

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – Review and Draft Strategy

SCHH Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22nd July 2019

Legal Context

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a legal duty on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness prevention and support in their area and produce a Homelessness Strategy every five years based on the findings of the review.

Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018 and required local authorities to publish a new **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy** by winter 2019 supported by a Review of homelessness.

National Policy Context

The foreword to Homelessness Monitor:
England 2018 says:

Councils across the country are struggling to house people because of a decline in social housing, spiralling private rents, and welfare cuts. Councils also reported a growing reluctance among landlords to rent to people on welfare, with many worried that formerly homeless tenants would struggle to pay rent and bills.

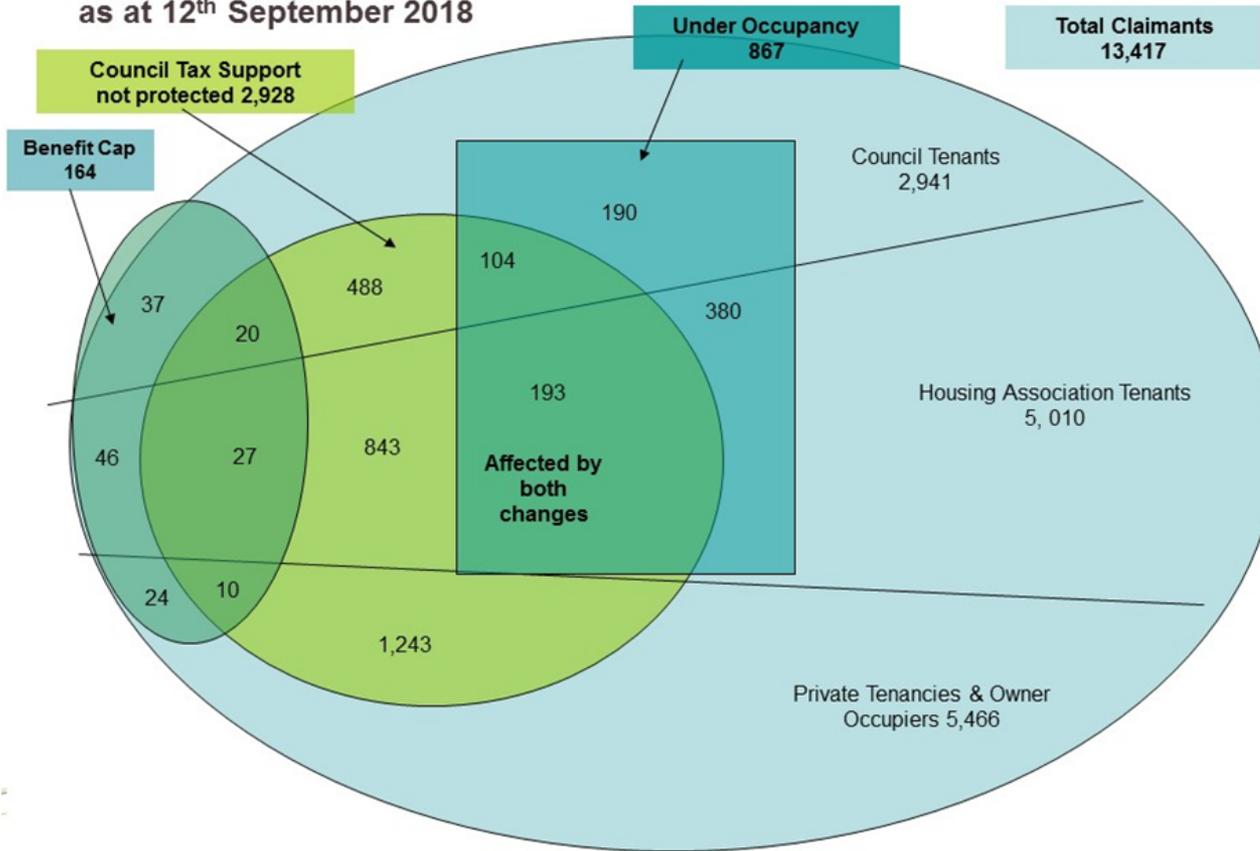


Key developments in national policy;

1. Rough Sleeping Strategy
2. Supply of affordable housing
3. Welfare reform
4. Austerity
5. Housing conditions

Welfare Reform

Diagram illustrating the impact of the Welfare Reforms on CBC Residents as at 12th September 2018



4,400 Households classed as High Needs in their relationship to welfare reform i.e.

