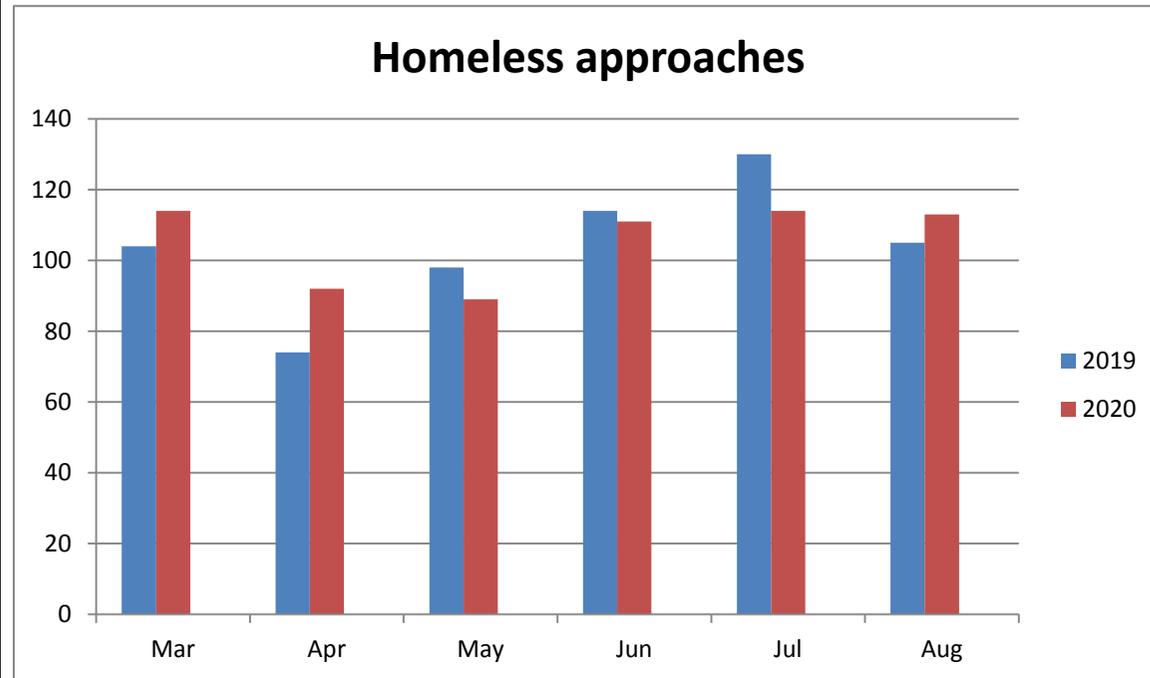


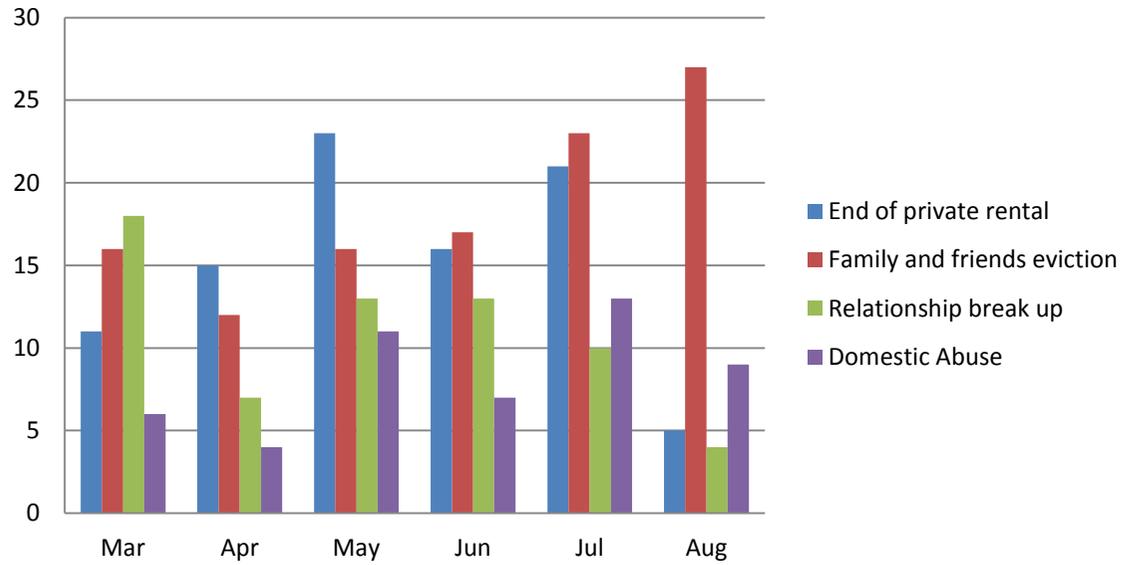
Community Theme - Impact Assessment - Housing

The following graphs provide a comparison between Mar-Aug 2019 and 2020. Firstly, the number of people approaching the Council because they are homeless, or threatened with homelessness.

