

Housing Facts and Figures

October 2021



WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

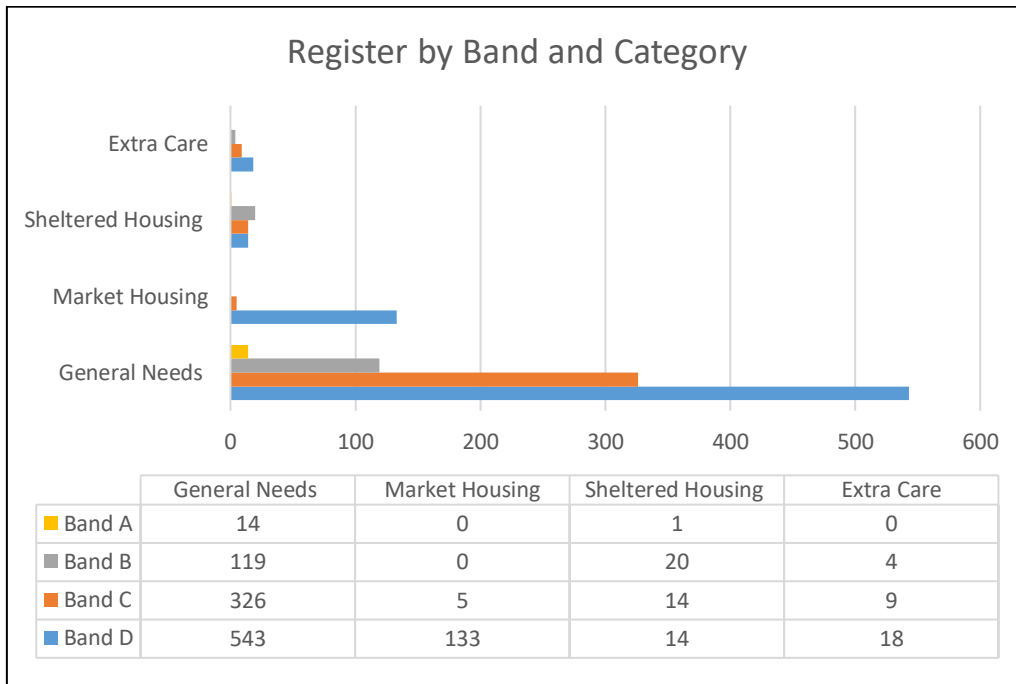
Contents

1. Housing Need	1
1.1 Housing register	1
1.2 Allocations	2
1.3 Shared ownership	2
1.4 Homelessness presentations and applications	3
1.5 Affordable housing supply	4
2. Housing Market.....	5
2.1 National.....	5
2.2 Local	5
2.3 Affordability	6
2.4 Renting a home privately.....	6
2.5 Earn Your Own Deposit.....	7
3. Welfare system	8
3.1 Universal Credit.....	8
3.2 Benefit Cap	9
3.3 Discretionary Housing Payment Awards	10
4. Housing Management and Repairs	11
4.1 Voids	11
4.2 Income collection	11
4.3 Number of arrears evictions	12
4.4 Customer experience	12
5. Private Sector Housing	13
5.1 Let's Rent.....	13
5.2 Empty homes	14
5.3 Housing Standards.....	15
6. Glossary	16

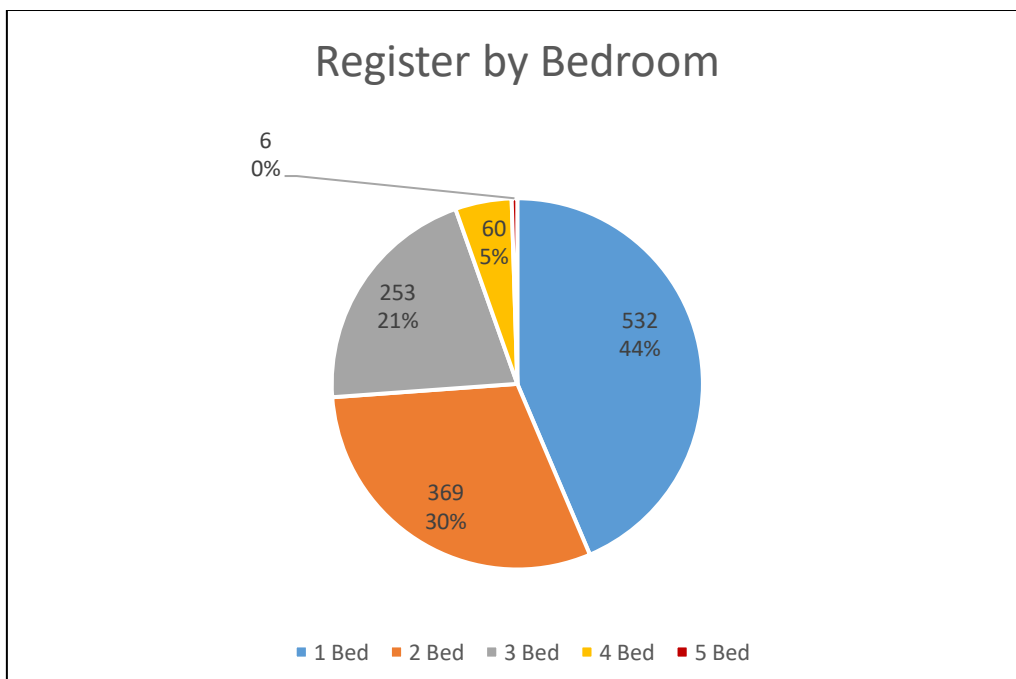
1. Housing Need

1.1 Housing register

As of the 1 October 2021, there were a total of 1,220 applicants on the Housing Register, including 138 applications that were registered for Thamesway Housing Limited properties only and 49 for sheltered accommodation (see Chart 1 below). Of the 1,220 applicants, 58% are currently placed in Band D, with 29% in Band C, 12% in Band B and 1% in Band A.