Mainly non-working – lone parents, workless families, long term unemployed, those with health and disability problems

Existing problems exacerbated by loss of income from welfare reforms. Average household income loss of £1,904 p.a.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - 5 key legislative changes;

- Placed a duty on authorities to provide improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness
- Extended the period of time that somebody may be 'threatened with homelessness'
- Created new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need or intentionality
- Introduced assessments and personalised housing plans which set out actions for the customer and local authority
- Encouraged public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a Duty to Refer

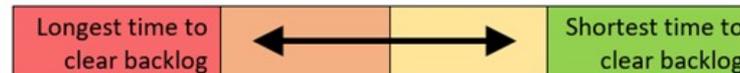
Housing Demand – Central Beds

Time to clear the backlog (years)

This relates to all band 1 and 2 Housing Register applicants

Housing area	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds
1) Southern tip (<u>Kensworth</u>)	6.3	4.5	2.2	No lettings
02) Dunstable	2.7	1.3	1.8	20.6
03) Houghton Regis	4.1	2.9	1.6	5.3
04) Leighton <u>Linslade</u>	3.3	1.4	0.8	1.3
05) Mid South (<u>Toddington</u>)	5.2	3.7	2.3	No lettings
06) <u>Tingrith</u> to <u>Stotfold</u>	1.6	1.1	0.7	0.7
07) <u>Amphill</u> / <u>Flitwick</u>	2.5	3.8	0.9	4.9
08) North West (<u>Marston</u>)	1.8	1.1	1.3	1.9
09) Mid North (<u>Southill</u>)	5.3	2.7	1.8	No lettings
10) Biggleswade	2.0	1.4	1.3	1.1
11) North East (<u>Sandy</u>)	2.7	1.7	0.7	4.0
Central Bedfordshire average	2.6	1.7	1.2	3.2

The key is applied to each property size separately.



