Wandsworth Housing and Regeneration Department
2023/24 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), and 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 need, 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 a set of data requirements known as H-Clic, which 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.

The Council is now collecting data on gender identity, sexual orientation and religion, however, these are relatively new additions to the data fields so many applicants will not have these characteristics recorded. These characteristics have been reported where it is possible to do so and we aim to further explore these characteristics once we receive more data.

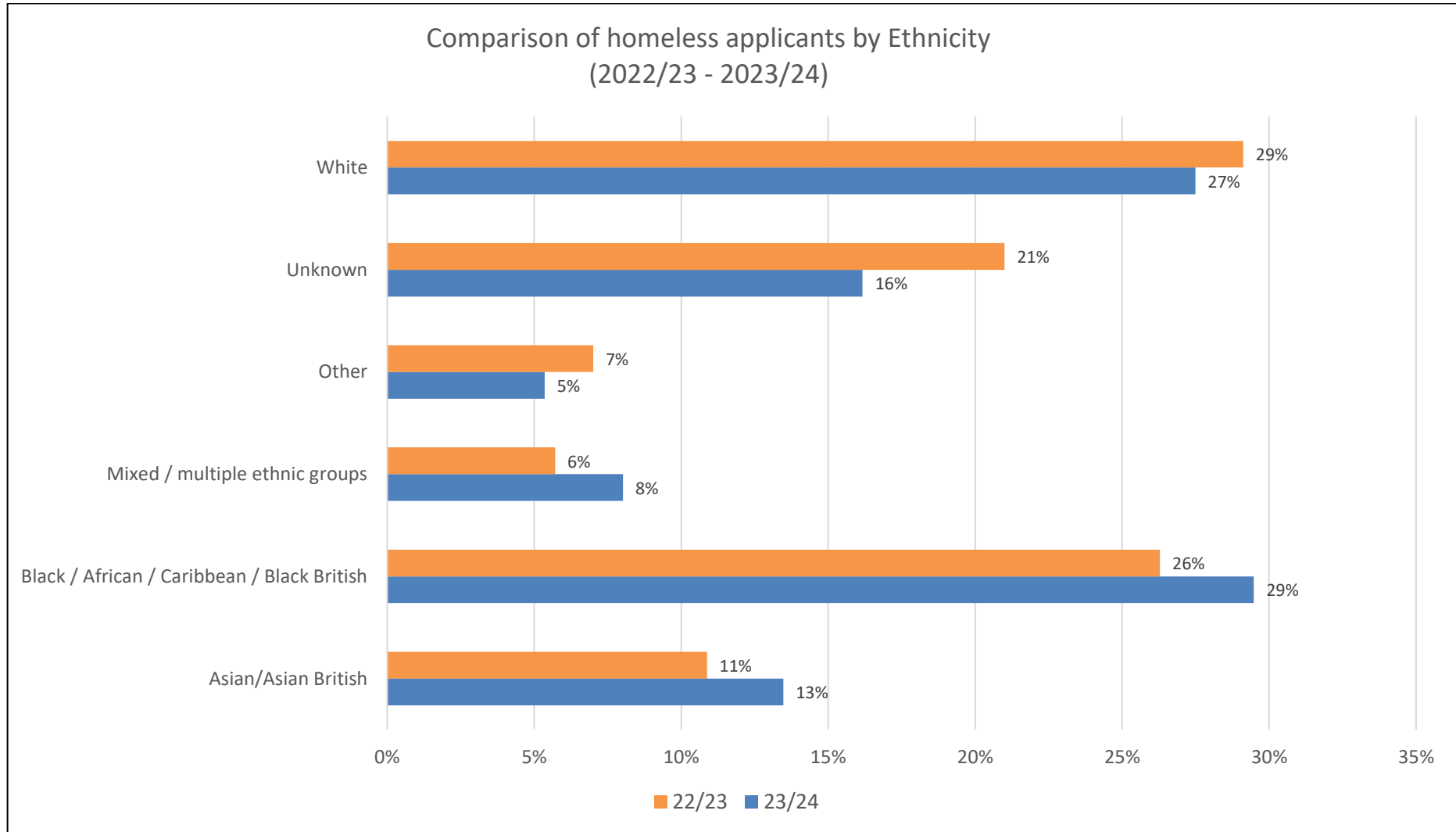**Housing Advice Homeless Cases by Ethnic Group (2023-2024)**

		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	1,134	331	556	1,216	221	667	4,125
	%	27%	8%	13%	29%	5%	16%	100%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	290	84	203	341	79	195	1,192
	%	24%	7%	17%	29%	7%	16%	100%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	52	7	21	47	2	18	147
	%	35%	5%	14%	32%	1%	12%	100%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	80	17	18	48	10	21	194
	%	41%	9%	9%	25%	5%	11%	100%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	74	19	24	56	10	55	238
	%	31%	8%	10%	24%	4%	23%	100%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	76	18	24	58	10	35	221
	%	34%	8%	11%	26%	5%	16%	100%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	273	65	197	337	95	210	1,177
	%	23%	6%	17%	29%	8%	18%	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

In 2023/24 there was a 25% increase in the number of homeless applications recorded.

