

Highland Housing Register

Allocations Monitoring Report 2016/2017

1. Introduction

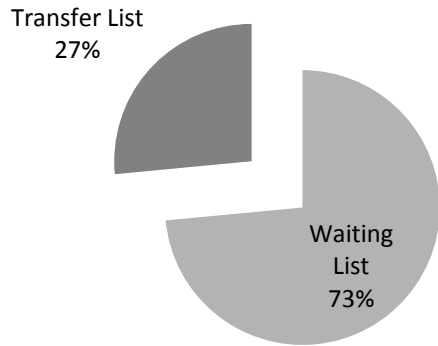
- 1.1.1 The Highland Housing Register Allocations Policy sets out details for annual performance monitoring. The Aims of the Policy are:
- to provide housing to those in the greatest need, dependant on individual circumstances;
 - to help to prevent and deal with homelessness;
 - to help create and maintain strong and economically viable communities;
 - to work with our partner HHR landlords to provide suitable housing for those with special needs;
 - to make the best use of the housing available;
 - to give applicants a range of choices of housing;
 - to help applicants move within the Highland area, and from other parts of the UK; and
 - to inform the Highland Council's planning processes.
- 1.2 This report relates to the period 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017. It contains monitoring information and commentary summarising how the housing allocations policy has operated over the last year.
- 1.3 The figures are for all the Highland Housing Register Partners and not just the Highland Council.

2. Monitoring Information

2.1 Applications

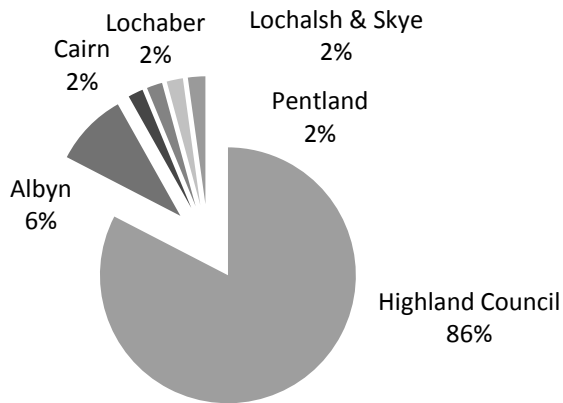
- 2.1.1 There were a total of 7,721 applications at 31 March 2017, compared to 7,331 at 31 March 2016, an increase of 390. This is the first year in 4 years that we have seen an increase in the number of applicants looking for social renting. One factor in this is the uptake of the online form for applying to the Highland Housing register which now accounts for 21% of all applications held since its launch in November 2015.
- 2.1.2 Chart 1 shows the percentage of all Highland Housing Register applications broken down by those seeking a social rented tenancy from an HHR partner (Housing List: 5,642 applicants) and those from existing tenants seeking to transfer to another property: (Transfer List: 2,079 applicants). The proportions last year were 5,359 (73%) Housing List and 1,936 (27%) Transfer List.

Chart 1 - HHR Waiting List



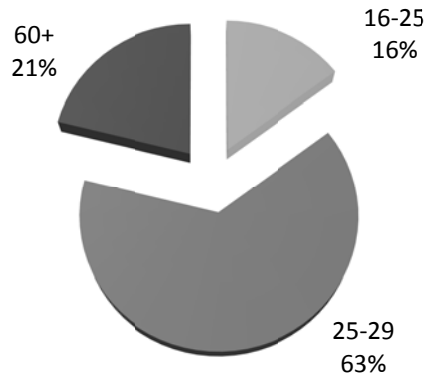
2.1.3 Chart 2 shows the number of applications each partner received. There were a total of 4,796 applications received last year. The partner who received the most applications was The Highland Council with 4,156, then Albyn Housing with 322, Lochalsh and Skye Association with 87, Pentland Housing with 83, Cairn Housing with 79 and then Lochaber Housing Association with 69. The numbers of applications received have remained fairly static for the last few years.

