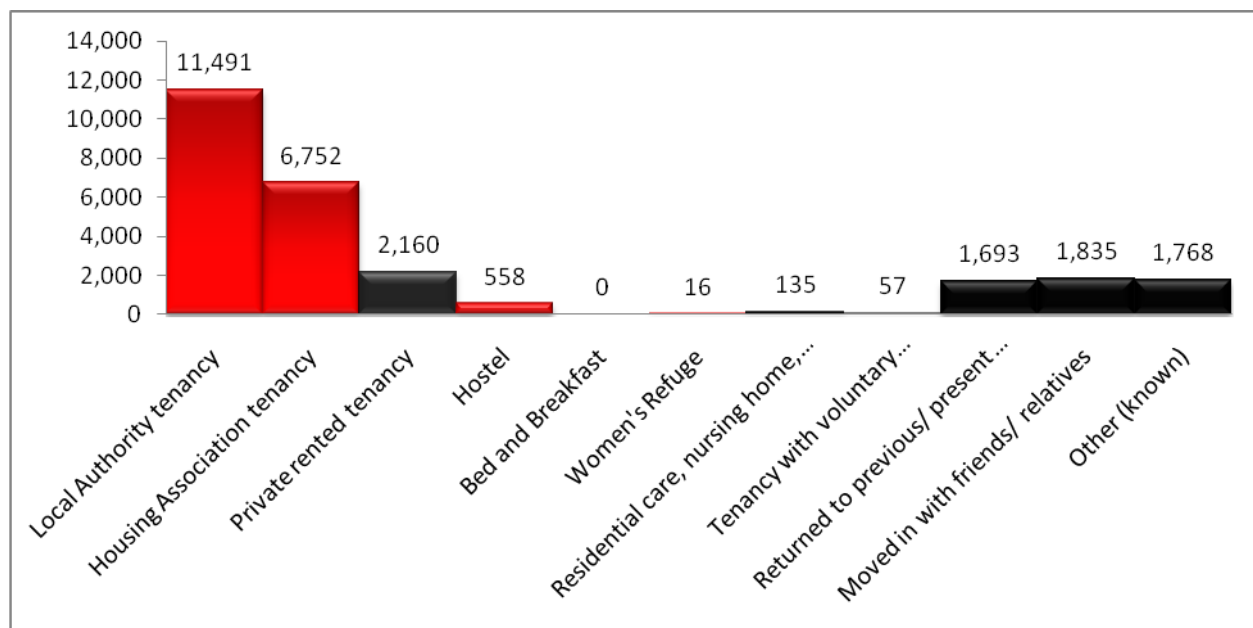
¹² This figure is a snapshot figure which shows the number of children in temporary accommodation, as at 31st June 2013.

¹³ <http://housingcharter.scotland.gov.uk/>

Outcomes

It is critical for the delivery of effective homeless services that households assessed as homeless end up with a positive housing outcome which is affordable and sustainable.