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, those from the white group received a smaller proportion of acceptances (23%) when compared to the number of homeless applications received (27%).

The white ethnic group were overrepresented for the number of homeless cases prevented (41%) when compared to the number of applications received (27%). The black ethnic group represented a lower percentage of homeless cases prevented (25%) despite accounting for a higher proportion of received applications (29%).

**Comparison of homeless applicants by Ethnicity
(2022/23 - 2023/24)**

	22/23	23/24
White	29%	27%
Unknown	21%	16%
Other	7%	5%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	6%	8%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	26%	29%
Asian/Asian British	11%	13%

The percentage breakdown of homeless applications across all ethnic groups has changed slightly between 2022/23 to 2023/24 with most groups experiencing a 2-3% increase or decrease in representation. The most noticeable difference is the decrease in the percentage of applicants whose ethnicity is unknown and the increase in the percentage of applicants from the black ethnic group.

Housing Advice and Homelessness Cases by Gender *

		Female with Children	Female without Children	Male with Children	Male without Children	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	753	1,492	241	1,639	4,125
	%	18%	36%	6%	40%	100%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	365	308	128	391	1,192
	%	31%	26%	11%	33%	100%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	42	49	14	42	147
	%	29%	33%	10%	29%	100%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	68	71	21	34	194
	%	35%	37%	11%	18%	100%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	33	66	8	131	238
	%	14%	28%	3%	55%	100%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	36	65	5	115	221
	%	16%	29%	2%	52%	100%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	417	304	147	309	1,177
	%	35%	26%	12%	26%	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 largest gender group was male without children, representing 40% of all applicants and 33% of all admissions into temporary accommodation. The second largest group was females without children who represented 36% of all homeless applications and 26% of all temporary accommodation admissions. In contrast, females with children represent 18% of all applicants but have a higher representation of cases being admitted into temporary accommodation (31%).

A similar pattern can be observed in the number of homeless cases prevented, with males without children representing 18% of all homeless cases prevented contrasted against females without children who represented 37% of all homeless cases prevented.

Similar to previous years, female with children represented the largest group of accepted homeless cases (35%), and male with children also received a higher proportion of positive decisions (12%) when compared to the number of applications received (6%). This will almost certainly be due to these applicants having a priority need due to dependent children.

Households in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group

There has been an 18% increase in the number of households being placed into temporary accommodation when compared to the previous year. The black ethnic group remains the largest group accommodated representing 30% of all households. This figure is much higher than the borough demographic as members of the black ethnic group constitutes 10% of the population (Census, 2021). The white ethnic group is the second largest group accommodated, representing 23% of households in temporary accommodation.

Households in Temporary Accommodation *		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total
2022/23	No.	686	173	501	874	266	471	2,971
	%	23%	6%	17%	29%	9%	16%	100%
2023/24	No.	792	217	564	1,057	280	597	3,507
	%	23%	6%	16%	30%	8%	17%	100%