Chart 2 - No of Applications Received



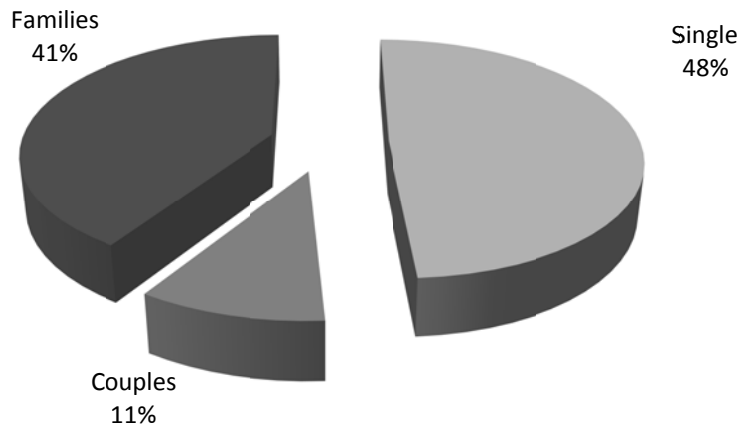
2.1.4 Chart 3 shows the total number of applicants broken down by age group. It shows that the largest group continues to be 25-59 which has remained at 63% of all applicants. The 60+ group has remained static at 21% and the 16-25 group has increased by 1% to 16%.

Chart 3 - Age Group



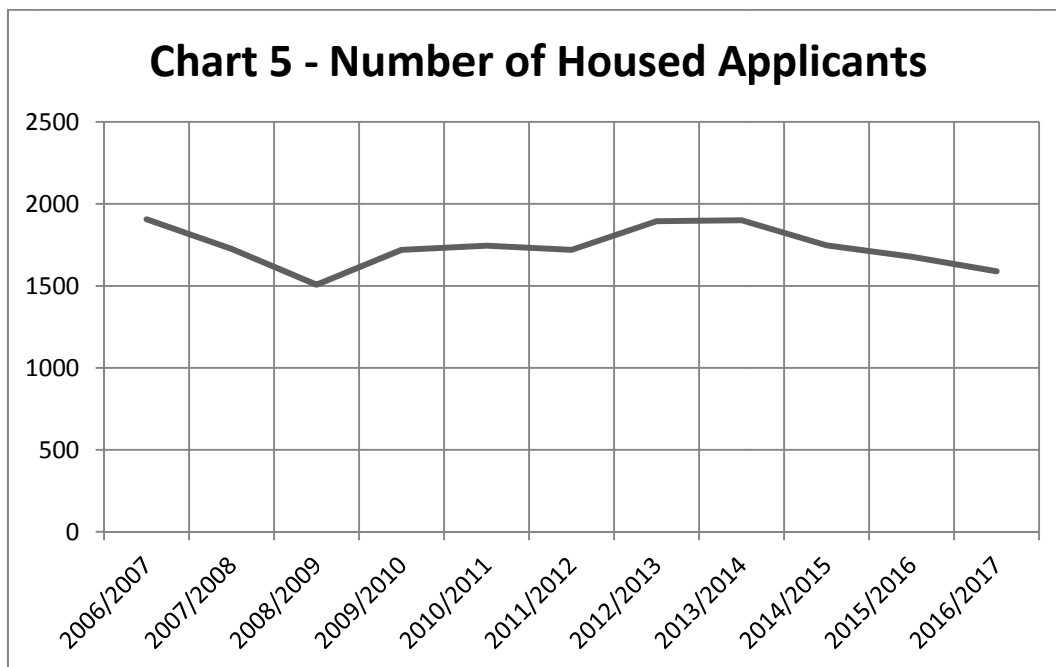
2.1.5 Chart 4 shows the number of applications by household type. It shows that the largest group continues to be single applicants (48%), with applications from couples at 11% and applications from families at 41%. The relative proportions are broadly similar to those reported last year.