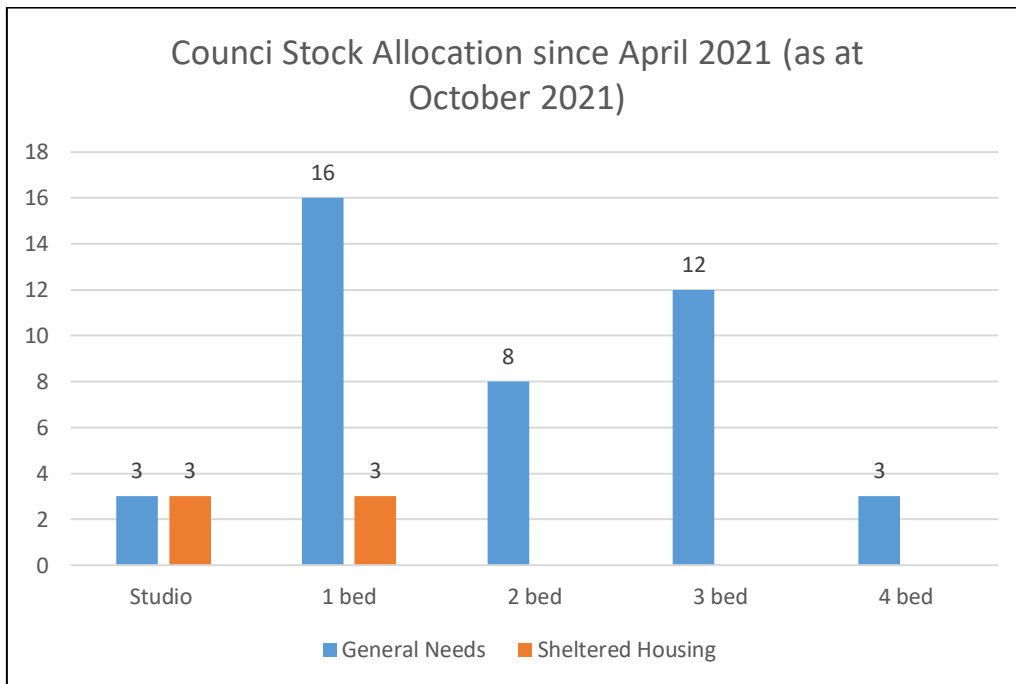


The Housing Register evidences a need of 44% for 1 bed dwellings; 30% for 2 bed; 21% for 3 bed; and 5% for 4+ bed (see chart 2 below).



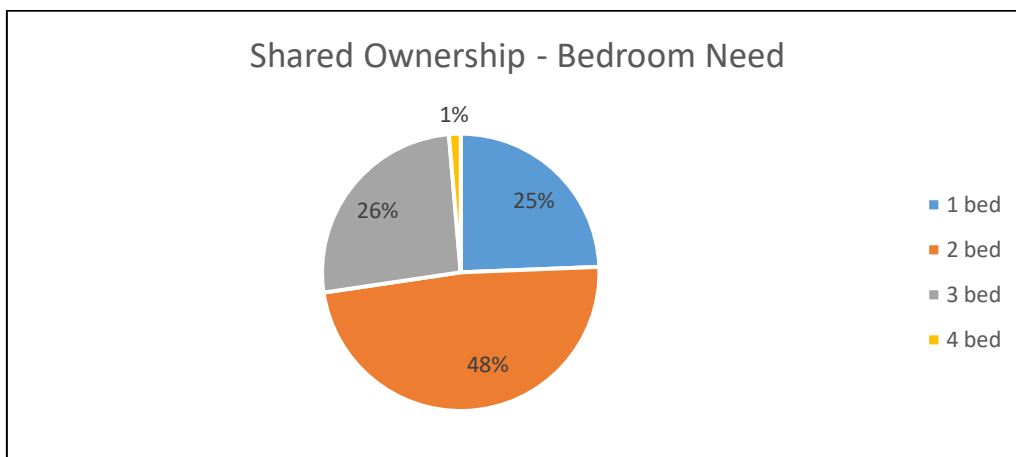
1.2 Allocations

The Council operates a Choice Based Lettings systems which allows applicants to see what homes are available, giving them the opportunity to express choice and preference in the process of selecting a suitable home. As at October 2021, 48 Council-owned properties have been allocated since April 2021. 18 properties have also been allocated through Registered Providers (housing associations) this financial year.



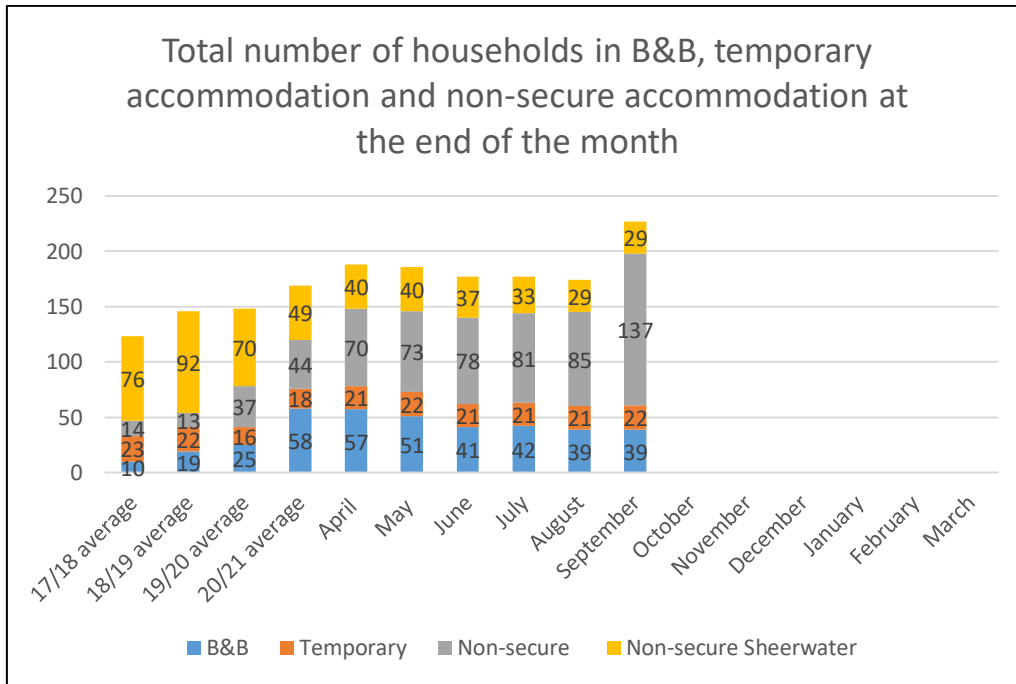
1.3 Shared ownership

The waiting list for low cost home ownership products, such as shared ownership, is held by the regional Help to Buy Agent (Radian Housing Association). They have 440 applicants seeking shared ownership homes in Woking as of October 2021. Of these, 25% are seeking one bedroom dwellings; 48% two-bedroom dwellings; and 26% three bedroom dwellings.