* This does not include households who have arranged temporary accommodation themselves (homeless from home cases)
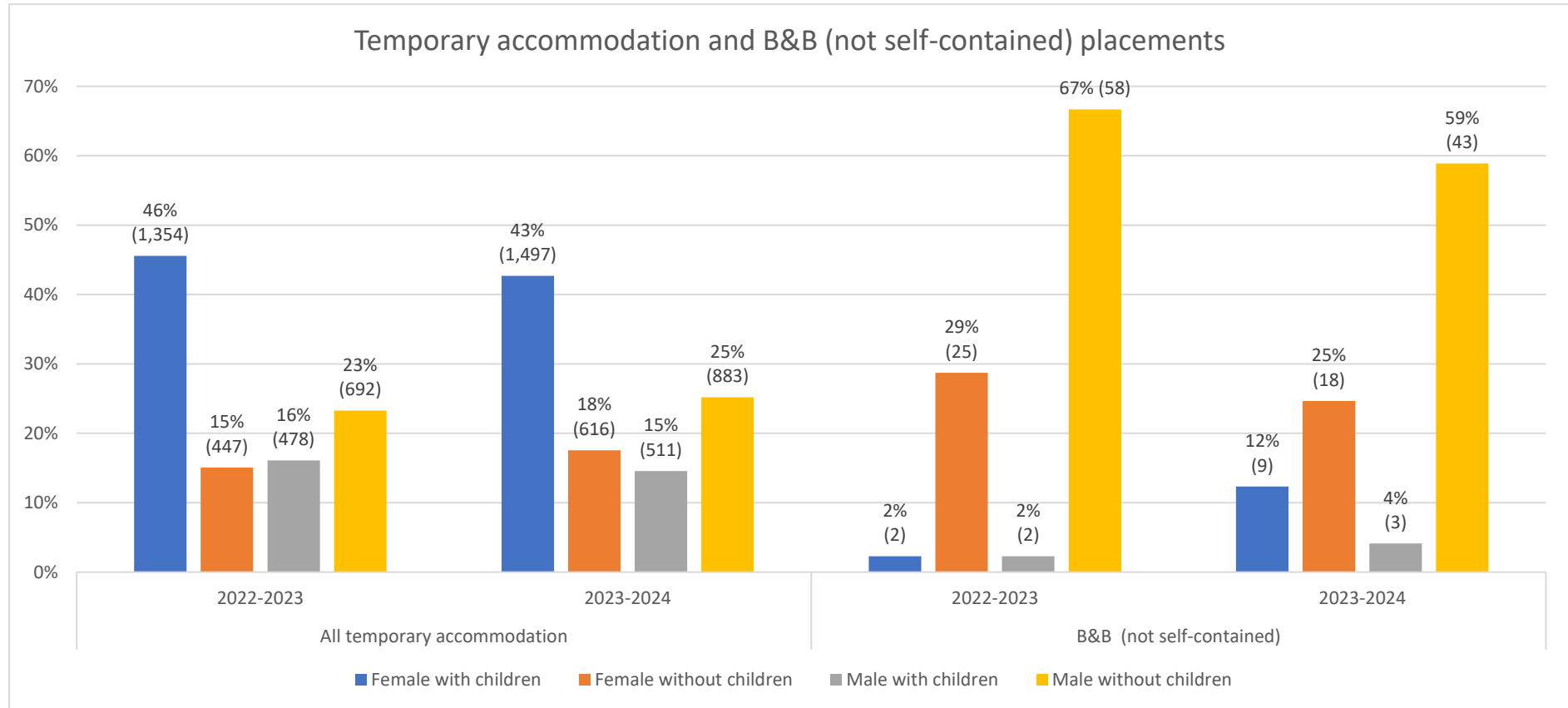
The overall representation of temporary accommodation placements across all the ethnic groups is similar for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Households in Bed and Breakfast (not self-contained) Accommodation by Ethnic Group

Households placed into B&B (not self-contained) by ethnic group		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total
2022/23	No.	26	3	9	19	4	26	86
	%	30%	3%	10%	22%	5%	30%	100%
2023/24	No.	14	5	12	18	3	21	73
	%	19%	7%	16%	25%	4%	29%	100%