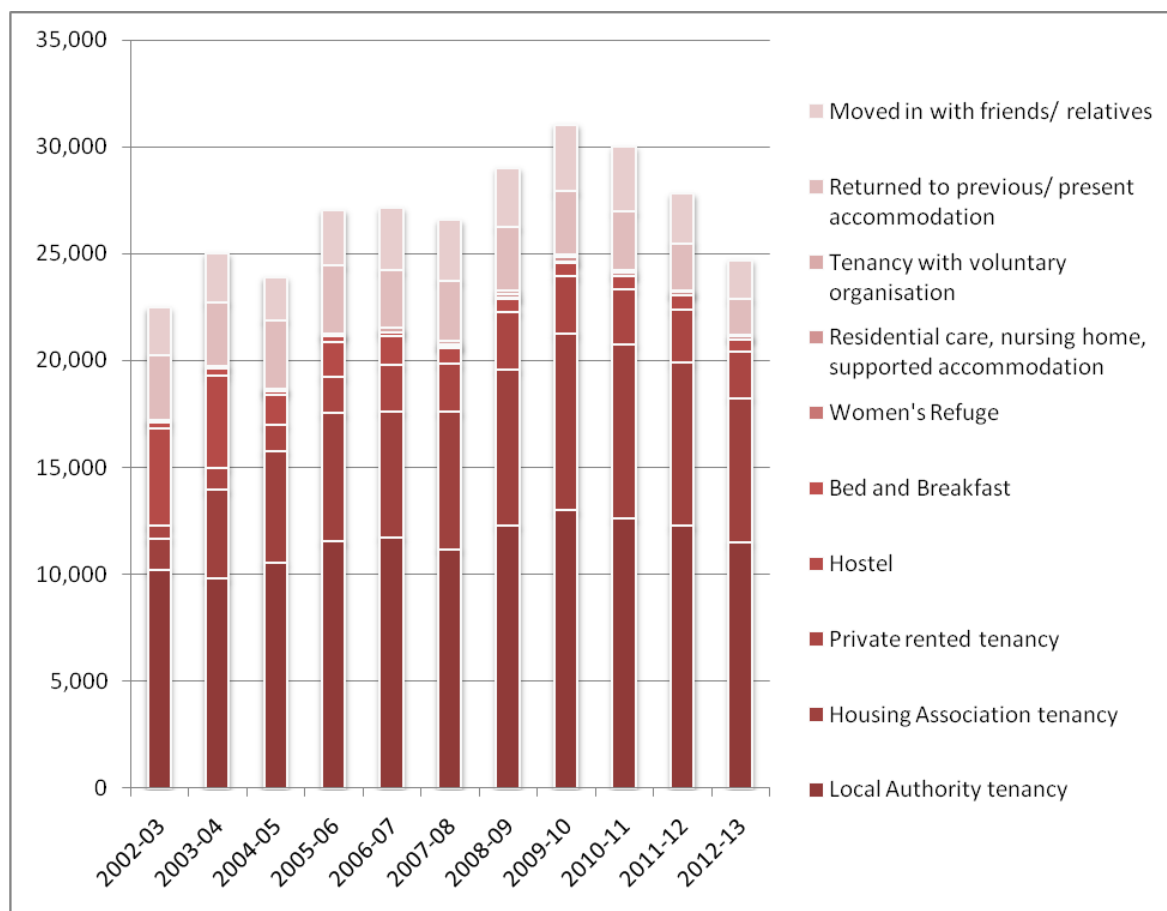
Chart 13: Outcome of those assessed as homeless, 2012/13



- The vast majority (69%) of homeless applicants go into social sector tenancies, either local authority or housing association.
- Over 2,000 (7.6%) households moved into the private rented sector last year. As illustrated in chart 11, this number has increased over the last 10 years.
- 1,835 (6.5%) moved in with either friends or relatives and 1,693 (6%) returned to their previous accommodation.
- Repeat homelessness remains an issue with 5.5% of homeless applicants applying again within a year of the initial assessment¹⁴. This rate has remained around the same for the last 4 years. This illustrates the need for good support throughout and after the homelessness process to ensure that permanent housing, whether that be a new tenancy or living with family or friends, is maintained.

¹⁴ A repeat homelessness assessment occurs where the applicant household must (1) be assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in both applications; (2) the previous case must have been closed within 12 months of the current assessment and; (3) the adults and family circumstances also need to be the same in both applications.

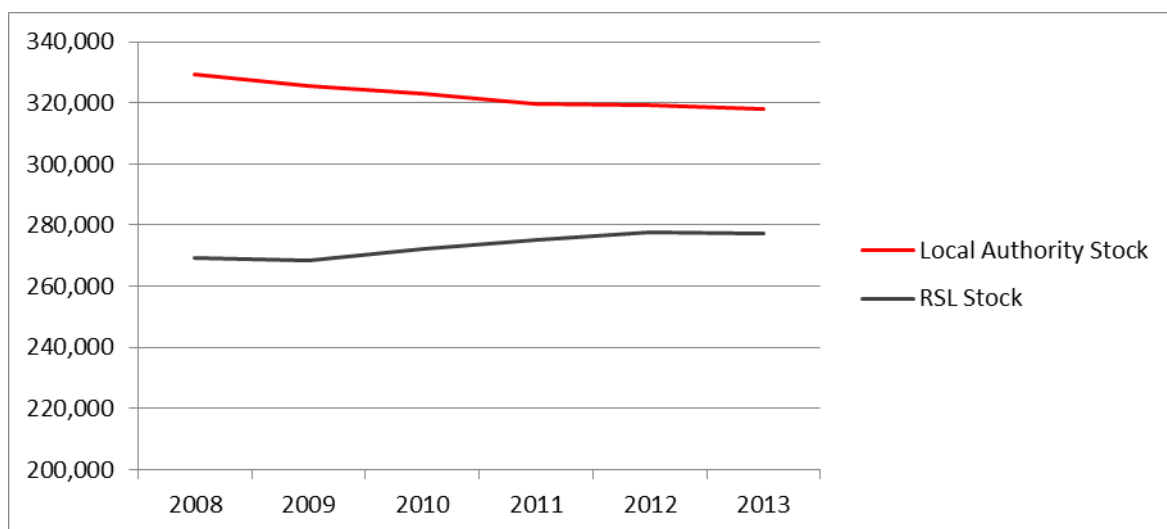
Chart 14: Outcomes of those assessed as homeless over a ten year period, 2002/03 to 2012/13