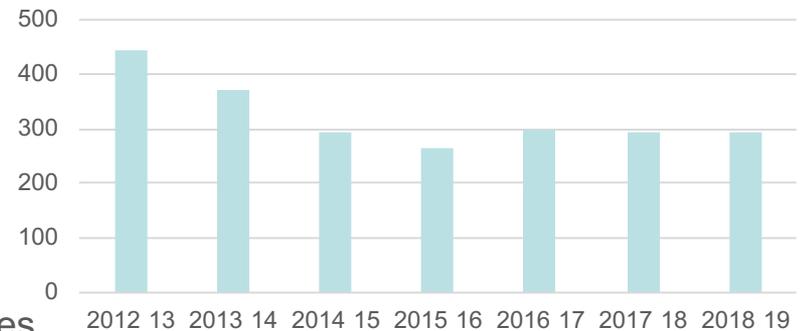
Homelessness

2018/19 - 1,913 Housing advice approaches

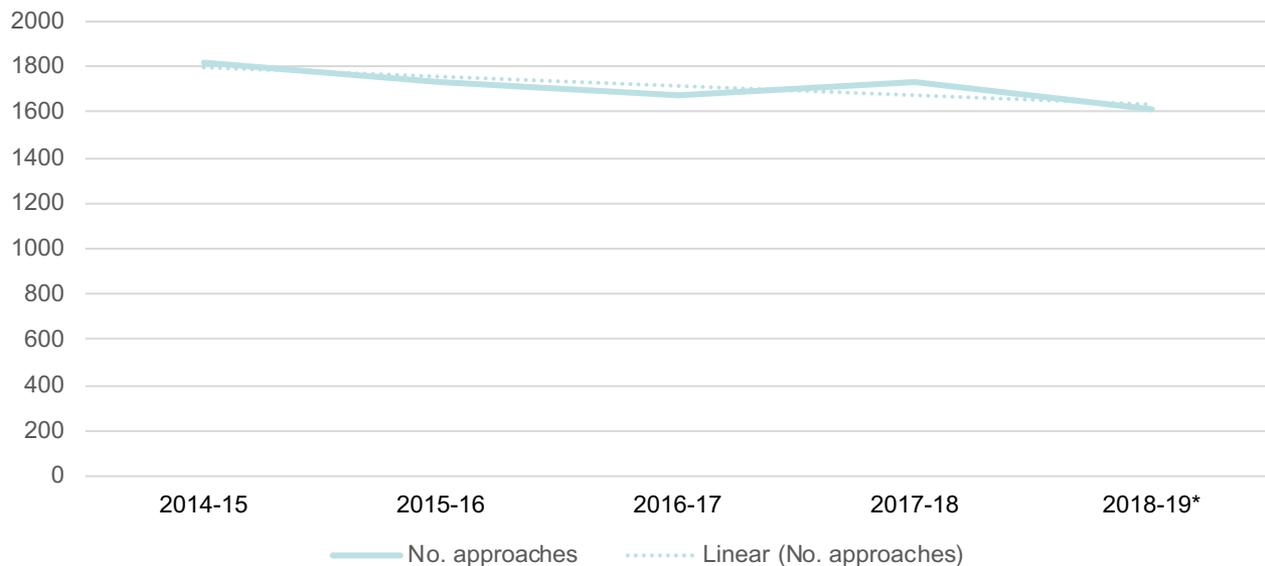
1,600 of those - 'approach' under HRA

8,812 calls made to Housing Options

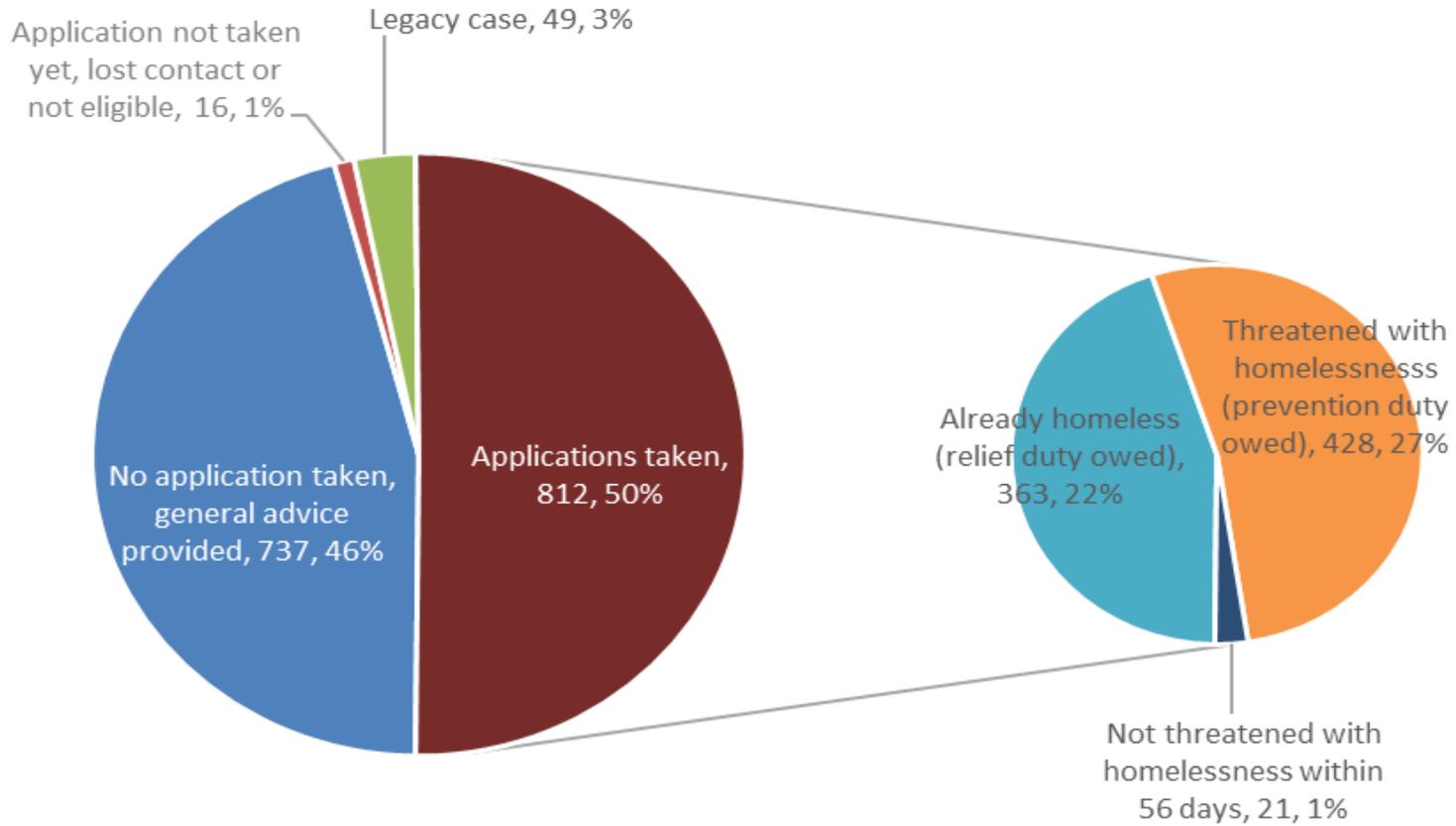
Homeless prevention



Number of homelessness approaches



