

Wandsworth Housing and Regeneration Department
2019/20 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 (2019-2020)

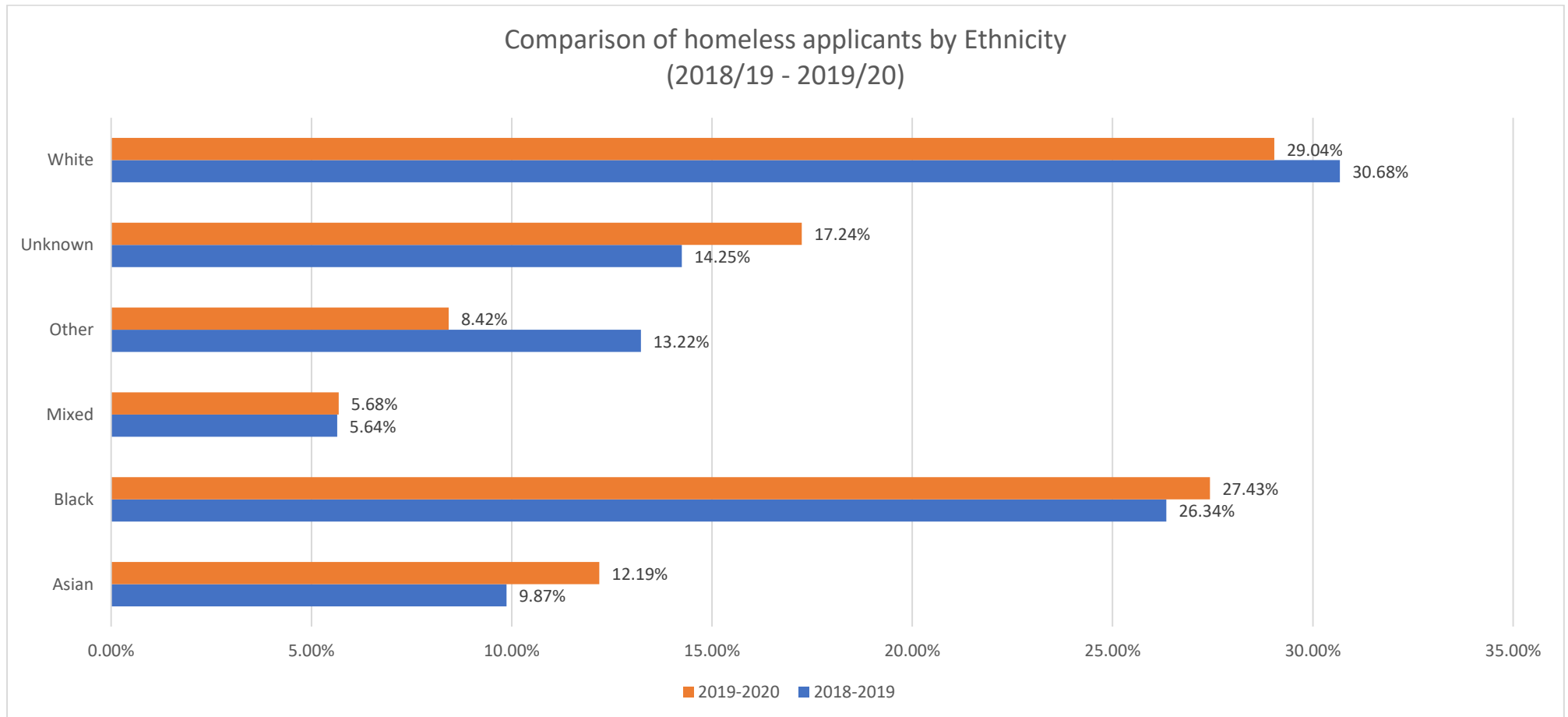
		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Unknown	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	741	145	311	700	215	440	2552
	%	29.04%	5.68%	12.19%	27.43%	8.42%	17.24%	100.00%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	249	49	152	249	102	166	967
	%	25.75%	5.07%	15.72%	25.75%	10.55%	17.17%	100.00%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	12	4	2	11	1	3	33
	%	36.36%	12.12%	6.06%	33.33%	3.03%	9.09%	100.00%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	26	5	13	27	5	9	85
	%	30.59%	5.88%	15.29%	31.76%	5.88%	10.59%	100.00%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	18	2	3	20	5	10	58
	%	31.03%	3.45%	5.17%	34.48%	8.62%	17.24%	100.00%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	24	6	10	12	5	5	68
	%	35.29%	8.82%	14.71%	17.65%	7.35%	7.35%	100.00%
Cases not accepted: no duty to house	No.	24	4	4	17	5	13	67
	%	35.82%	5.97%	5.97%	25.37%	7.46%	19.40%	100.00%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	115	28	62	116	66	61	448
	%	25.67%	6.25%	13.84%	25.89%	14.73%	13.62%	100.00%