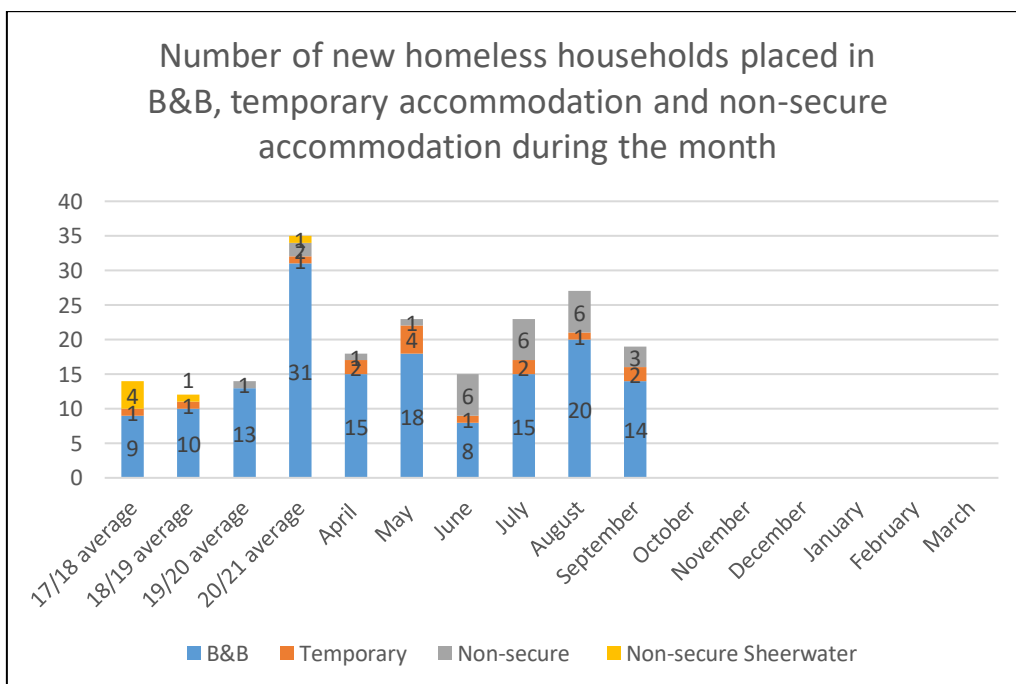


1.4 Homelessness presentations and applications

At the end of September 2021, the Council was accommodating 227 homeless households in some form of emergency accommodation. Typically, in previous years, this number has been around 130 - 150, with the increase in 2020/21 reflecting the additional numbers accommodated in hotels through the Covid-19 pandemic (see graph below).

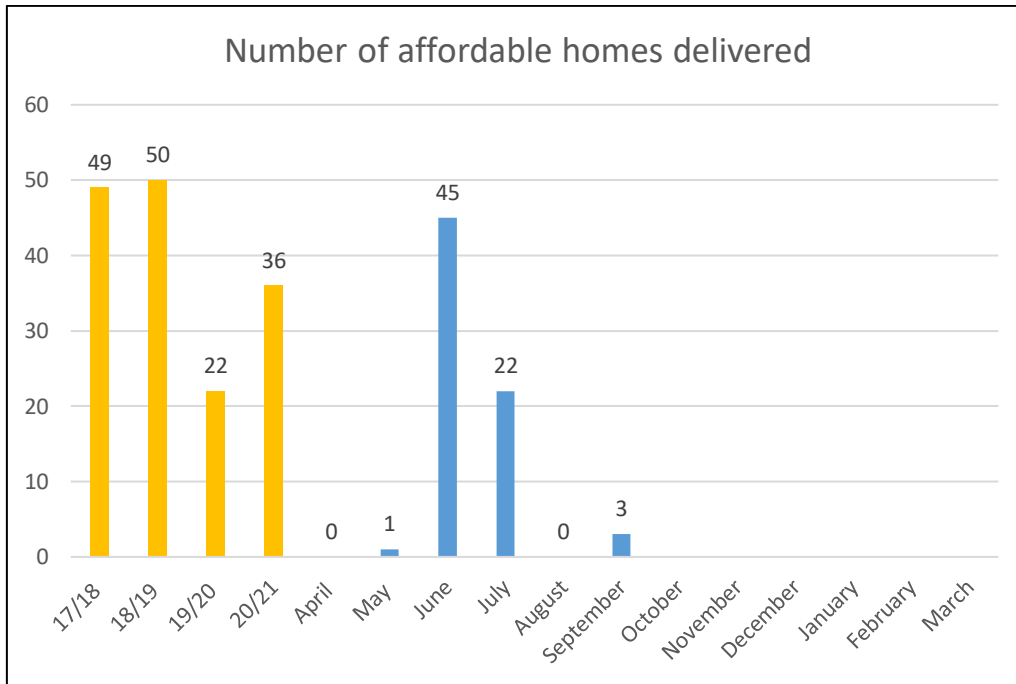


As at September 2021, there were 19 new homeless households placed in B&B, temporary accommodation and non-secure accommodation.



1.5 Affordable housing supply

The Woking Core Strategy (2012) Policy CS12 sets out the parameters for the delivery of affordable housing in the Borough, including the overall delivery target over the Plan (to 2026) of 1,737 new affordable homes. This equates to an annual target of 102 dwellings per annum. As depicted in the graph below, 36 affordable homes were delivered in 2020/21 and 71 affordable homes have been delivered in 2021/22 to date.