Housing Options Approaches 2018/19



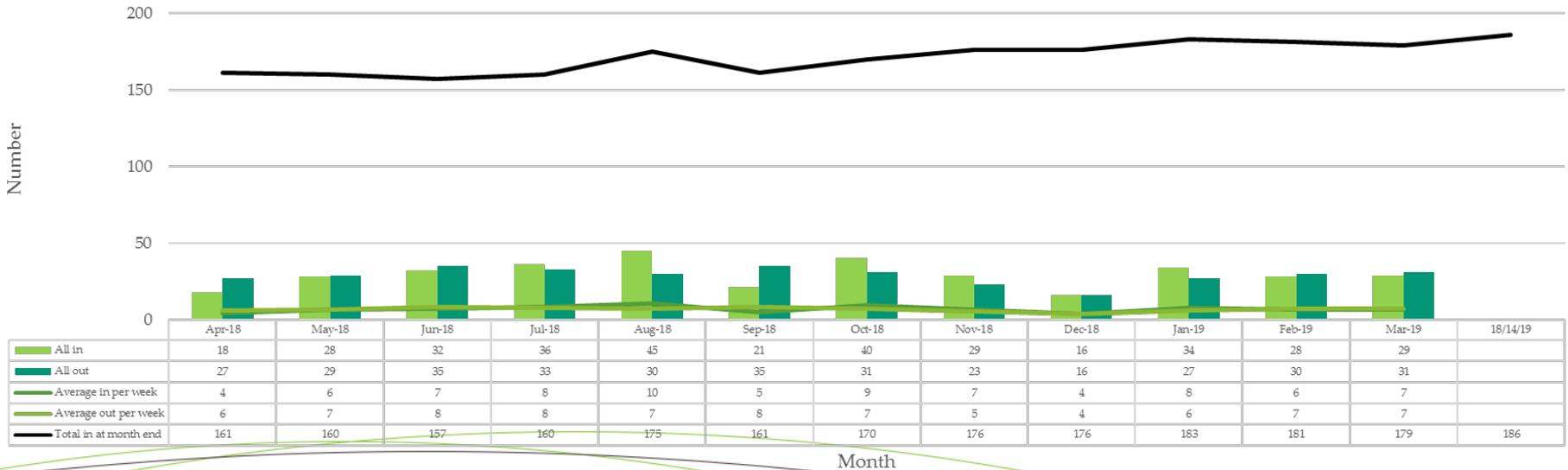
Transitional Accommodation

Number of households entering various types of transitional accommodation at the end of the month 2015-2019¹

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
B&B	66	42	15	27
Private TA	-	-	196	116
CBC TA	-	-	141	213