* 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 2019/20, there was a 10% decrease in the number of applications recorded by the Housing Options team, and this is likely due to the Council's IT system being replaced and a delay in applications being registered resulting from this. The number of recorded applications was therefore lower for most ethnic groups, though the Asian ethnic group saw an 11% increase in recorded applications from 280 in 2018/19 to 311 in 2019/20.

In 2019/20, 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 groups both received a smaller proportion of acceptances (25.67%/25.89%) when compared to the number of homeless applications received (29.04%/27.43%). The other ethnic group had the greatest difference, representing 8.42% of applicants while contributing 14.73% of all accepted cases.

For the percentage of cases not accepted, the white ethnic group received a disproportionate number of negative decisions with 35.82% of cases not accepted while representing 29.04% of applications received. The number of households who were not accepted was proportionate for all other ethnic groups when compared to the number of applications received, with the exception of the Asian ethnic group, who represented 12.19% of all applicants, though made up 5.97% of cases not accepted.



The percentage breakdown of homeless applications across all ethnic groups has remained largely the same in 2019/20 when compared to 2018/19. The group with the largest difference is the other ethnic group, which represented 13.22% of all applications in 2018/19 and now represents 8.42% of all applications, while the Asian ethnic group saw an increase in representation of applications in 2019/20 at 12.19% compared to 9.87% in 2018/19.

Housing Advice and Homelessness Cases by Gender *

		Female with Children	Female without Children	Male with Children	Male without Children	Total
Homeless applications received	No.	714	640	225	973	2552
	%	27.98%	25.08%	8.82%	38.13%	100.00%
Cases admitted into temporary accommodation	No.	336	211	139	281	967
	%	34.75%	21.82%	14.37%	29.06%	100%
Prevention duty: cases closed	No.	6	12	1	14	33
	%	18.18%	36.36%	3.03%	42.42%	100.00%
Homeless cases prevented *	No.	28	17	9	31	85
	%	32.94%	20.00%	10.59%	36.47%	100.00%
Relief duty: cases closed	No.	9	16	2	31	58
	%	15.52%	27.59%	3.45%	53.45%	100.00%
Homeless cases relieved *	No.	24	17	2	25	68
	%	35.29%	25.00%	2.94%	36.76%	100.00%
Cases not accepted: no duty to house	No.	18	15	2	32	67
	%	26.87%	22.39%	2.99%	47.76%	100.00%
Cases accepted: duty to house	No.	218	52	72	103	445
	%	48.99%	11.69%	16.18%	23.15%	100.00%

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

The largest gender group was male without children, representing 38.13% of all applicants. Similarly, males without children also contributed to the highest number of negative decisions served representing 47.76%, and is disproportionate when compared to the percentage of applications received. In addition, female without children represent 22.39% of negative decisions served, while making up 25.08% of all applications received, meaning that females without children receive fewer negative decisions than males without children.

Similar to previous years, female with children represented the largest group of accepted homeless cases (48.99%), and male with children also received a higher proportion of positive decisions (16.18%) when compared to the number of applications received (8.82%). This will almost certainly be due to their having a priority need of dependent children.