2. Housing Market

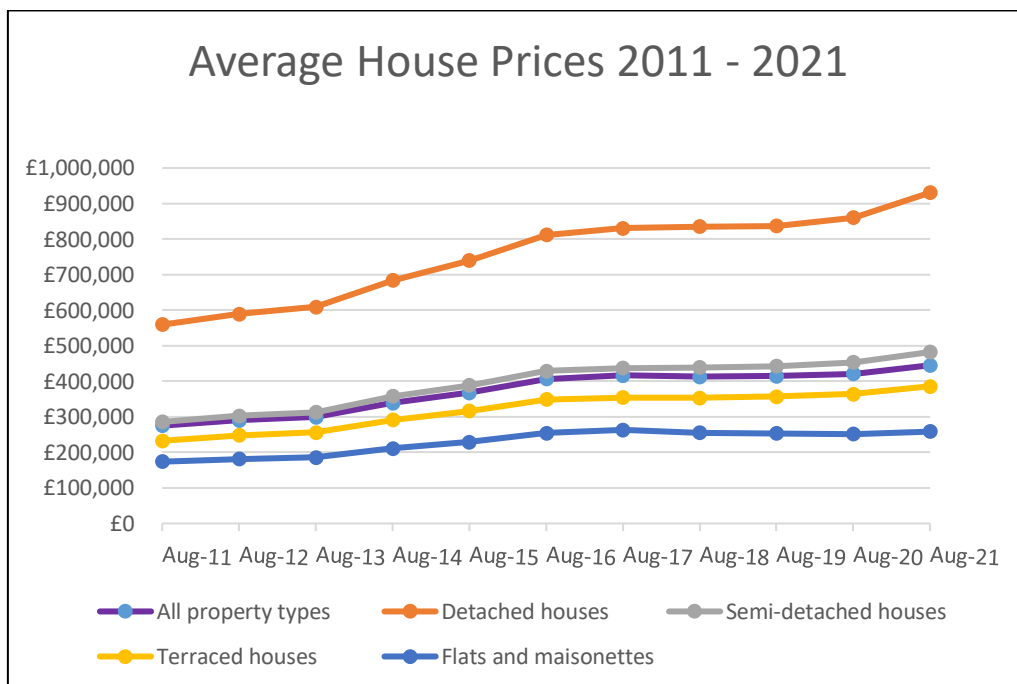
2.1 National

As of August 2021 the average house price in the UK was £264,244. Property prices have increased by 2.9% compared to the previous month, and risen by 10.6% compared to the previous year.¹ The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (RICS) August 2021 [UK Residential Market Survey](#) reported that buyer demand had steadied in the housing market, after there was a softening in sales July. House price growth decelerated but is reported to remain firm across the UK.

2.2 Local

House prices in the borough have been steadily rising since August 2020. Latest Land Registry data shows that the average house price of all property types in Woking borough was £445,087 in August 2021. This is a 5.8% (+£24,267) annual percentage change since August 2020. The average house prices in Woking remain significantly higher than the national average house price. The chart below shows the house price trend in Woking between 2011 and 2021.

The chart shows that sale prices for houses (particularly detached properties) have increased steadily following the first lockdown, while sales prices for apartments have risen to a lesser extent.



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-house-price-index-summary-august-2021/uk-house-price-index-summary-august-2021>

2.3 Affordability

In Woking, the affordability ratio of median house price to workplace-based earnings was 10.17 as of March 2020, this is a steady decrease since 2017 when the ratio was 12.24². Data published by the Office for National Statistics on 25 March 2021, shows that in England in 2020, full-time employees could typically expect to spend around 7.84 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home; this is a slight improvement from 2018, when the ratio was 8.0.

Purchaser affordability table by property type in Woking Borough August 2021.

Property type	Average selling price in the Borough (as of Aug 2021)	Deposit required (assuming 80% mortgage)	Minimal annual income required (assuming 3.5 times annual salary)
All	£445,087	£89,017	£101,734
Detached	£930,713	£186,143	£212,734
Semi-detached	£482,206	£96,441	£110,219
Terraced	£386,010	£77,202	£88,231
Flat/Maisonette	£259,105	£51,821	£59,224

2.4 Renting a home privately³

The latest HomeLet Rental Index⁴ shows that average rental values in the South East have increased by 6.1%, when compared to last year. The table below gives a breakdown of asking rents for privately rented homes as of October 2021, together with the applicable Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the potential shortfall between these figures.

	LHA month (pcm)	Average Asking Rent (pcm) October 2021	Potential Shortfall (pcm)
1 Bed flat	£847.68	£1,048.00	£200.32
2 Bed flat	£1,096.98	£1,315.00	£218.02
2 Bed house	£1,096.98	£1,827.00	£730.02
3 Bed house	£1,371.24	£1,621.00	£249.76
4 Bed house	£1,795.08	£2,440.00	£644.92

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

³ <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/market/woking/?q=Woking%2C%20Surrey>

⁴ <https://homelet.co.uk/homelet-rental-index/south-east>

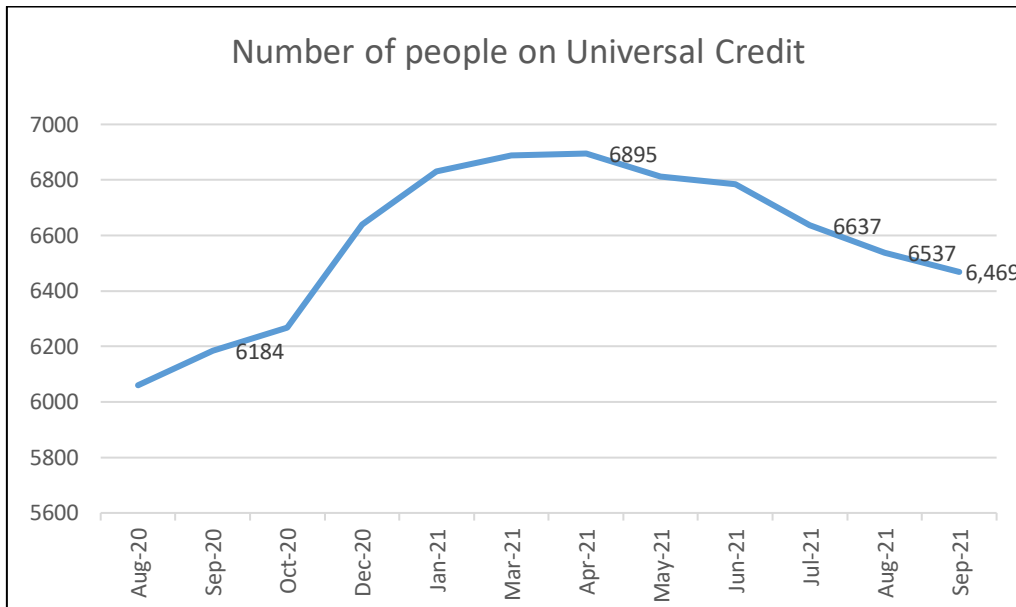
2.5 Earn Your Own Deposit

Earn Your Deposit is a new scheme that helps Thamesway assured shorthold tenants buy their own home by giving them money towards a deposit. The Earn Your Deposit scheme offers them a substantial financial contribution towards the deposit needed to buy a place of their own. Available to all 'good tenants' who pay their rent on time, look after their homes and respect their neighbours, the scheme enables tenants to 'earn' a monetary value each year - for example £2,400 for a two-bed property - towards a deposit for their first privately-owned home after a two year qualifying period. The maximum deposit is capped at £80,000, which is a significant sum towards a property purchase. The scheme is not available to investors or existing home owners. As at September 2021, 11 tenants have made use of the Earn Your Deposit scheme, with £67,700 drawn from the scheme.