Chart 4 - Household Type



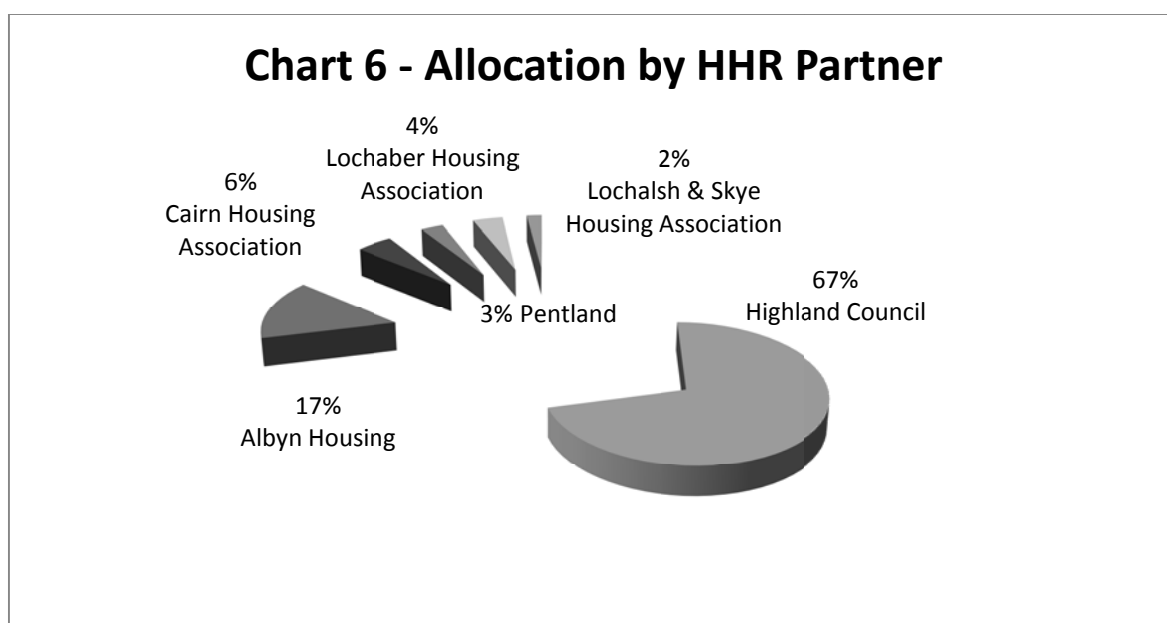
2.2 Allocations

2.2.1 Chart 5 shows that 1,589 applicants were housed in 2016/17 and shows the trend in applicants housed over time. It shows there has been a very slight decrease in the numbers housed in the last year.

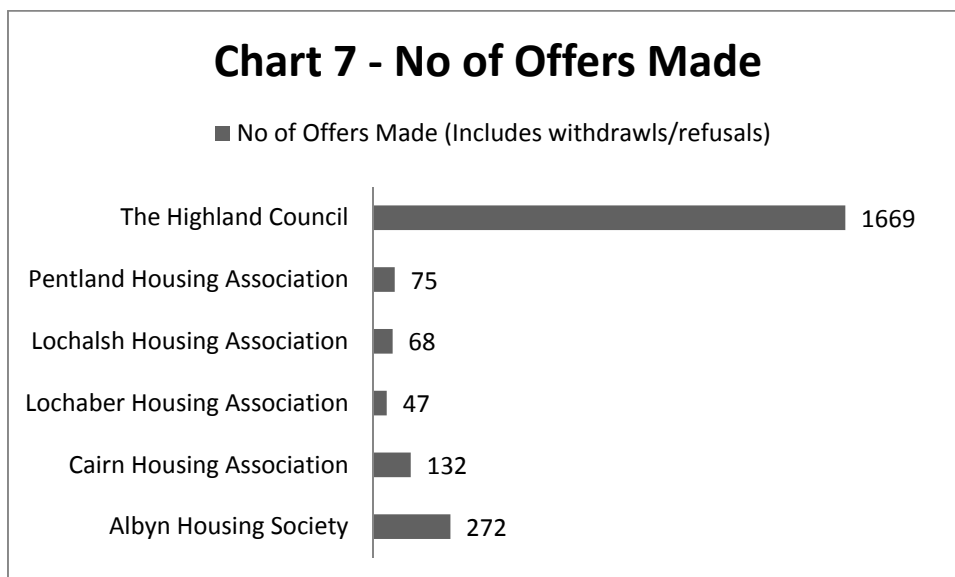


2.2.2 Of the 1,589 applicants housed in 2016/17, 1,189 (75%) were from the Housing List and 400 (25%) were from the Transfer List. Allocations to Highland Council houses accounted for 1,072 (67%) of all applicants housed, which is a 4% decrease on the previous year.