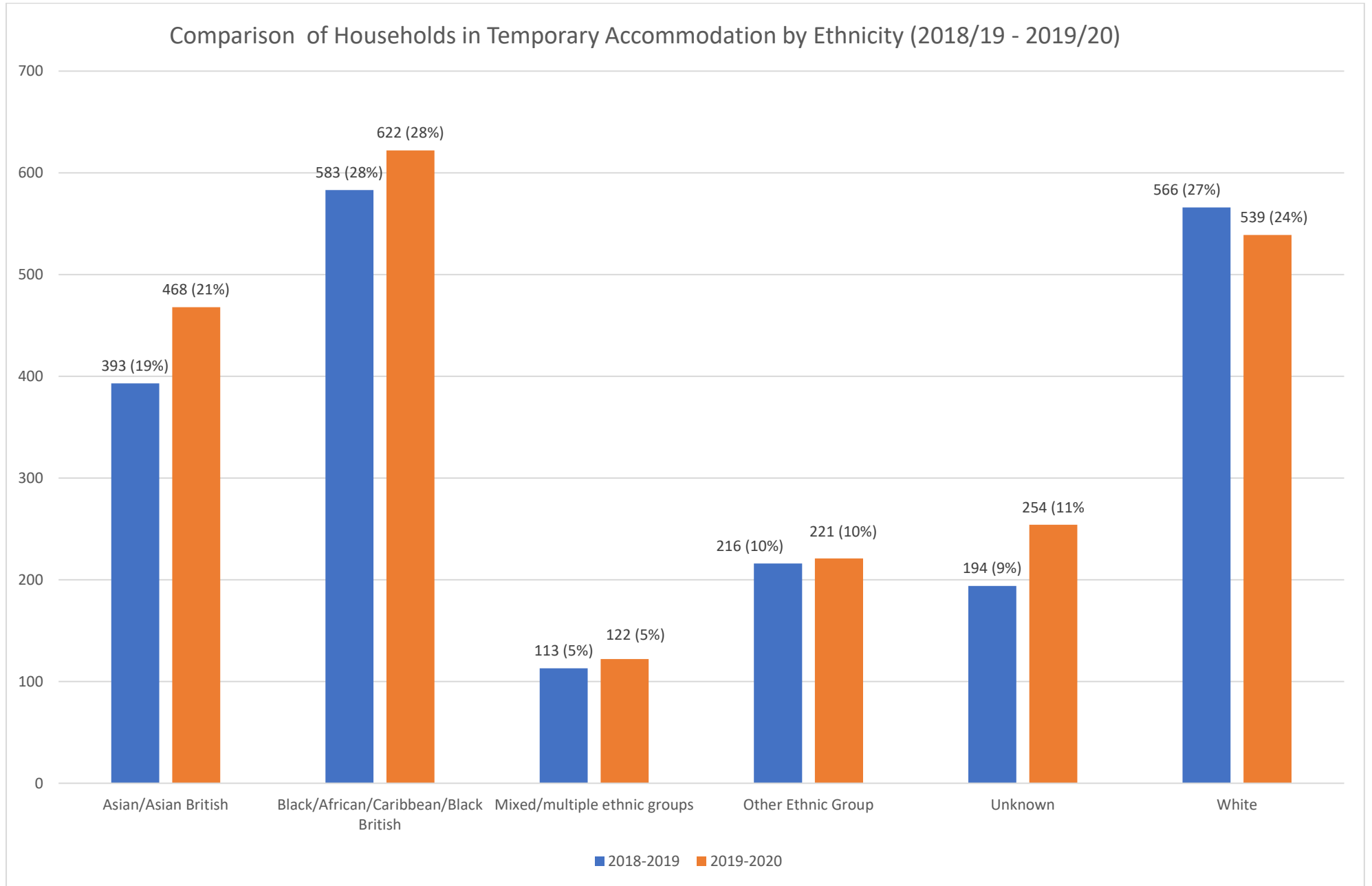
Households in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group

There has been a 7.8% increase in the number of households being placed into temporary accommodation when compared to the previous year (2,065 in 2018/19 to 2,226 in 2019/20). Similar to 2018/19, the black ethnic group remains the largest group accommodated (28%). This figure is much higher than is found within the borough demographic as members of the black ethnic group constitute approximately 10% of the population (Census, 2011). The white ethnic group is the second largest group accommodated, though this group has decreased in temporary accommodation placements from 27% in 2018/19 to 24% in 2019/20.

Households in Temporary Accommodation *		White	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other	Not asked	Total
2018/19	No.	566	113	393	583	216	194	2065
	%	27%	5%	19%	28%	10%	9%	100%
2019/20	No.	539	122	468	622	221	254	2226
	%	24%	5%	21%	28%	10%	11%	100%

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

As can be seen from the graph below, the distribution of ethnic groups that were placed in temporary accommodation is similar for the years 2018/19 and 2019/20. In keeping with the increase in placements being made all groups have increased in numbers with the exception of the white ethnic group. The Asian group had one of the largest increases by percentage in placements (19%) with 393 placements in 2018/19 to 468 placements in 2019/20.



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

The number of B&B placements being made has increased by 6% since 2018/19.