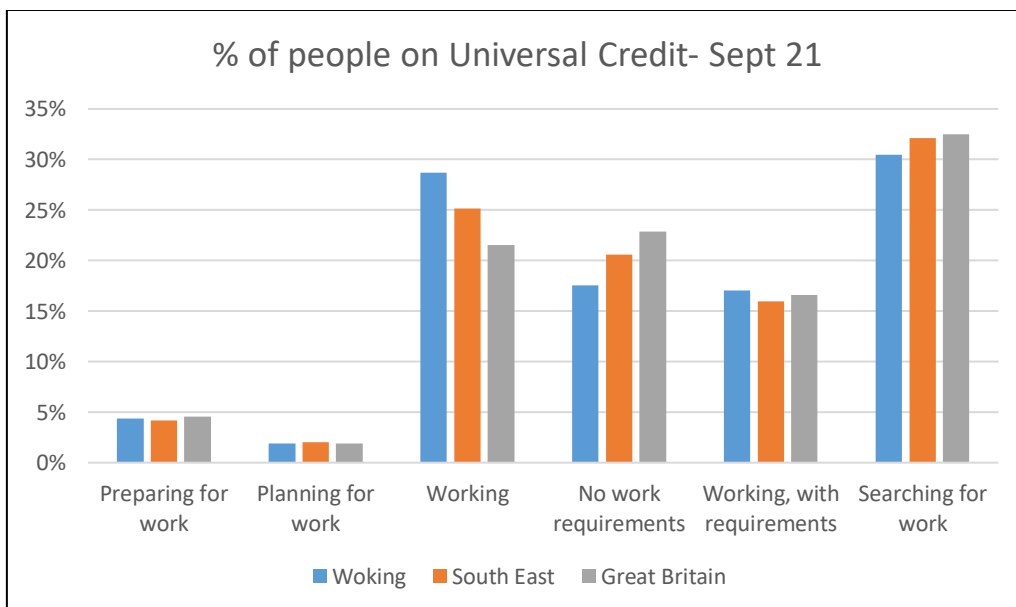
3. Welfare system

3.1 Universal Credit

In Woking, the number of people on Universal Credit was 6,469 as at 9 September 2021 which has steadily decreased from 6,895 in April 2021.

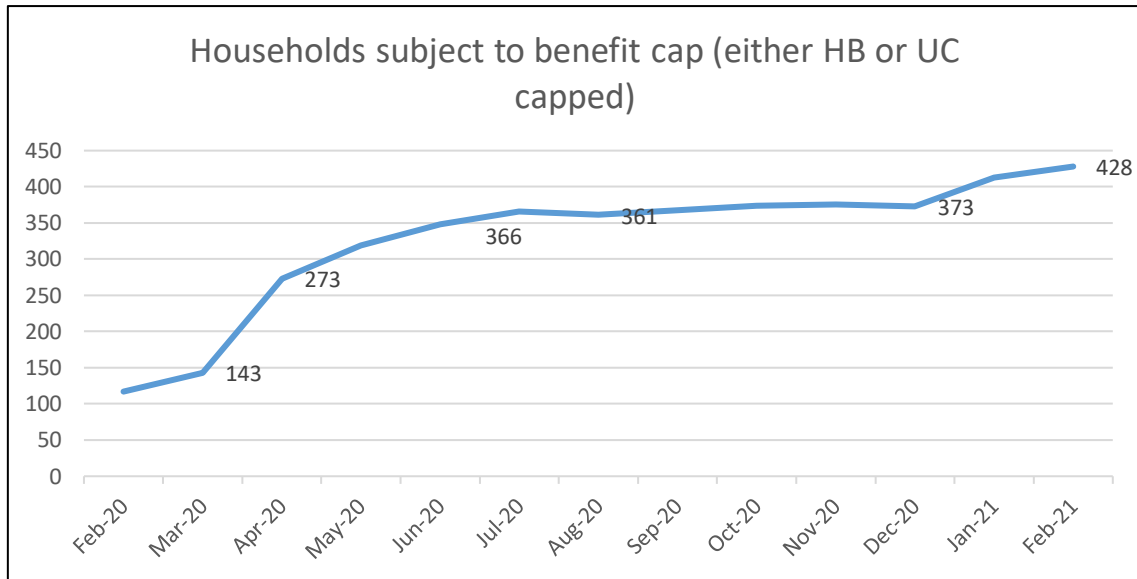


Claimants are required to do certain work-related activities to receive Universal Credit. These activities are determined by which of the 6 conditionality regimes the claimant is placed in. As circumstances change claimants will also transition between different levels of conditionality. The graph below compares the six conditionality regimes for Woking, the South East and Great Britain as at September 2021.



3.2 Benefit Cap

The benefit cap is a limit on the total amount of benefit that most working age people can get. The amount of benefit a household receives is reduced to ensure claimants do not receive more than the cap limit. The benefit cap can be applied through either Universal Credit (UC) or Housing Benefit (HB). Nationally, 170,000 households had their benefits capped at August 2020, an increase of 8% on the previous quarter. As depicted in the graph below, the number of households that had their benefits capped in Woking borough has increased rapidly from 115 households in September 2019 to 361 households in August 2020⁵.



⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/benefit-cap-number-of-households-capped-to-february-2021>

3.3 Discretionary Housing Payment Awards

A Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) is a short-term payment from the Council to help meet some housing costs, a DHP is made on top of any Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction entitlements. The Government has given councils funding to give DHPs to people who have been affected by welfare reforms including; the benefit cap, removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector and changes to Local Housing Allowance rates, including the 4 year freeze. The tables below show our 2021/22 current position as at 30 September 2021.