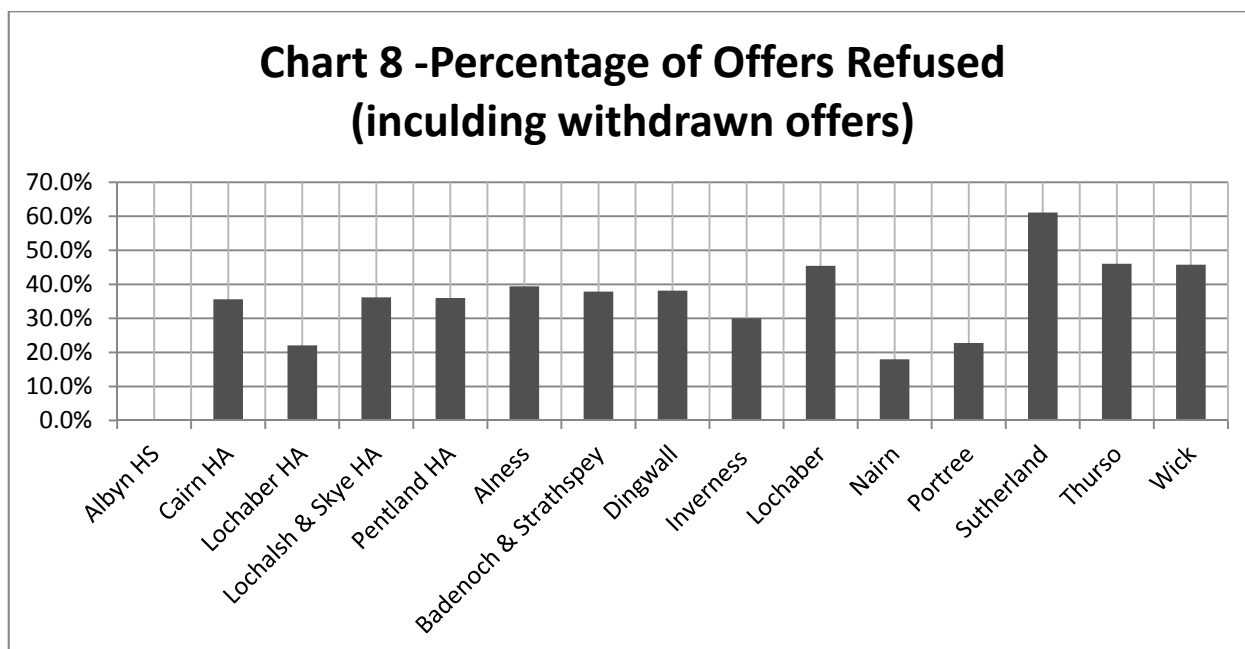
2.2.3 Chart 6 shows the breakdown of the proportion of applicants housed by individual HHR Partners. Albyn Housing (275) has risen by 2% Cairn (101), Lochaber Housing Association (57) and Pentland have all risen by 1%. Highland Council (1,072) has decreased by 4% and Lochalsh & Skye Housing association by 1%.



2.2.4 The Chart 7 below shows how many offers each partner made.



2.2.5 Chart 8 shows the percentage of all offers made by HHR partners which have been refused or withdrawn. Whilst there has been a reduction of over 173 refusals/withdrawn offers, the levels are still relatively high in Caithness despite Choice based lettings being in operation. The Sutherland office is experiencing a high level of refusals on properties due to the remote location of some of the stock. Highland Council is looking at initiatives to try and reduce the number of refusals, these include operating an accompanied viewing to properties, local advertising of properties and will be engaging local community councils to promote vacancies in the areas. If these initiatives do not look to reduce the number of refusals, consideration will need to be given to extending choice based lettings into Sutherland as well as Caithness.