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
2018/19	No.	41	4	20	27	13	18	123
	%	33%	3%	16%	22%	11%	15%	100%
2019/20	No.	34	5	22	30	17	22	130
	%	26%	4%	17%	23%	13%	17%	100%

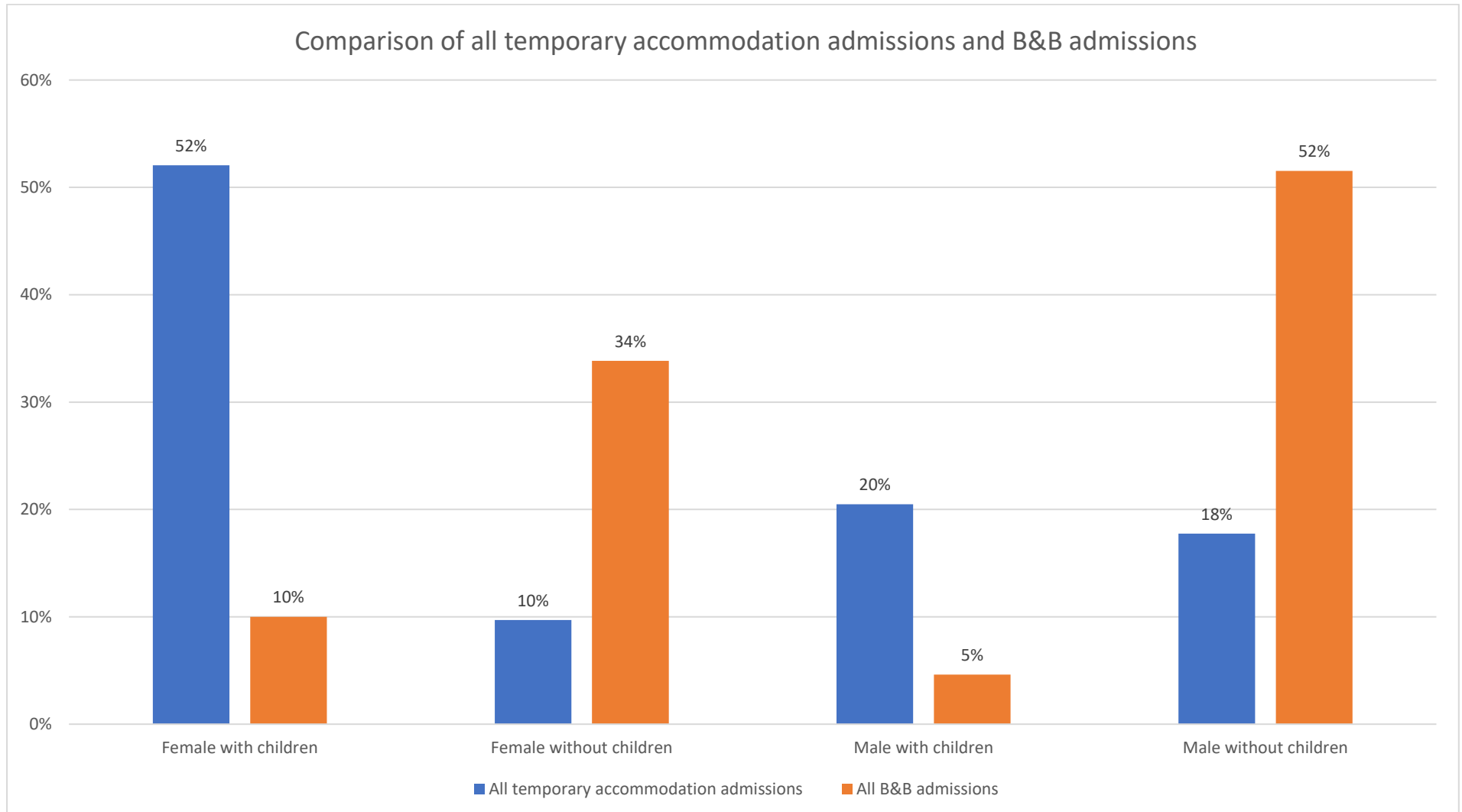
Where applicants are placed in B&B accommodation that is not self-contained, the largest proportion are in the white ethnic group at 26%, which is a decrease from 33% in the preceding year. The number of B&B placements for the white ethnic group (26%) is also in proportion to the number of overall temporary accommodation placements (26%). The next largest ethnic group placed into B&B accommodation is the black ethnic group at 23%, which is slightly under proportion when compared to the overall percentage of temporary accommodation placements (26%) for this group. The proportion of B&B placements when compared to the cases admitted into temporary accommodation is broadly in proportion across all other ethnic groups.