Where applicants are placed in B&B accommodation that is not self-contained, the black ethnic group has the largest representation at 25% (which is an increase of 3% from 2022/23). B&B placements to the Asian ethnic group has also increased from 10% in 2022/23 to 16% in 2023/24, while the white ethnic group has dropped significantly from 30% in 2022/23 to 19% in 2023/24. However, the number of B&B placements are relatively small when compared to placements for all temporary accommodation, so percentile changes are greater even with a small numerical difference in placements between groups.
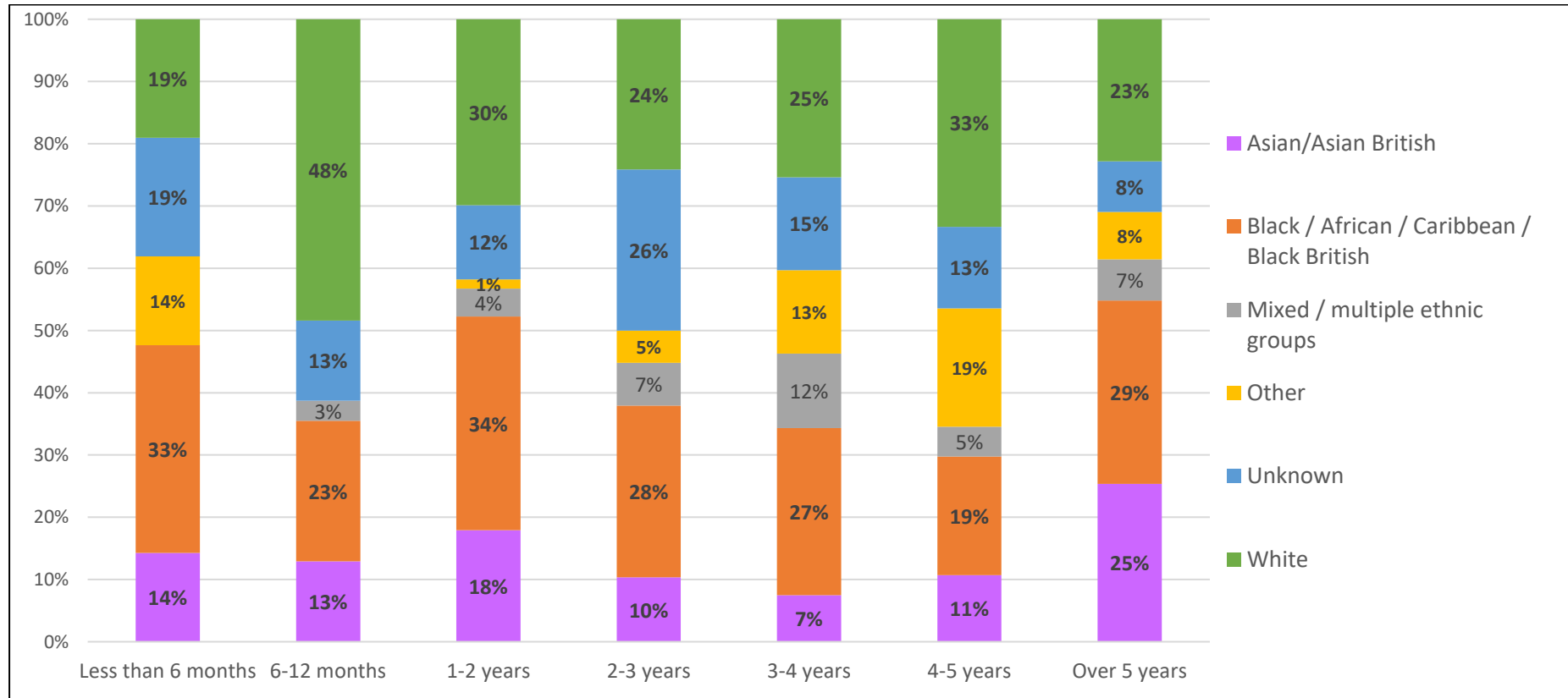
Households in Temporary Accommodation by Gender