2.2.7 The table below shows the comparison over the last 2 years in respect of all received, housed, cancelled and total applications held by each area office. This does not include reinstated applications within the reporting period or those housed by mutual exchange or through our participating landlords (Trust Housing Association, Key Housing etc.).

Area Office	Total Applications held - 31/03/16	Total Housed - 31/03/17	Total Cancelled - 31/03/17	Total New Apps Received - 31/03/17	Total Applications held - 31/03/17
Albyn HS	737	322	246	275	603
Cairn HA	381	79	118	101	314
Lochaber HA	157	69	47	57	137
Lochalsh & Skye HA	135	87	58	32	142
Pentland HA	101	83	39	52	90
Alness	419	353	209	150	440
Badenoch & Strathspey	356	181	105	41	375
Dingwall	753	546	299	107	827
Inverness	2521	1340	730	235	2784
Lochaber	621	464	264	98	632
Nairn	258	208	97	43	300
Portree	270	217	111	611	317
Sutherland	177	220	97	83	229
Thurso	21	299	133	115	275
Wick	235	328	153	139	256

2.3 Allocations – Ethnic Origins for Applicants & Housed Applicants

2.3.1 This section of the HHR application form is not compulsory and therefore the figures reported may not be fully representative of all applicants. There has also been a reduction in the volume of new monitoring forms returned this year. Since March 2017 the equal opportunities form has been incorporated into the main application form and it is hoped that this will provide us with better qualitative data going forward.

2.3.2 Chart 9 shows that the largest group of those who completed the form describe themselves as Scottish: 2,417 (78%) applicants and 429 (77%) housed applicants. British and Other White applicants are the next largest groups. Other ethnic minority groups account for a very much lower proportion of the overall housing register, however there is evidence that these groups are receiving housing outcomes through the policy.

Chart 9 – Applicants by Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Origin	Number of Applications	Number Housed
White Scottish	2417	381
White Other British	366	66
White Irish	14	2
White Gypsy/Traveller	3	2
White Polish	103	16
White Other	147	26
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic	5	1
Indian	5	-
Pakistani	3	1
Bangladeshi	2	2
Chinese	-	-
Other Asian	3	1
Caribbean	2	-
African	3	1
Other Black	6	1
Arab	2	-
Other Ethnic	6	1
Unknown	1	-
TOTAL	3088	498

2.4 Allocations – Letting Zones & Homeless Demand

2.4.1 Chart 10 shows the number of houses in each letting area; the number of applicants where the letting area is one of their choices for housing; and the number and percentage of applicants housed last year in each area, as well as the number and percentage of applicants with homeless priority.