Households in Temporary Accommodation by Gender

Households in Temporary Accommodation		Female with children	Female without children	Male with children	Male without children	Total
2019/20	Total number in temporary accommodation	1159	216	456	395	2226
	%	52%	10%	20%	18%	100%
	B&B (not self-contained)	13	44	6	67	130
	%	10%	34%	5%	52%	100%

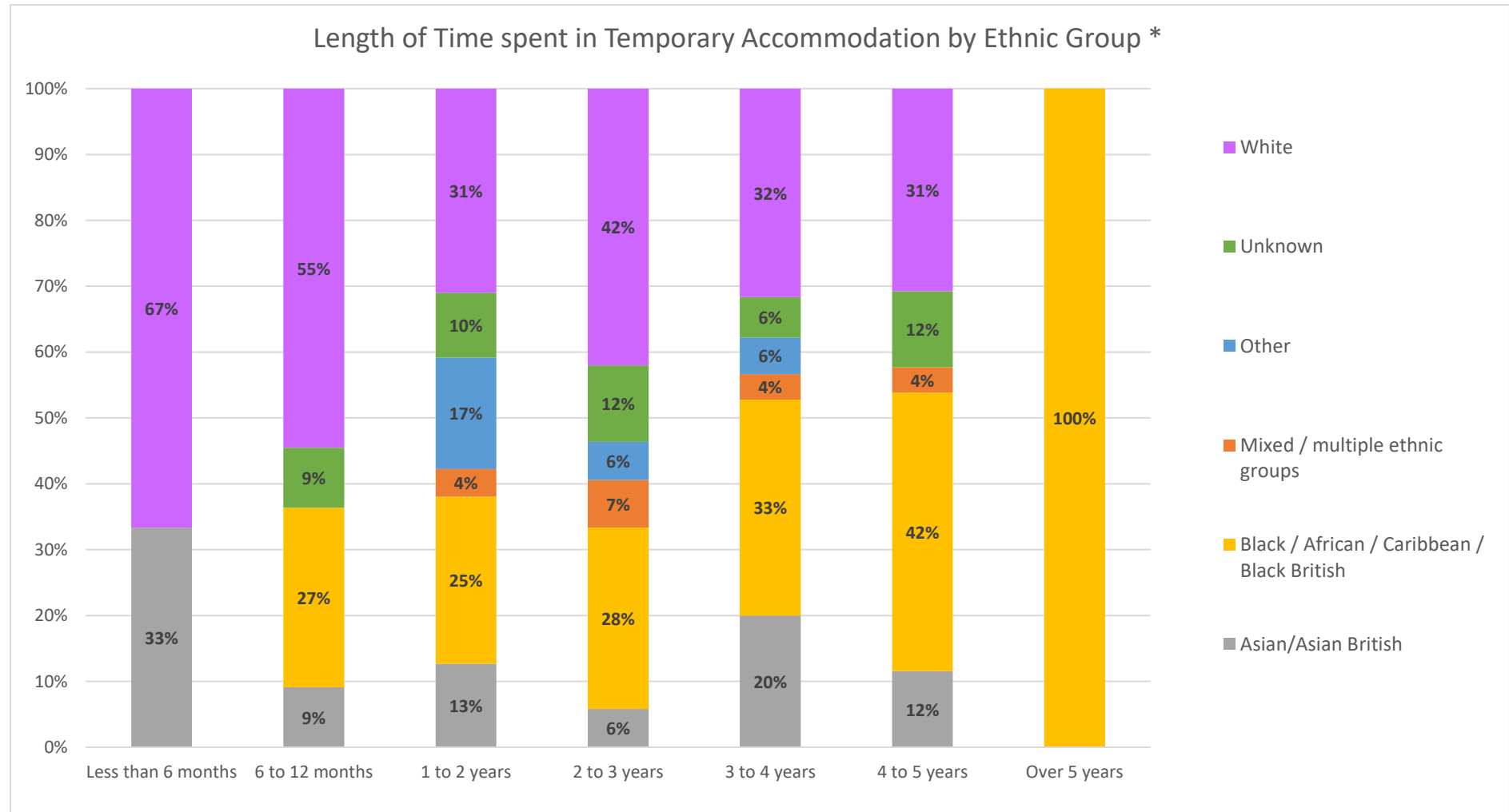
The largest proportion of applicants in any type of temporary accommodation are households with children. The combined total of these groups is 1,615 households which equates to 72% of all households placed into temporary accommodation, which is similar to 2018/19's figure of 71%.