Temporary accommodation and B&B (not self-contained) placements

Legend: Female with children | Female without children | Male with children | Male without children

All temporary accommodation:
- 2022-2023: 46% (1,354), 15% (447), 16% (478), 23% (692)
- 2023-2024: 43% (1,497), 18% (616), 15% (511), 25% (883)

B&B (not self-contained):
- 2022-2023: 2% (2), 29% (25), 2% (2), 67% (58)
- 2023-2024: 12% (9), 25% (18), 4% (3), 59% (43)

The largest proportion of applicants in any type of temporary accommodation are households with children. The combined total of these groups is 2,008 households which equates to 57% of temporary accommodation placements, which is a slight drop from 62% in 2022/23.

The largest proportion of applicants accommodated in B&B that is not self-contained is households without children. A total of 61 out of 73 households make up this group which equates to 84% of the B&B 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. Although the total number of all temporary accommodation placements has increased, the total number of B&B placements has decreased from 86 in 2022/23 to 73 in 2023/24.
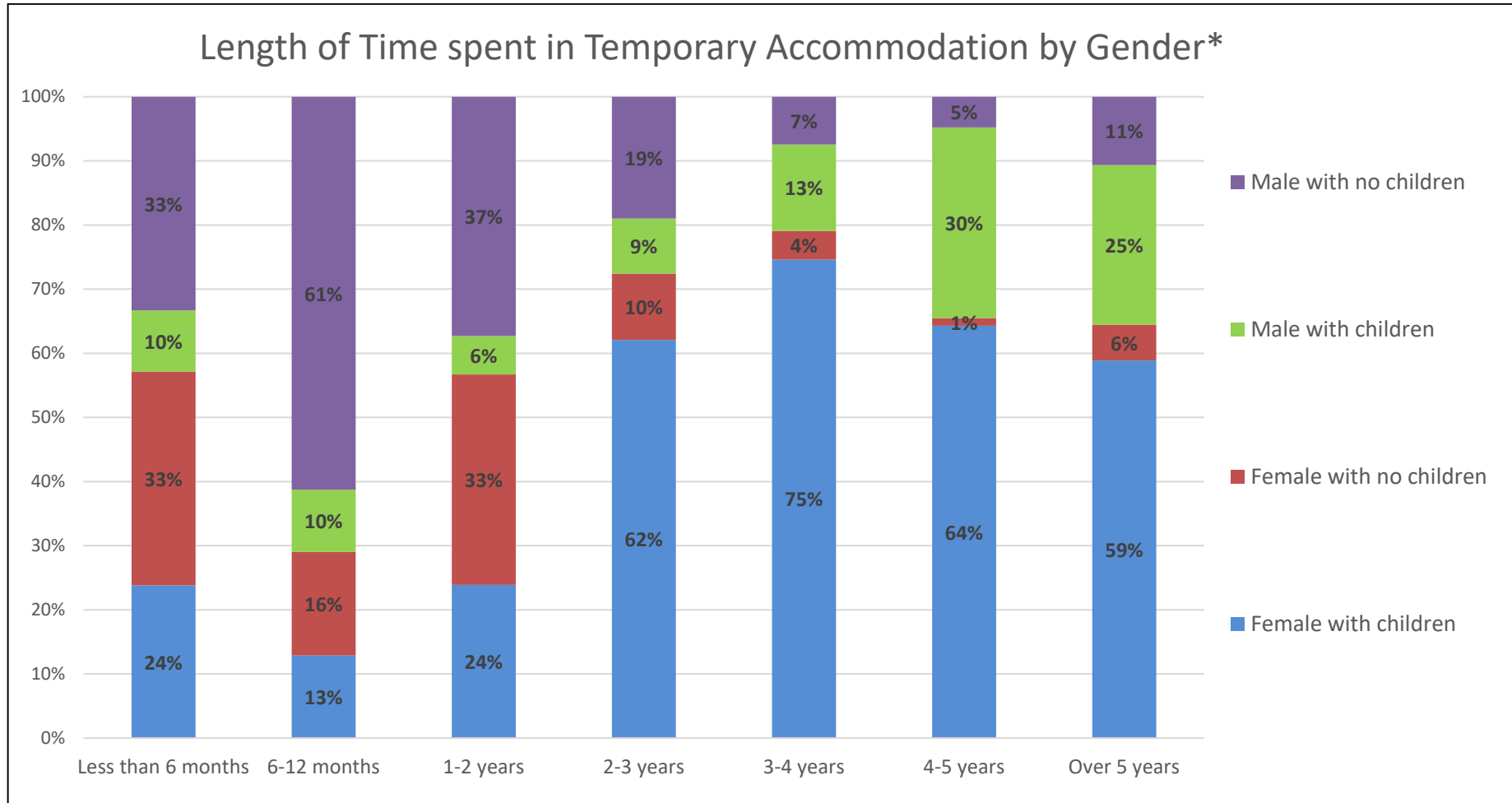
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group