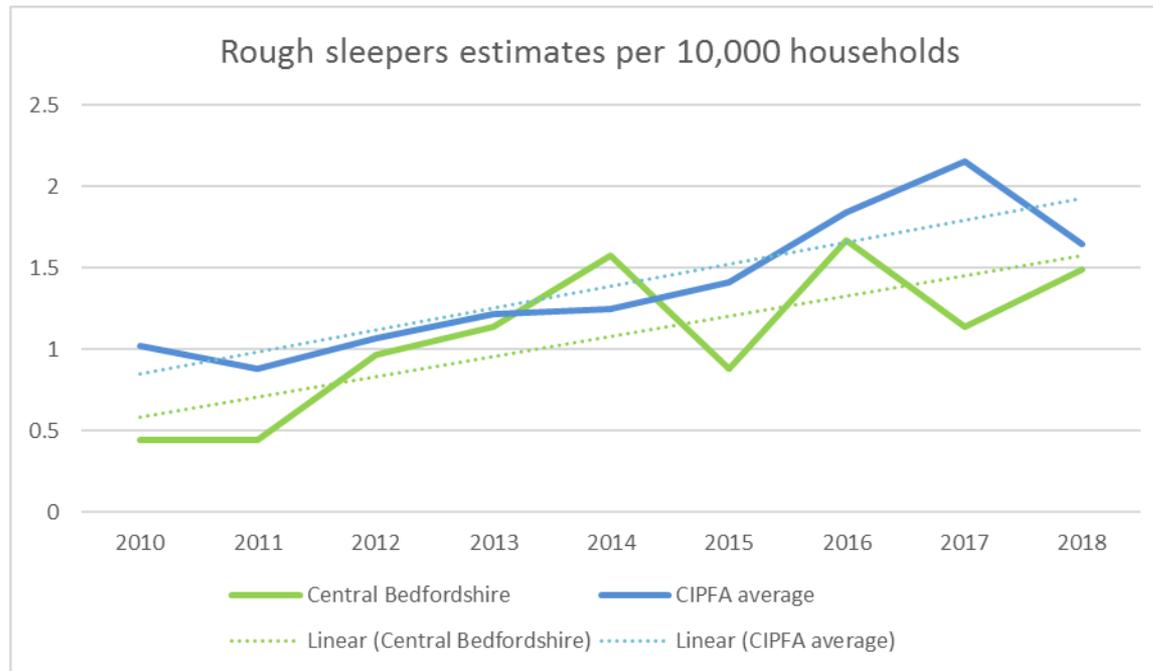
Work needs to continue to increase transitional accommodation provision in the north of the area, to ensure that the supply of transitional accommodation best matches demand.

All households flow in and out of TA
Apr-18 to YTD



Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping estimates are gathered through street counts, evidence-based estimates, and estimates informed by a spotlight street count of rough sleeping. In 2018, there were estimated to be 17 rough sleepers in Central Bedfordshire, 15 male and two female. 14 were aged 26 or over, one aged between 18 and 25 and two where the age was unknown.



Homelessness and Health

A Director of Public Health report published in October 2018

Key Findings;

- Being homeless is associated with extremely poor health outcomes relative to those of the general population, with average life expectancy of rough sleepers being 48 years for men and 43 years for women
- Homeless people are more likely to have poor physical and mental health, and people with physical and mental health problems are more vulnerable to becoming homeless
- As with other risks to public health, prevention and early intervention can keep people housed appropriately, stopping the escalation of issues that can lead to losing stable accommodation and worsening health

Funding

Central Bedfordshire Council has received (2019/20):