- Over the period 2002/03 to 2012/13 the reliance on the private rented sector for homeless households has increased by more than two and a half times, from 595 to 2,160 households a year. Across the whole population, the numbers in private rented tenancies has increased from 6% to 11% from 2001 to 2011¹⁵.
- Housing associations are playing an increasingly significant role in the provision of permanent tenancies for homeless households. This partially reflects the level of stock transfer from local authorities over this time period.

¹⁵ Scottish Household Survey (2012) House Tenures

Chart 15: Social sector stock in Scotland, 2012/13¹⁶



- There is currently a total social sector stock of almost 600,000, made up of 318,160 (53%) local authority properties¹⁷ and 277,379 (47%) housing association properties¹⁸. Chart 12 shows that housing association stock is increasingly contributing to the total social sector stock across Scotland.
- The proportion of housing stock owned by housing associations increased significantly following the transfer of housing from local authorities from 2002 onwards. Glasgow, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Inverclyde, Scottish Borders and Western Isles have transferred all their stock to housing associations, so there is now no council owned stock in these areas.

¹⁶ Data for RSL stock has not yet been published for 2013

¹⁷ Scottish Government (2013) Housing Statistics for Scotland: Public Authority Stock

¹⁸ Scottish Housing Regulator (2013) Performance Tables – Stock

Figure 16: Source of new social sector tenant lets, 2012/13

	Local Authority	RSLs	All Social Sector Stock
Total Lets in a year	27, 263	27,100	54,363
Proportion to Homeless Households	11,445 (42%)	6,882 (25%)	34%
Proportion from Waiting Lists	9,774 (36%)	12,496 (46%)	41%

- As figure 16 shows, lets to homeless households make up 34% of social sector lets each year with a larger proportion of all allocations coming from all social sector waiting lists.
- Proportionality, local authorities are letting to a greater number of homeless households (42%), whereas housing associations currently let 25% to households who are homeless.

Scotland's housing supply

Figure 17: Factors affecting the demand and supply of housing – comparing now and ten years ago¹⁹.

Demand			
Local Authority waiting lists	101, 400 (2003)	155,100 (2013)	Up 53%
Population	5,062,011 (2001)	5,295,400 (2011)	Up 4%
Households	2,192,250 (2001)	2,372,777 (2011)	Up 8%
Supply			
Social Sector Housing Stock	416,258 (2003)	318,160 (2013)	Down 24%
Social Sector New Build Completions	3,809 (2002/03)	4,209 (2012/13)	Down 11%
New build completions	22, 747 (2002/03)	13,803 (2012/13)	Down 39%

- There is a huge amount of pressure on a limited social housing supply. Figure 17 shows just a few of the factors contributing to the demand for housing, including an increase in the number of households on waiting lists. The latest census data²⁰ shows an increase in the population, but also the number of households as household demographics change. This is set against a decrease in house building in Scotland in the last ten years.

¹⁹ Comparative dates given are for the latest figures available i.e. comparing 2013 with 2003 and 2011 with 2001.

²⁰ Scotland Census (2011) <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/en/>

Figure 18: Increasing demand vs Decreasing supply²¹



²¹ It should be noted that there is currently some debate about the 'true' number of people on housing waiting lists. The Scottish Government's official figures only report on local authority waiting lists, as shown the table above, although within this figure there is an element of double counting and inaccuracy. Due to the increasing stock of housing associations and in some council areas the total stock transfer – particularly in Glasgow – we know that this data does not tell the whole story. The Scottish Government recently put the official figure at 400,000 on social housing waiting lists (<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Safeguarding-Scotland-s-social-housing-21a.aspx>) which, even considering the problems with the data, shows the massive demand for affordable housing.

Housing stock in the Social Sector

2002



In 2002 there were 503,631 social houses in Scotland.

2012



In 2012 there were 319,384 social houses in Scotland.

Figures from Scottish Government's Housing Statistics.

Appendix: Area profiles

	No. of homeless applications (2012/13)	Number of homeless assessments (2012/13)	Numbers in temporary accommodation (As at March 2013)
Glasgow	8,240	5,955	1,814
Edinburgh	4,267	4,172	840
Dundee	1,470	1,163	317
Aberdeen	1,364	1,191	324
Dumfries and Galloway	949	748	273
Highland	1,001	858	477