* 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 black ethnic group represents the largest group for the least amount of time spent in temporary accommodation (less than 6 months). The white ethnic group was most likely to spend between 6 and 12 months in temporary accommodation, representing nearly half of stays in this timeframe. Those from the black ethnic group were also more likely to spend longer than other ethnic groups in temporary accommodation (29% of all households). Also to note, those from the Asian ethnic group were more likely to spend over five years in temporary accommodation than other time periods   The distribution between the ethnic groups and the time spent in temporary accommodation fluctuates a lot and other factors such as household size and whether any household members have physical health needs could impact waiting times because larger properties and properties that are adapted are in short supply and are in high demand, leading to longer waiting times for those households.
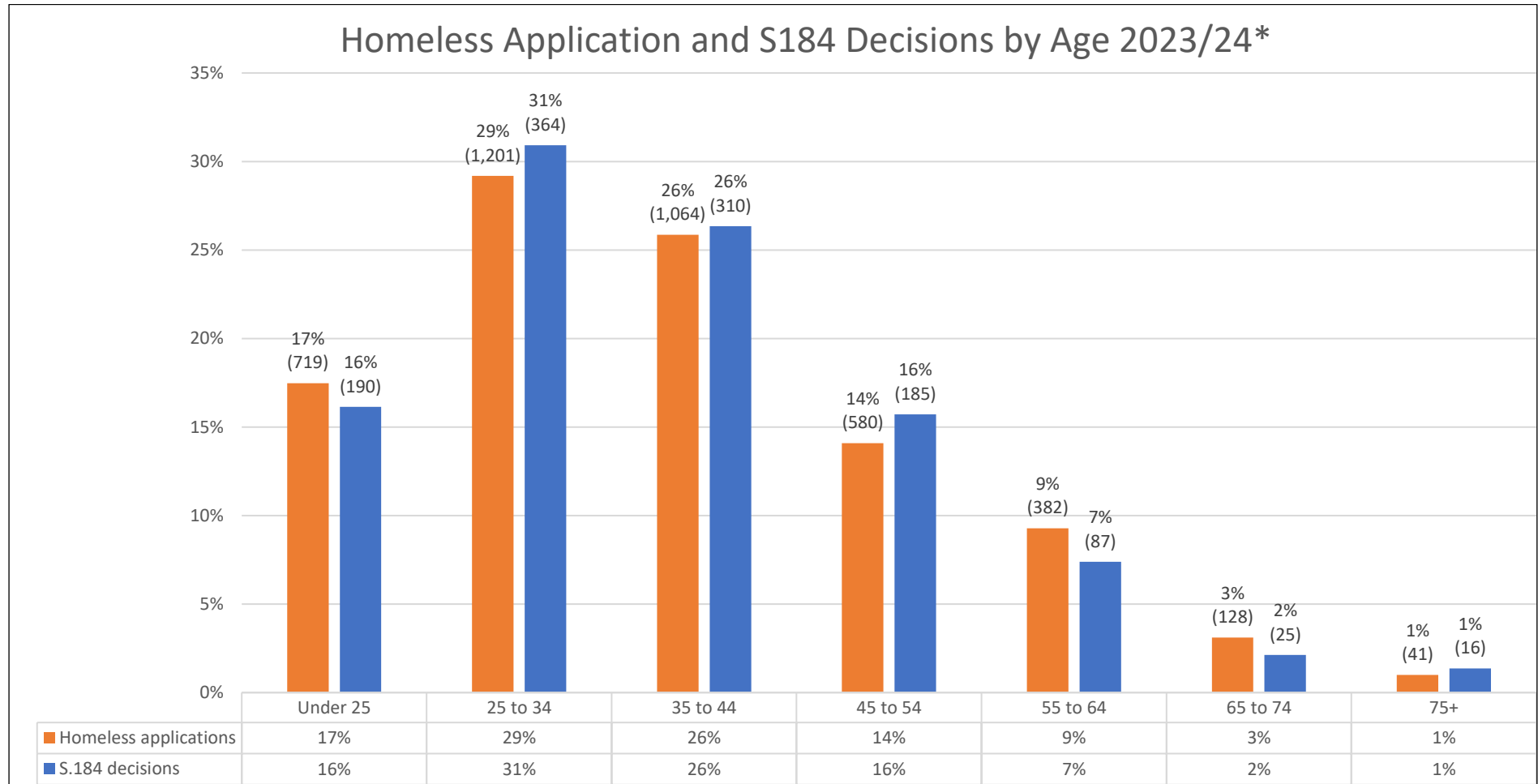
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Gender