The graph below demonstrates the percentage of households in temporary accommodation compared to the total number of households in B&B.



The largest proportion of applicants accommodated in B&B that is not self-contained is households without children. A total of 111 households make up this group which equates to 85% 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.

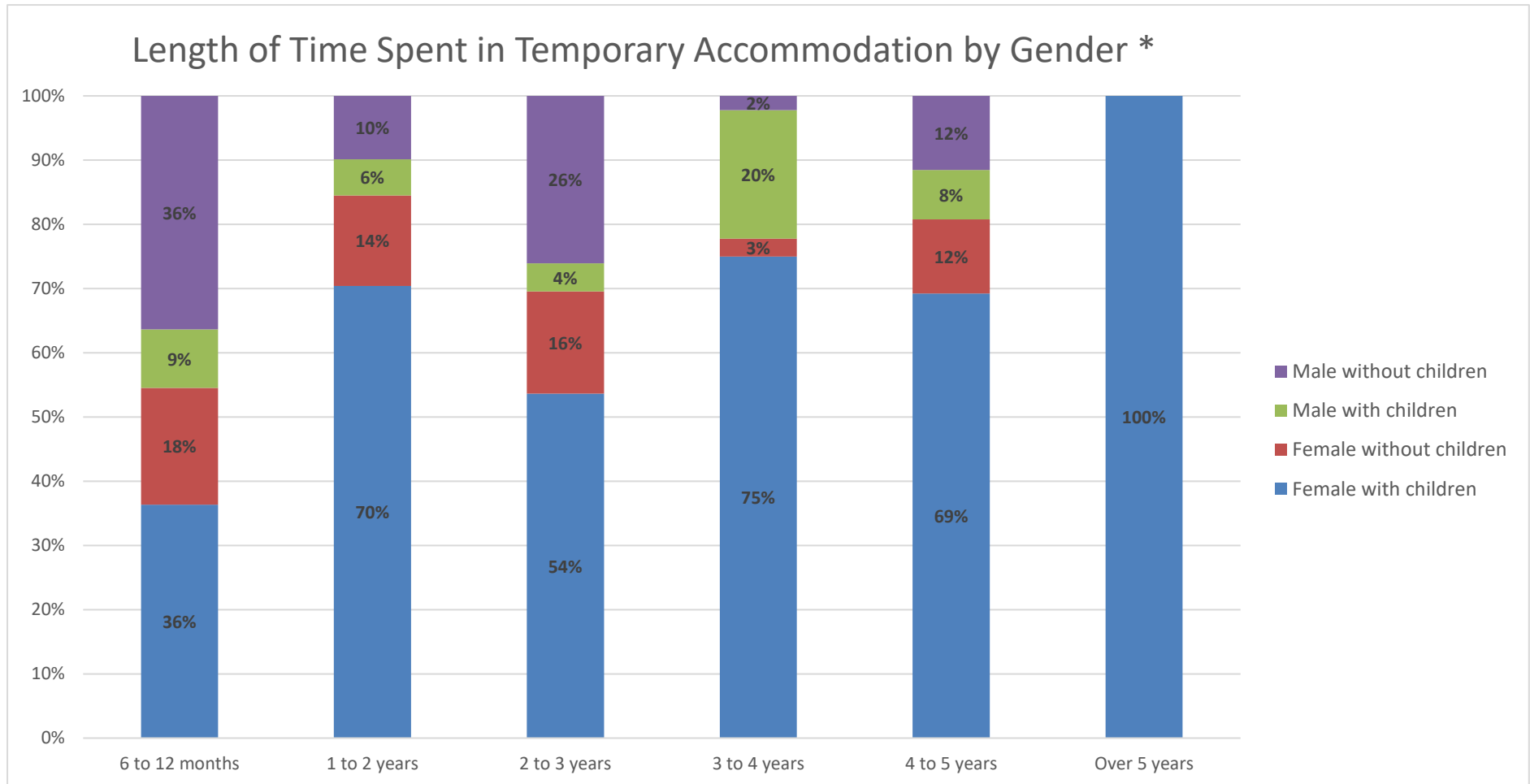
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Ethnic Group



* 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 ethnic group represent the largest group for the least amount of time spent in temporary accommodation, representing 67% of those accommodated for less than 6 months, and 55% for those accommodated for 6 to 12 months, compared to 27% of those accommodated for 6 to 12 months for the black ethnic group. The black ethnic group is the only group accommodated for over 5 years, however it should be noted that this category only had a single household which encompasses the full 100%.