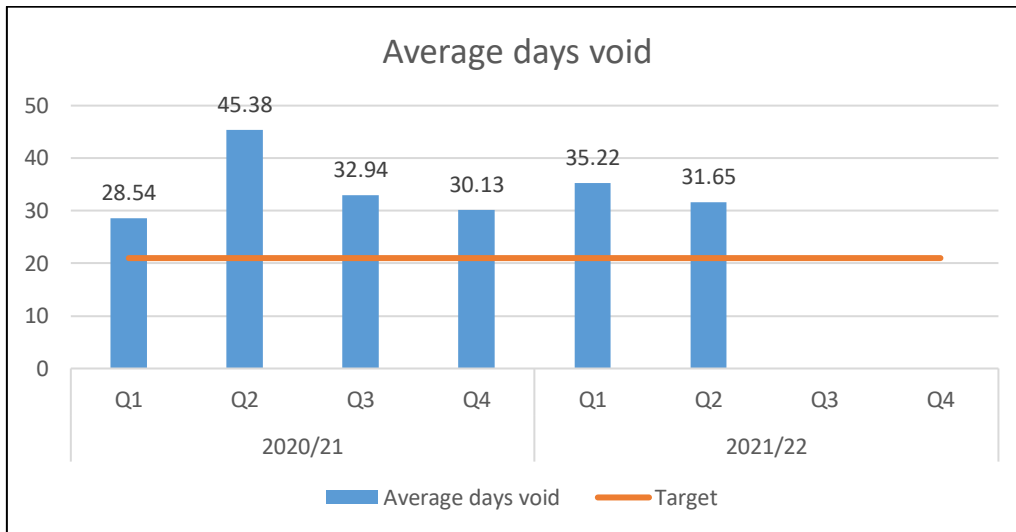
Impact of welfare Reforms	Number of Awards	£
Benefit Cap	15	13120.62
Removal of spare room subsidy	14	4287.94
LHA Restriction	2	804.29
Combination of reforms	3	3090.86
No impact	20	35501.81
Number of Awards	54	£56805.52

Purpose of DHP	Number of Awards
To help secure and move to alternative accommodation (e.g rent deposit)	27
To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant secures and moves to alternative accommodation	3
To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant seeks employment	15
To help with ongoing rental costs for disabled person in adapted accommodation	2
To help with ongoing rental costs for foster carer	0
To help with on-going rental costs for any other reasons	7
Total	54

4. Housing Management and Repairs

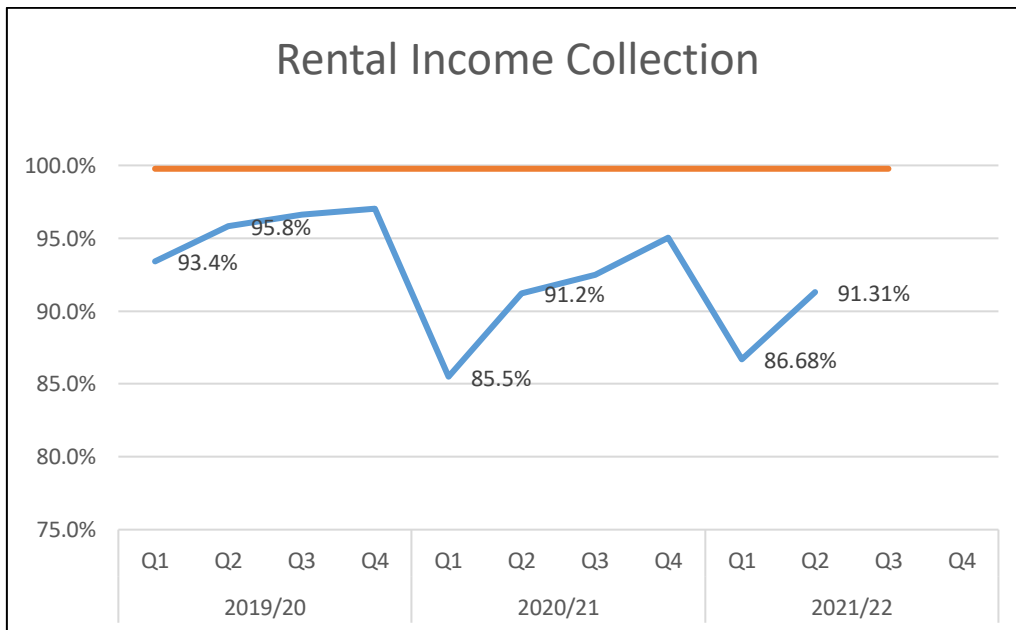
4.1 Voids

The average re-let time for a void property between July to September 2021 (Q2) was 31.65 days, which is above the quarterly target of 21 days. This is however lower than in Q2 2020/21 when the average re let time was 45.38. The Covid 19 pandemic has made it increasingly difficult to conduct repairs and maintenance on void properties due to supply chain delays.

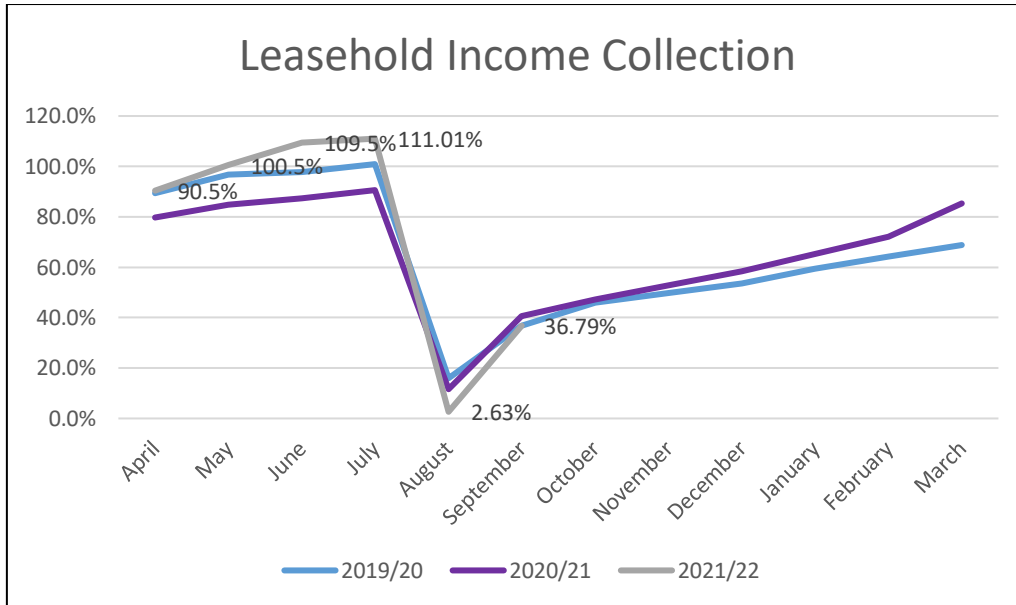


4.2 Income collection

The yearly target for rental income collection is 98.7%. The level of rental income collection in Q2 2021/22 is similar to Q2 in 2020/21.