Chart 10: Housing Supply Demand and Numbers Housed including Homeless Priority

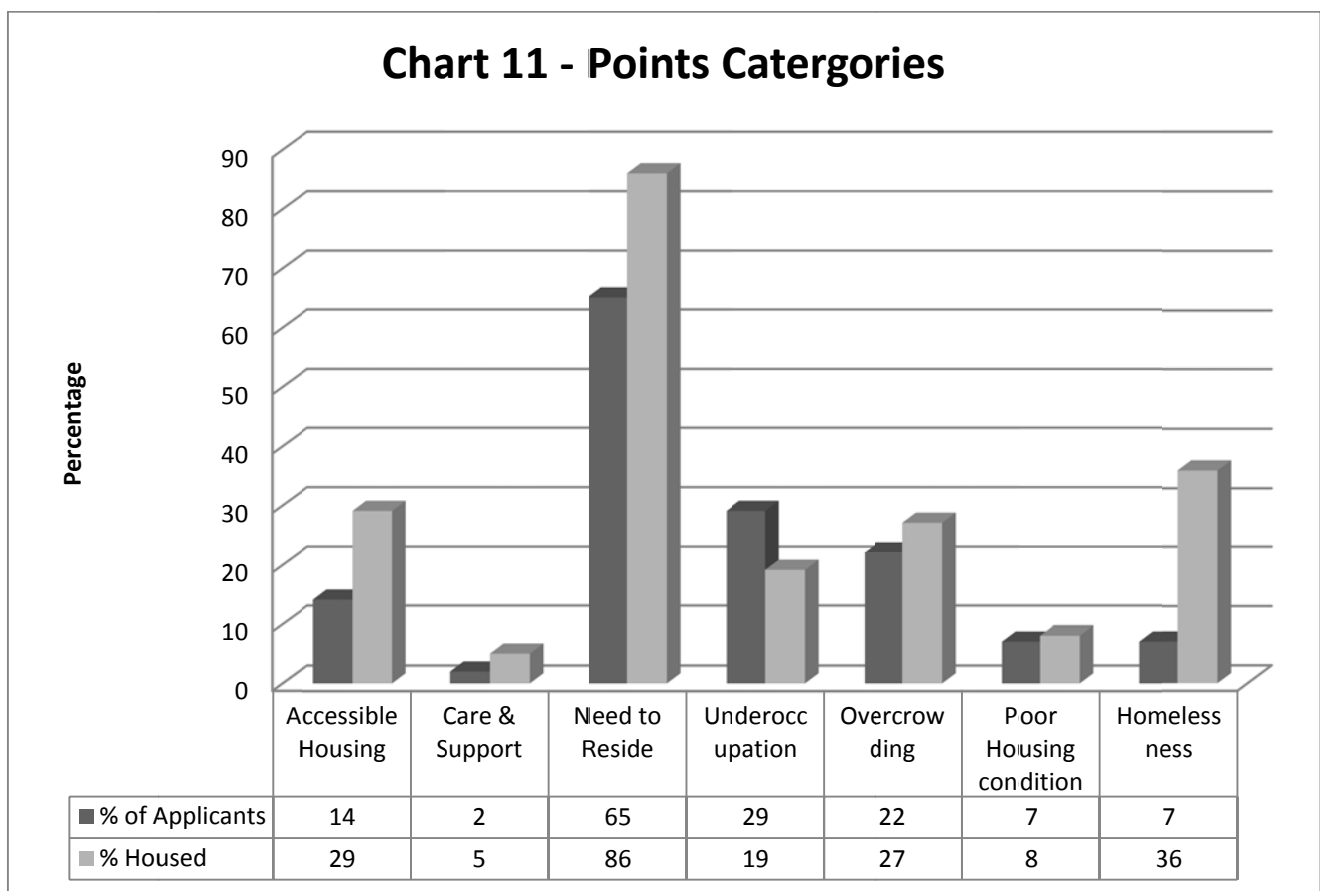
ZONE	Total Stock	Total Demand	Homeless Demand	Total Hsed	% Housed of Demand	Total Home Hsed	% of Homeless Housed of Total
Alness/Invergordon	2051	458	38	115	25%	45	39
Ardersier	1026	679	62	54	8%	23	43
Aviemore	490	271	17	18	7%	4	22
Beauly	266	142	3	16	11%	6	38
Black Isle	444	194	7	27	14%	7	26
Central Lochaber	1273	435	18	132	30%	71	54
East Caithness	1419	185	3	198	107%	26	13
East Sutherland	862	167	4	90	54%	11	12
Gairloch	135	39	1	17	44%	3	18
Grantown	229	107	5	12	11%	5	42
Inverness City	4489	1893	189	322	17%	201	62
Kingussie	166	64	-	20	31%	8	40
Lochalsh	241	75	4	20	27%	13	65
Lochcarron	113	52	1	12	23%	-	0
LochNess	193	100	1	6	6%	-	0
Mid Ross	1370	522	49	99	19%	49	49
Nairn	835	298	20	87	29%	28	32
North East Lochaber	86	27	-	3	11%	-	0
North Skye	613	227	22	67	30%	37	55
North West Sutherland	237	41	1	19	46%	2	11
Peninsula	135	46	-	18	39%	1	6
Rural Nairn	93	49	1	4	8%	-	0
South Lochaber	290	86	-	38	44%	3	8
South Skye	249	87	8	25	29%	11	44
Tain	777	158	5	65	41%	20	31
Tomatin	25	22	-	-	-	-	0
Ullapool	182	89	2	25	28%	8	32
West Caithness	1415	236	4	153	65%	18	12
West Lochaber	169	50	-	16	32%	1	6
TOTAL	19873	6799	465	1678	25%	601	36

2.4.2 This gives an overall view of relative housing supply / demand and pressure. It shows that in most areas of Highland, demand for housing far exceeds supply. A low percentage of people housed in comparison to the number of people seeking housing in an area is an indicator of housing pressure.