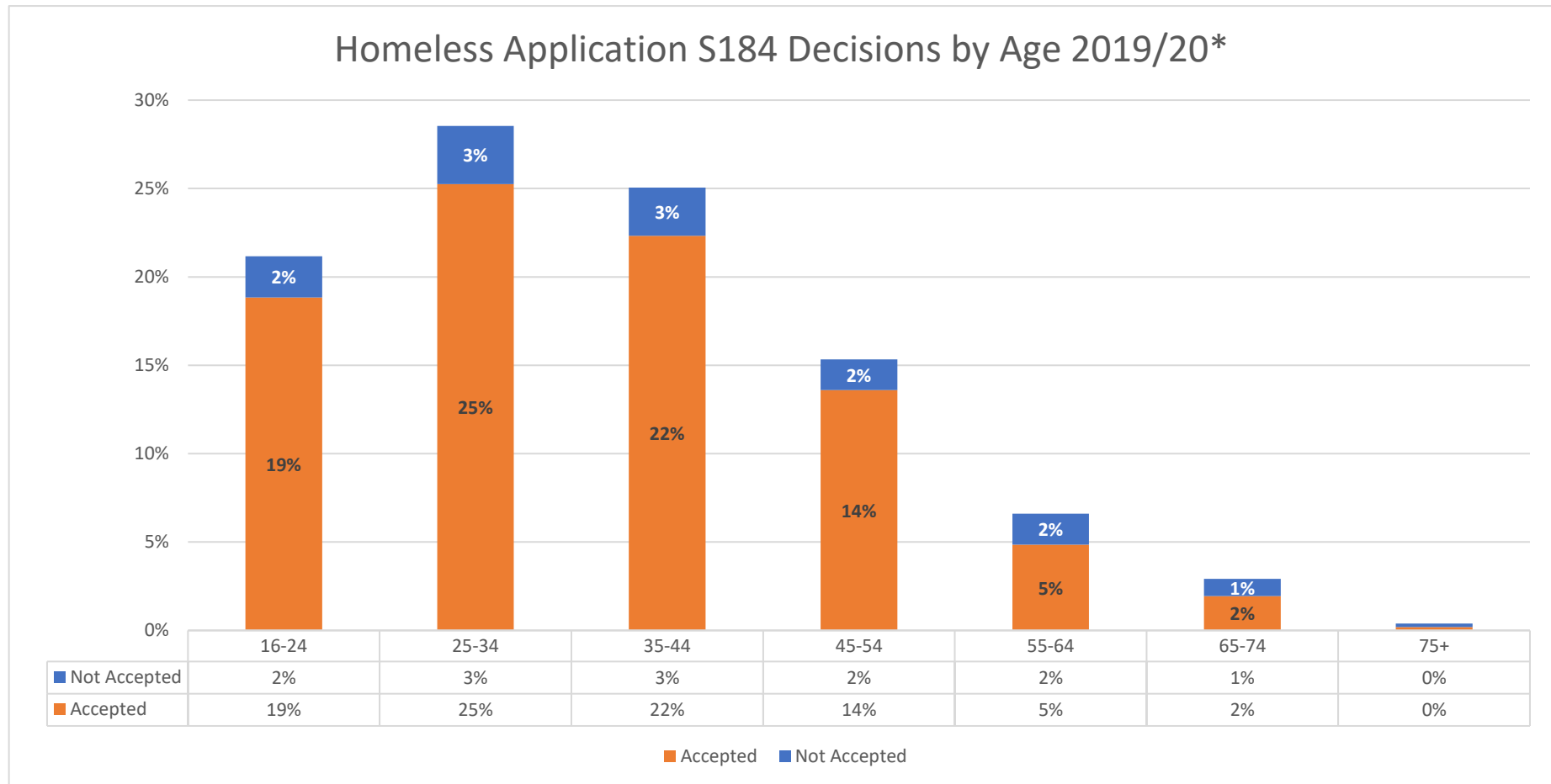
Length of Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation by Gender



* 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 50% 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

In 2019/20 the largest percentage of decisions issued were to the 25-34 & 35-44 age groups which equated to 54% of all section 184s served. When comparing the type of decision issued to each age category as a distinct group, there is little variation though the age groups of 16-24 through to 45-54 received the highest percentage of positive decisions at 88-89% respectively.