The yearly target for leasehold income collection is 100%. Invoices are produced annually and issued in August. In order to help tenants budget, service charges can be paid by monthly instalments. The percentage of leasehold income collection is slightly lower at 36.79% in September 2021 in comparison to 40.5% in September 2020.

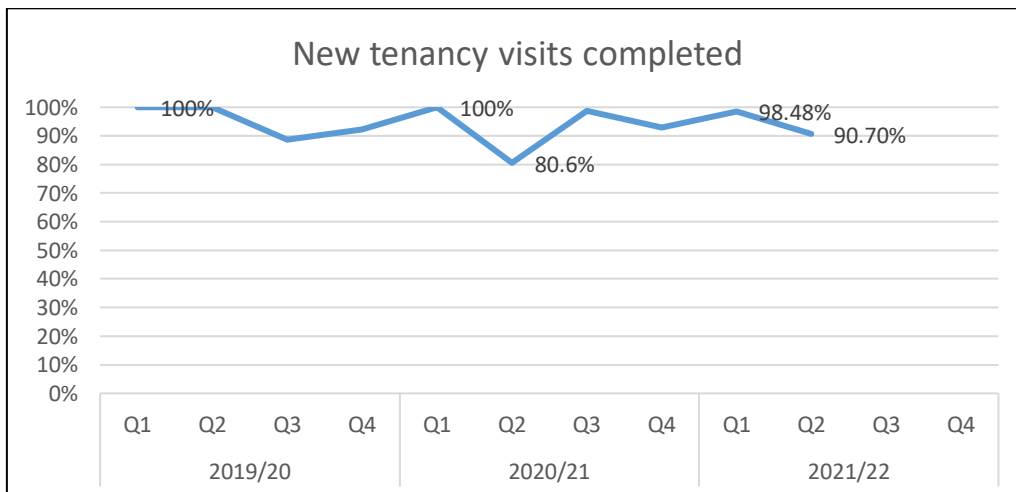


4.3 Number of arrears evictions

The eviction ban, that was put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic to protect renters, came to an end on 31 May in England. Woking Borough Council continues to work collectively with New Vision Homes, along with other agencies, to support tenants to avoid eviction. There have been two evictions in Q2 2021/22.

4.4 Customer experience

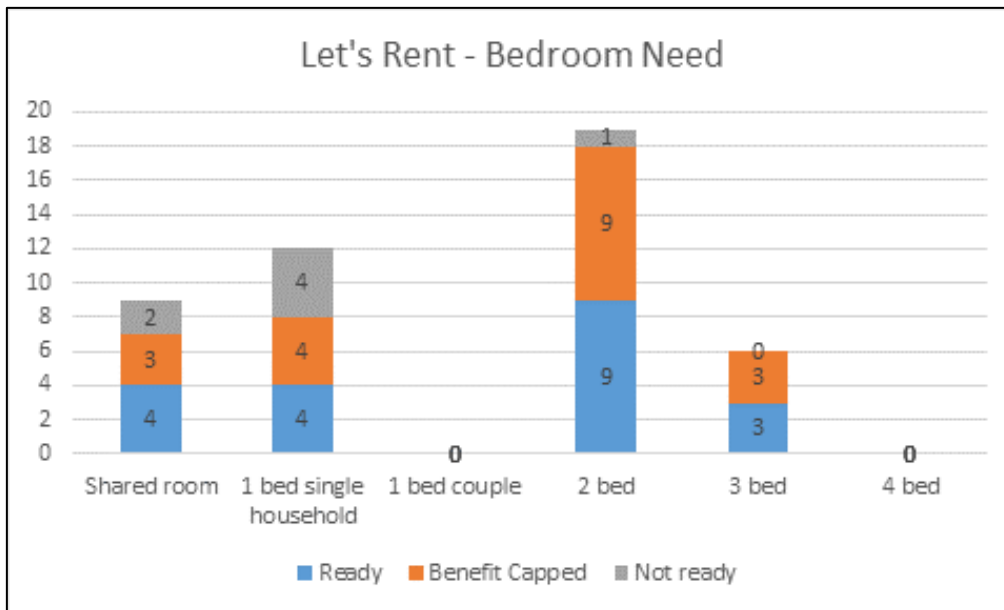
In Q2, 90.70% of new tenancy visits were completed. The chart below shows that the percentage of new tenancy visits is higher in Q2 2021/22 in comparison to Q2 2020/21.



5. Private Sector Housing

5.1 Let's Rent

The Let's Rent service procures and supports tenancy sustainment for households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This remit has recently expanded to assist Rough Sleepers or those at risk of Rough Sleeping. Let's Rent ensures that Woking Borough Council can discharge its homeless duties by procuring long term suitable accommodation. The service provides landlord incentives and advice and support to tenants and landlords. Between July and September 2021, 98 households have been referred to the Let's Rent scheme. The chart below shows the bedroom need of those referred to Let's Rent.



The tables below show the number of tenancies that have been secured through Let's Rent between 1st July 2021 and 21st October 2021.