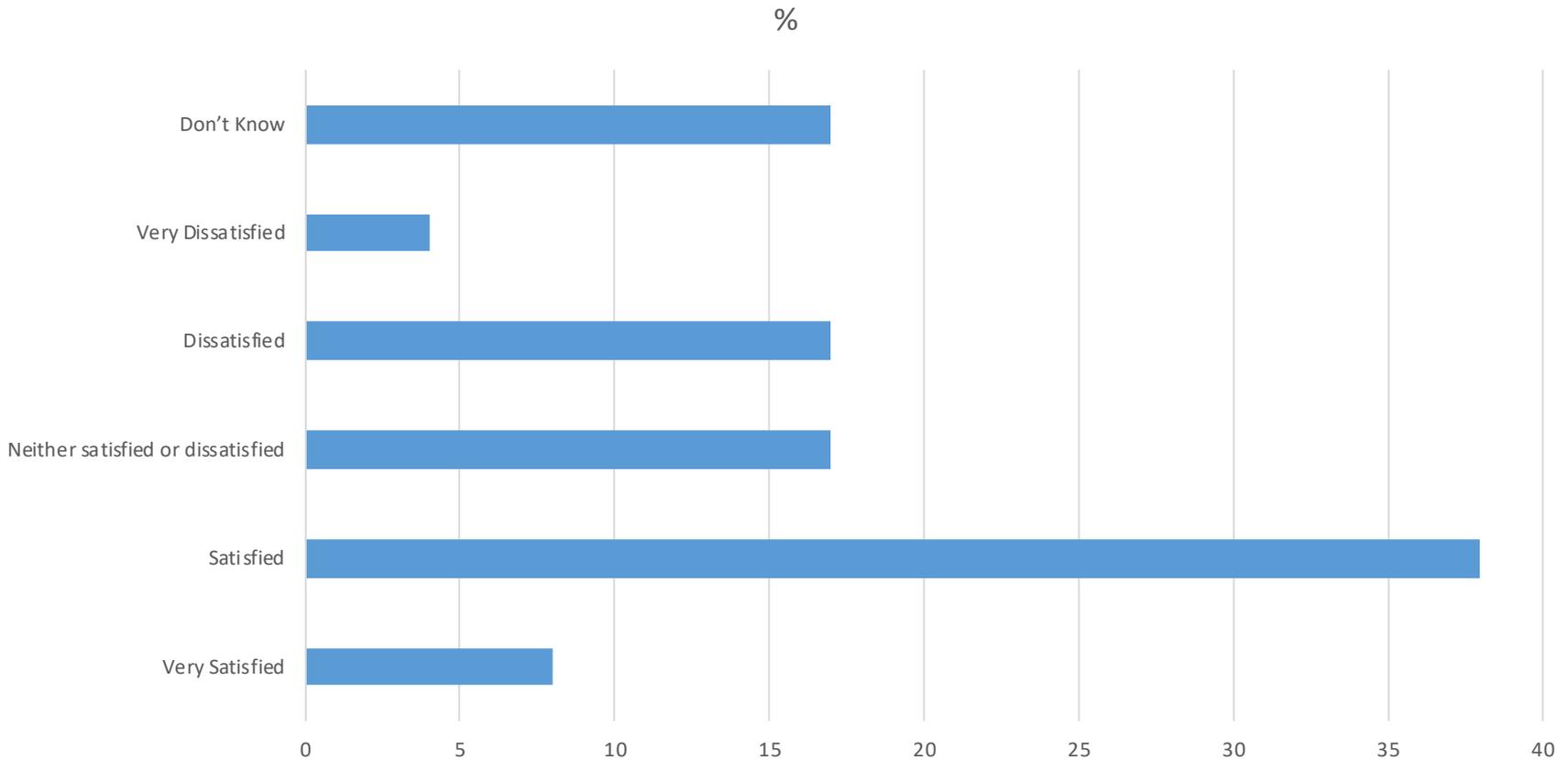
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant of £326,000, and
Homeless Reduction Act New Burdens Funding of £81,000

Grant Funding has also been awarded after successful bids were made to assist with implementation of new initiatives to help with the prevention and relief of homelessness including:

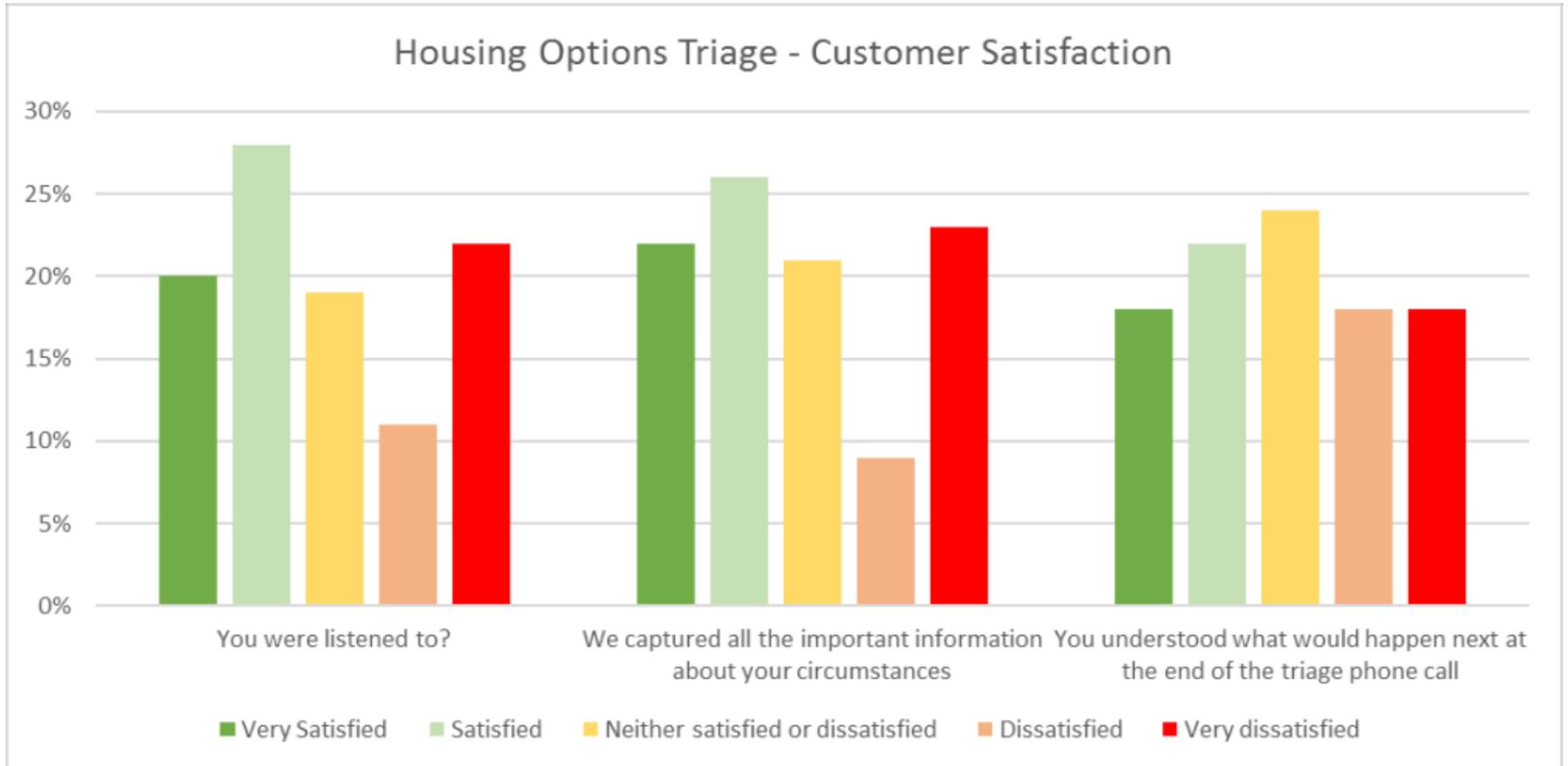
Rogue Landlord Enforcement Grant	£35,000
Rapid Rehousing Pathway Funding	£33,000
Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding	£120,000

Provider Engagement

Providers were asked how satisfied they were with the Housing Options Service provided by central Bedfordshire Council



Customer Engagement



Collaboration Key Partners

Shared Vision;

Deliver services through collaborative partnerships, designed with customers, to support and empower the prevention and relief of homelessness

Person centred – provide services through honest conversations and the provision of tailored information which captures the voice and needs of the customer.

Sharing resources - co-location of services to ensure strong relationships and intelligent use of resources and comprehensive information collected with customers.

Manage expectations – create opportunities relevant to customers for them to enable realistic changes they want to make.

Togetherness – flexible services that raise awareness within communities and build on partnership approaches.

Draft Strategy Priorities

1. Increase the availability of decent, affordable accommodation that meets the needs of different groups in the community
2. Improve awareness of and access to services that support those that are homeless or at risk of homelessness
3. Maximise opportunities for collaboration and developing pathways that work
4. Improve access to health services and health outcomes of those that are homeless or threatened with homelessness
5. Maximise funding opportunities and make the best use of resources.

Next Steps;

- Current consultation on the Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy ends on 15th September 2019
- Mid point consultation event is being held for colleagues, partners and stakeholders on 27th August 2019
- Homelessness Steering Group will meet in October to review final consultation report
- Final draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy brought back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November