*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 77% 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 spent the most 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 applications and decisions by age

Homeless Application and S184 Decisions by Age 2023/24*

	Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
Homeless applications	17%	29%	26%	14%	9%	3%	1%
S.184 decisions	16%	31%	26%	16%	7%	2%	1%

Chart data labels:
- Under 25: 17% (719), 16% (190)
- 25 to 34: 29% (1,201), 31% (364)
- 35 to 44: 26% (1,064), 26% (310)
- 45 to 54: 14% (580), 16% (185)
- 55 to 64: 9% (382), 7% (87)
- 65 to 74: 3% (128), 2% (25)
- 75+: 1% (41), 1% (16)

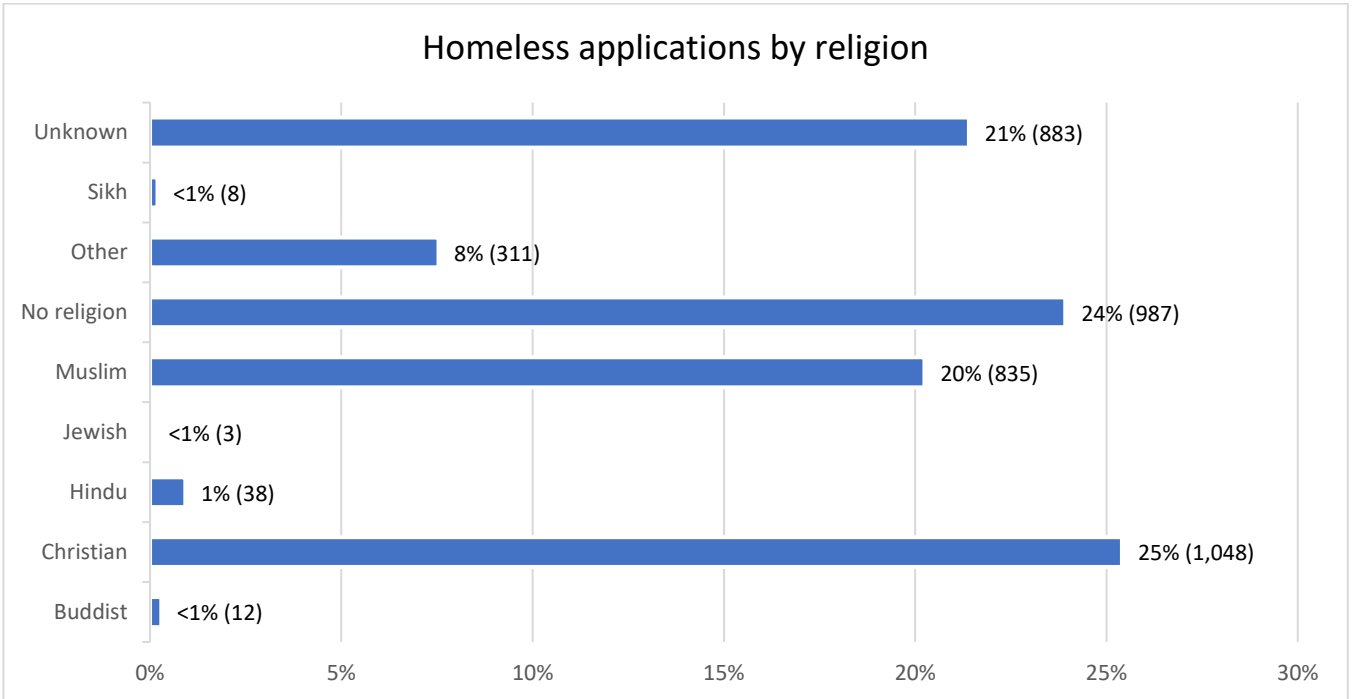*Age of applicant as of 31st March 2024

The largest percentage of received applications and accepted s.184 decisions were from applicants between the ages of 25 to 44 years, representing a respective total of 55% applications and 57% of decisions. The percentage breakdown of applications received and decisions made are largely in proportion across all age groups.

Homeless applications by sexual orientation and religion[1]

Homeless applications by sexuality

9%

27%

64%

- LGBTQIA+
- Heterosexual
- Unknown
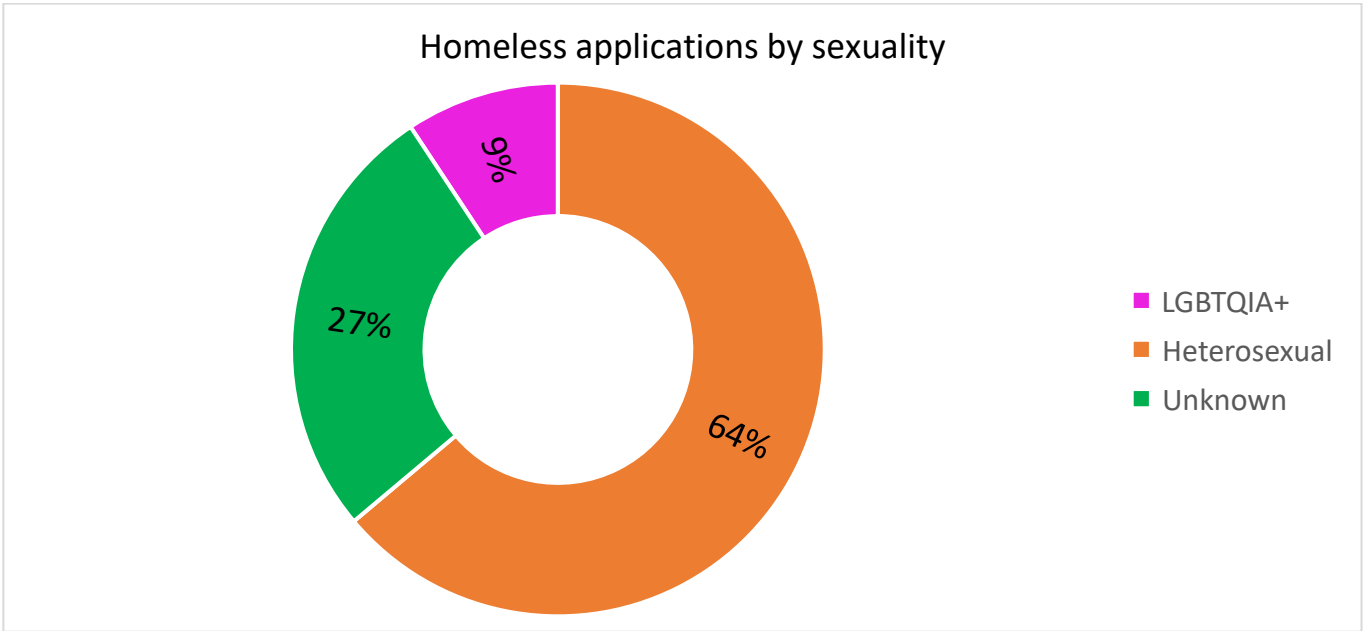
*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual plus other groups