New and current tenancies by service:

	01/07/21 – 21/10/2021	Total current
Connect	7	68
Core	9	152
Complete	3	66
Historical schemes	0	111
Total	19	379

Tenancies by landlord type:

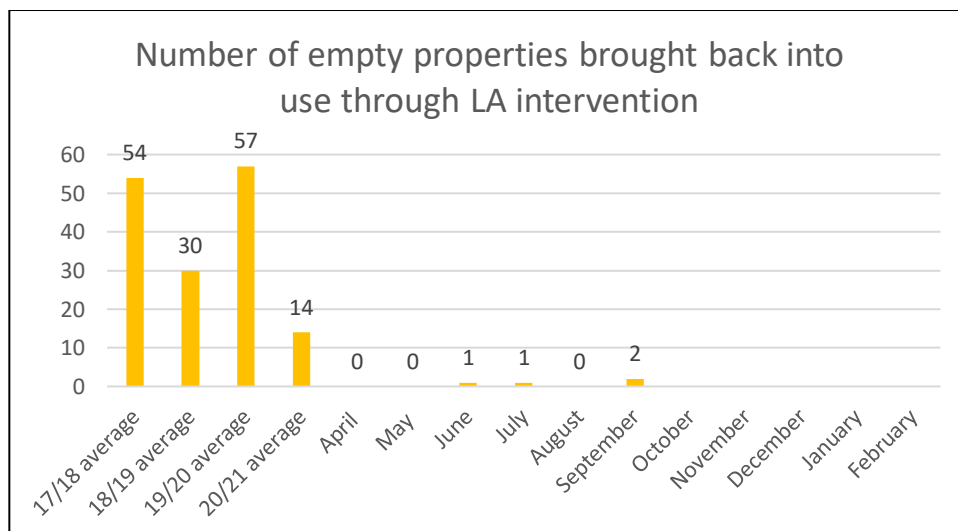
	Private	Letting Agent	THL	HA	Total current
Connect	47	15	6	0	68
Core	24	71	50	7	152
Complete	62	0	4	0	66
Total	133	86	60	7	286

Tenancies by rent level:

	LHA	Above LHA	Below LHA	Total
Connect	68	0	0	68
Core	3	99	50	152
Complete	66	0	0	66
Total	137	99	50	286

5.2 Empty homes

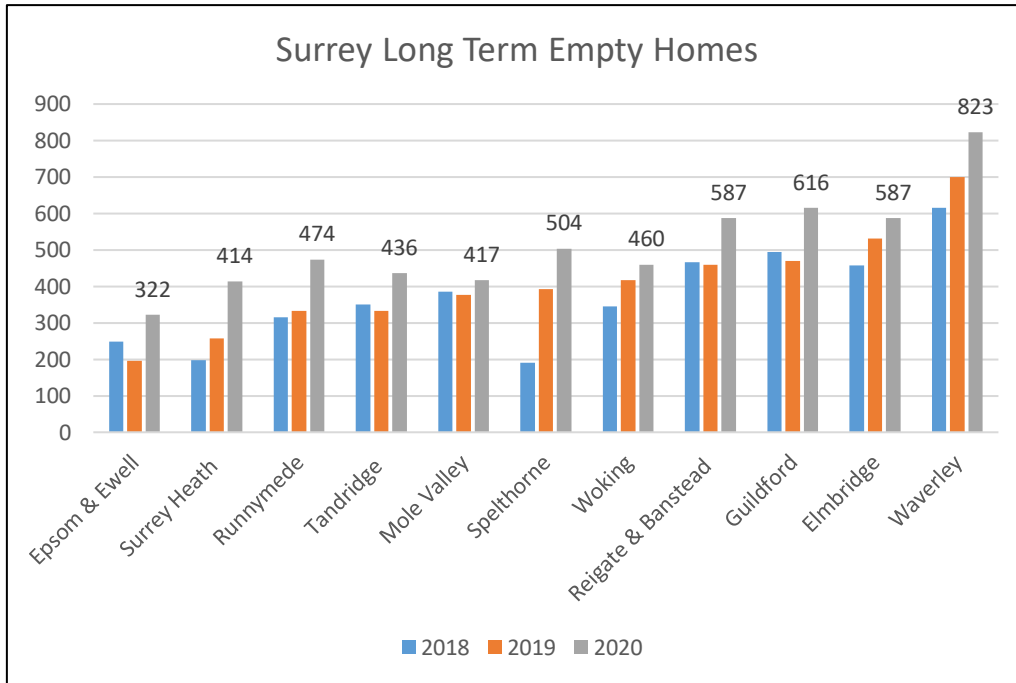
The annual target for the number of properties to be brought back into use through local authority intervention is 40. As at October 2021, 4 properties have been brought back into use this financial year.



Since April 2019, long term premium empty properties (empty for more than two years) attract a 100% Council Tax premium. As at September 2021, there were 109 long term empty premium properties. As at September 2021, there were 381 long term empty properties (6-24 months) and this has increased by 33 properties since June 2021. 33

of the long term empty premium and 25 of the long term empty properties were in Sheerwater which are deliberately empty and will be brought back in to use through the regeneration project.

In 2020⁶, Woking had 460 long term empty homes which was a 9% increase from 2019.



5.3 Housing Standards

Under the Housing Act 2004, the Council has the delegated powers to implement a selective licensing scheme, which aims to improve the standard of privately rented properties and the health and wellbeing of private tenants in the Canalside Ward. Following a decision by Full Council on 19 October 2017, private landlords or their managing agents renting properties in this area are required to have a license for each privately rented property. As at June 2021, there were 875 homes licensed in Canalside under the selective licensing scheme. In addition, there are currently 75 houses in multiple occupation (HMO) that are licensed. Between July to September 2021, there have been 3 improvement notice served and 21 properties have improved.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants#history>

6. Glossary

Affordable housing	Affordable housing, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework, is housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market.
Benefit cap	The benefit cap is a limit on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can get.
Extra care	Extra care housing is a type of specialist housing for people with care and support needs, including older or disabled people and those with long term conditions.
General needs housing	General Needs Housing applies to general family housing and dwellings for singles and couples.
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen.
Housing benefit	Housing Benefit is a national welfare benefit administered by local councils. It is designed to help people on low incomes in rented accommodation.
Let's Rent Scheme	The Let's Rent Scheme offers private landlords long-term tenancies via a range of professional letting services with no fees or commission. There are no hidden charges and net income will be comparable with many letting agents' offers. We offer 3 letting management services – Core, Connect and Complete. The differences between these services can be found on our website .
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	Local housing allowance (LHA) rates are used to work out how much universal credit or housing benefit you get if you rent from a private landlord.

Shared ownership	Shared Ownership is a type of affordable home ownership that offers the chance to buy a share of your home (between 25% and 75% of the home's value) and pay rent on the remaining share. Later on, it is possible to buy bigger shares.
Universal credit	Universal Credit is a new, single monthly payment merging six benefits into one. It is for working age claimants.