2.4.3 The proportion of homeless applicants housed has reduced in 2016/2017 to 547 homeless applicants housed compared to 601 in 2015/16 however the proportion of applicants with homeless status has risen by 140 to 642 in 2016/17. The proportions of lets to homeless households tends to reflect the general pattern of housing pressure, with a higher proportion of lets to homeless people in areas of greatest housing pressure.

2.5 Allocations – Points Category

2.5.1 Chart 11 shows the percentage of applicants who have been awarded points for housing need categories contained in the Allocations Policy compared to the percentage of applicants housed with these categories of points.

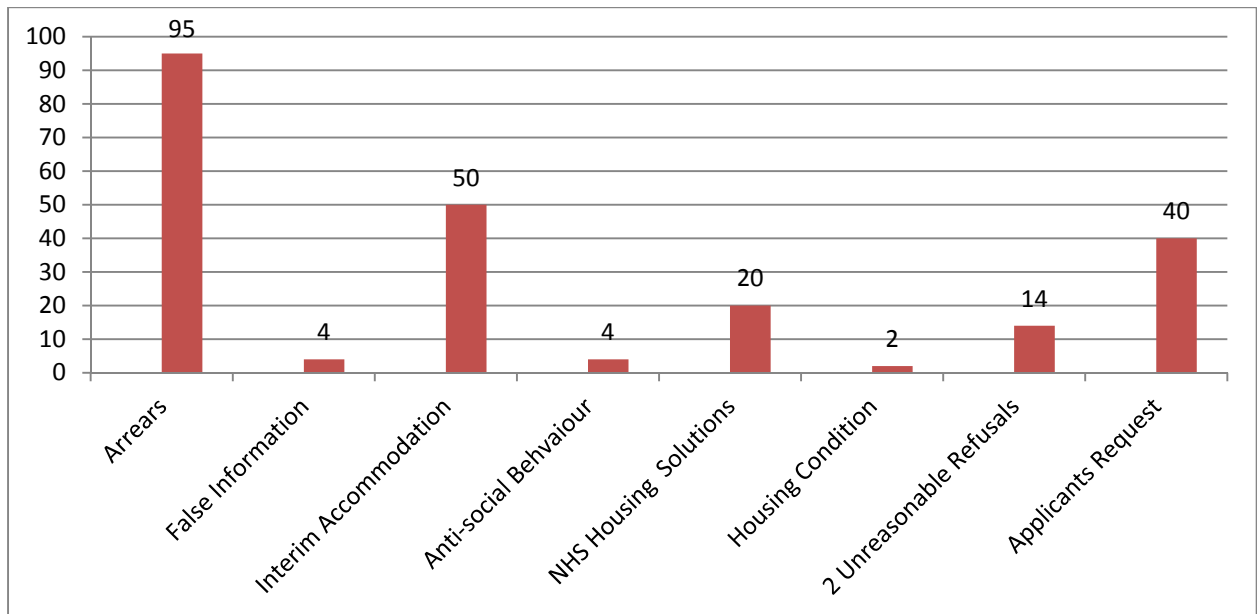


2.5.2 This graph shows that in most cases applicants with the greatest housing needs are more likely to be housed.

2.6 Suspended Applications

2.6.1 Chart 12 shows the breakdown by reason for the 229 applications which were suspended from receiving offers at 31 March 2017. The total number of applicants suspended accounts for 3% of all applicants, which is a slight increase from last year although this may be because the total number of applications have reduced this year. Most suspensions result from people being in rent arrears (95) followed by those in interim accommodation

(50). This is the fourth consecutive year that rent arrears have been the most common reason for applicants being suspended. 14 applicants were suspended following refusal of 2 reasonable offers of housing, which is the third year we have seen a reduction.



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Date: 26 July 2016