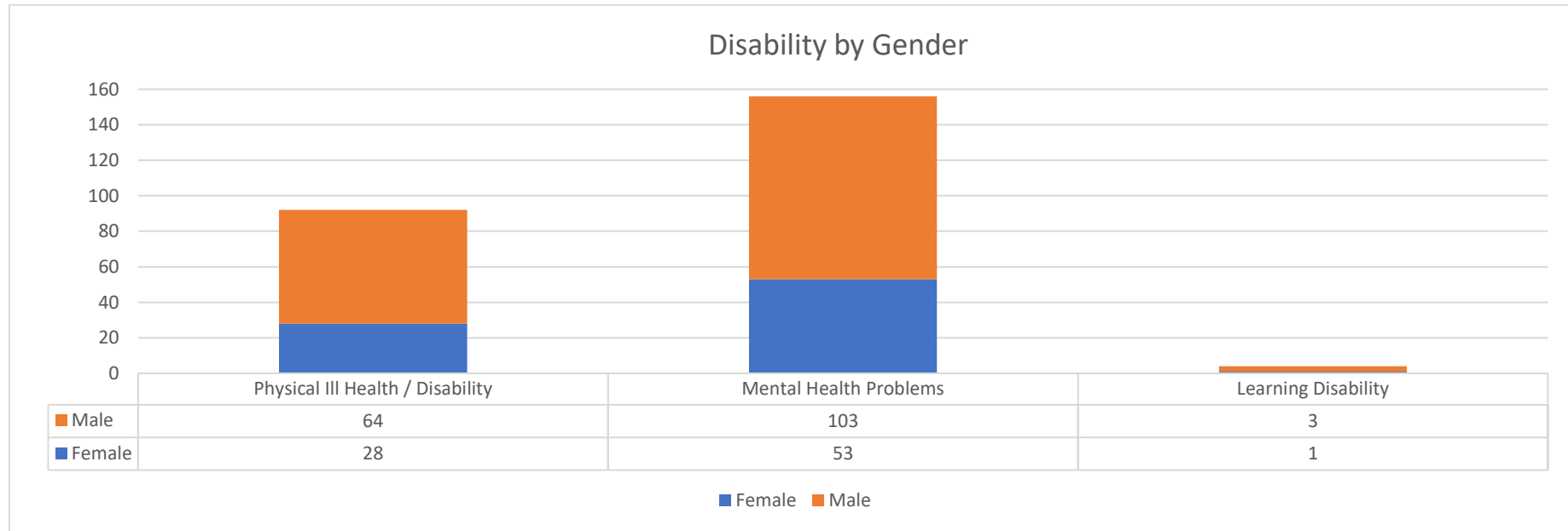
Accepted Housing Duty by Age

Age	Accepted Housing Duty (2018/19)	Percentage of Accepted Cases	Accepted Housing Duty (2019/20)	Percentage of Accepted Cases
16-24	90	18%	97	22%
25-34	131	27%	130	29%
35-44	149	31%	115	26%
45-54	70	14%	70	16%
55-64	32	7%	25	6%
65-74	12	2%	10	2%
75-84	4	1%	1	<1%

The total number of s184 decisions issued across all age groups in 2019/20 had fallen by approximately 8% when compared to the previous year. The distribution of positive decisions by age group is similar for both years with the noticeable change being that the age group of 35-44 was previously the largest group receiving positive decisions in 2018/19, and 25-34 age group is the largest group who received positive decisions in 2019/20.

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 nearly 62% of all disabilities. Learning disability is the lowest identified disability, with 3 males identified as having a learning disability compared to 1 female.

Disability identified at HRA Assessment and Disability Confirmed at Main Duty

Disability Identified at HRA Assessment		Female	Male	Total
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	22	49	71
	%	30.99%	69.01%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	46	81	127
	%	36.22%	63.78%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	1	2	3
	%	33.33%	66.67%	100.00%
Disability Confirmed at Main Duty				
Physical Ill Health / Disability	No.	6	15	21
	%	28.57%	71.43%	100.00%
Mental Health Problems	No.	7	22	29
	%	24.14%	75.86%	100.00%
Learning Disability	No.	0	1	1
	%	0.00%	100.00%	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 67-76% of all identified disabilities. The majority of applicants have their disability identified during the HRA assessment.