Applicants who identify as heterosexual have the largest representation at 64%, and applicants from the LGBTQIA+ community represent 9% of all applications.
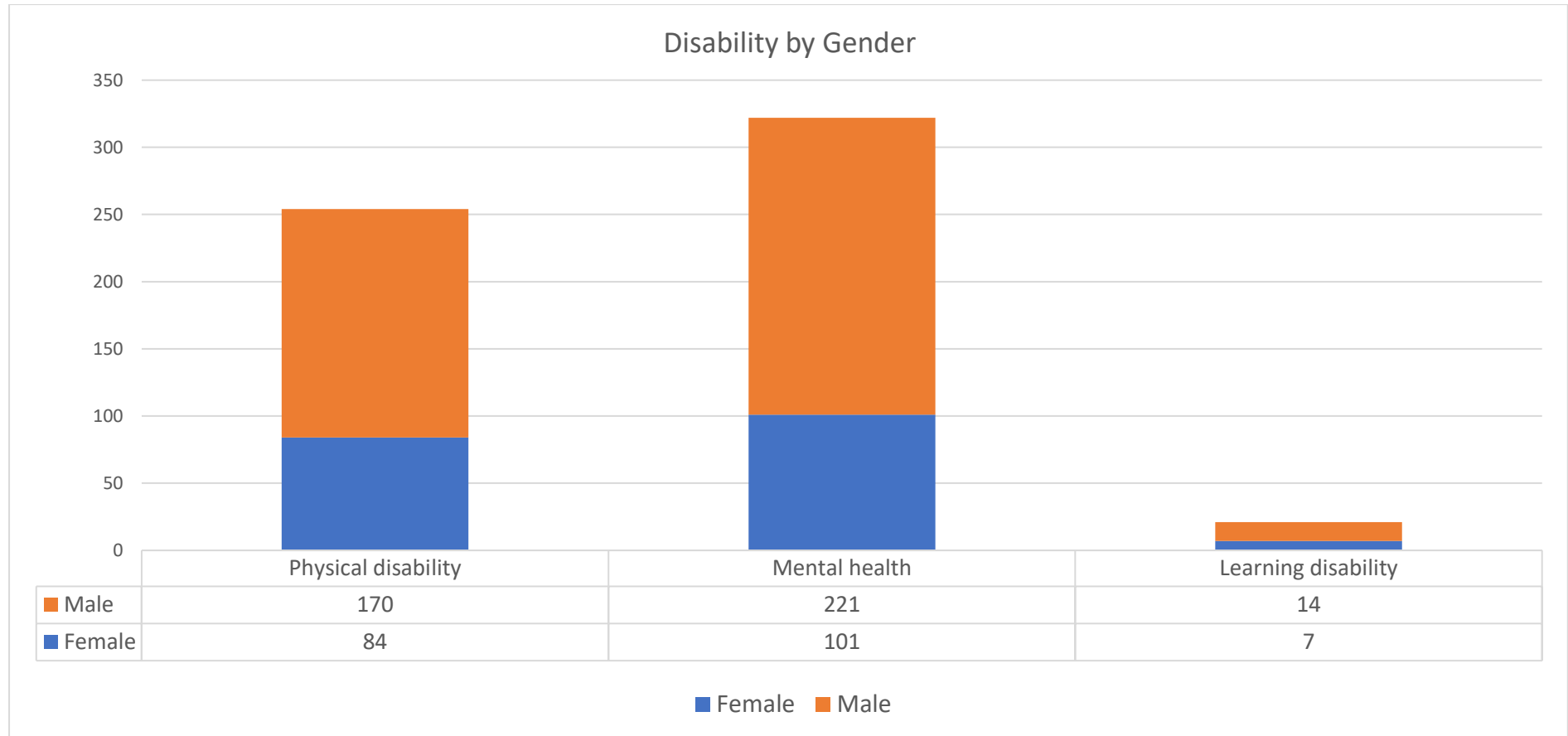
Homeless applications by religion

Religion	Value
Unknown	21% (883)
Sikh	<1% (8)
Other	8% (311)
No religion	24% (987)
Muslim	20% (835)
Jewish	<1% (3)
Hindu	1% (38)
Christian	25% (1,048)
Buddist	<1% (12)

Christians are the largest demographic group representing 25% of applicants followed by applicants with no religious belief.

[1] The Department is working to collect data on sexual orientation and religion since these are relatively new data fields and a significant number of applicant's sexual orientation and religion remain unknown. However, the data for these two groups will continue to improve.

Disability

Since the advent of the HRA reforms 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.

Disability by Gender

	Physical disability	Mental health	Learning disability
■ Male	170	221	14
■ Female	84	101	7

■ Female ■ Male

The most common disability identified is for applicants who are experiencing mental health issues which account for 54% of all disabilities. Learning disability is the lowest identified disability, with 14 males and 7 females identified in this group.

Disability identified at HRA Assessment and Disability Confirmed at Main Duty

Disability Identified at HRA Assessment		Female	Male	Total
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	39	85	124
	%	31.45%	68.55%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	51	127	178
	%	28.65%	71.35%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	5	9	14
	%	35.71%	64.29%	100.00%
Disability Confirmed at Main Duty*				
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	45	85	130
	%	34.62%	65.38%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	50	94	144
	%	34.72%	65.28%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	2	5	7
	%	28.57%	71.43%	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 68% of all applicants with an identified disability, and most applicants have their disability identified during the HRA assessment.