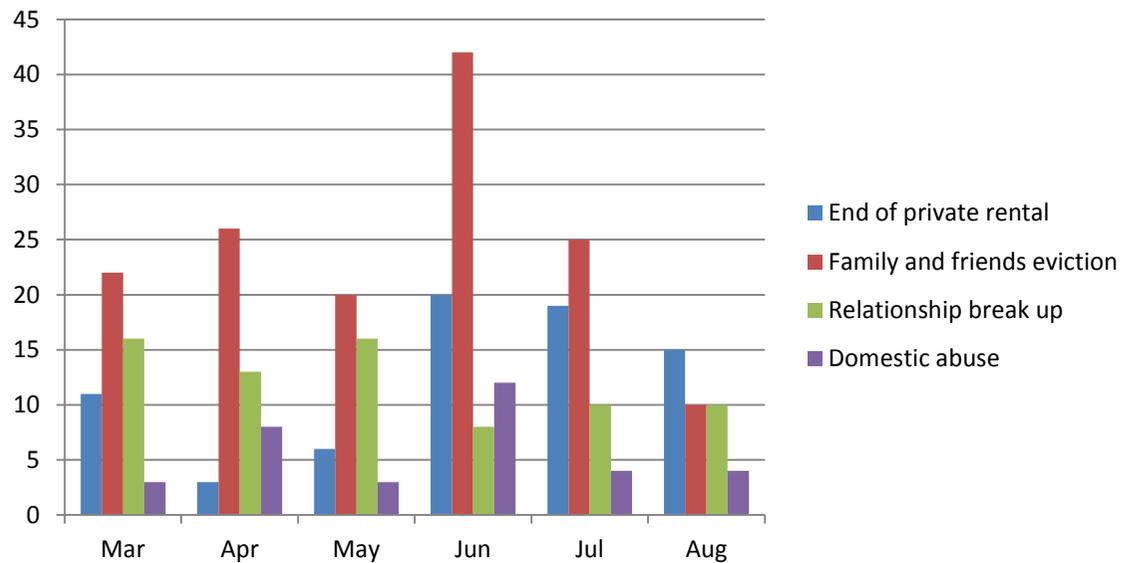


The following two graphs show the main reasons for homelessness between March and August 2019 and 2020.

Reasons for homelessness 2019



Reasons for homelessness 2020



What does the data identify in terms of impact? Are there any gaps in the data?

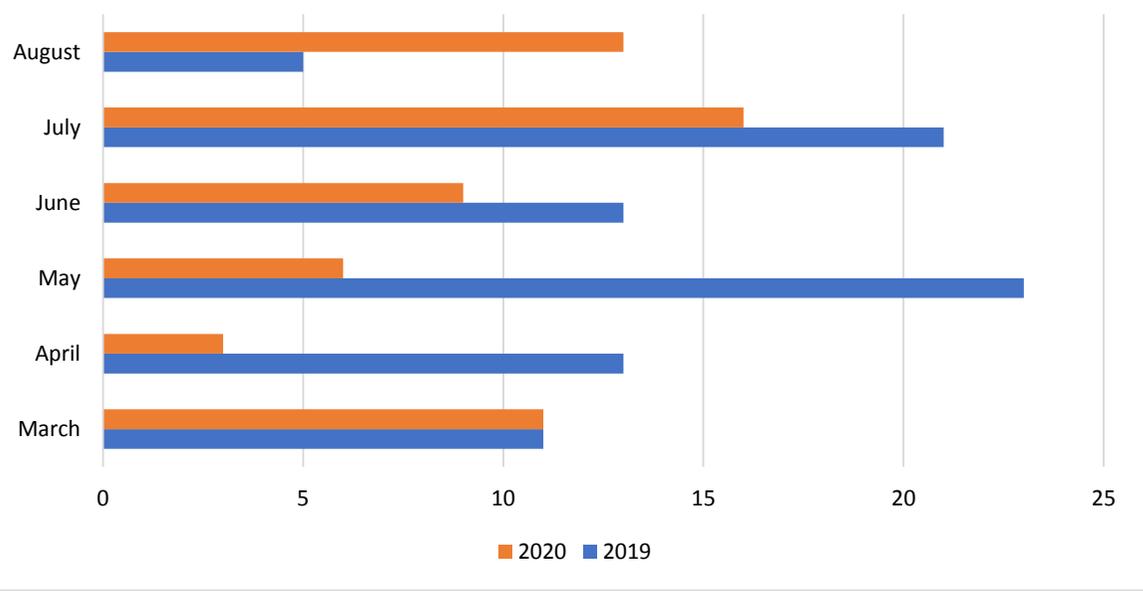
The data reflects that we have a higher than usual number of placements in emergency housing. Pre Covid 19, we would have around 25 households in emergency housing. Most of those would be families with children.

As of 31 August, we have 51 households in emergency accommodation. Most of these (36) are single people or couples who are not in priority need under the homelessness legislation, who would not usually be entitled to emergency accommodation. Currently we have 36 single people, one couple and fourteen families with children.

What local knowledge do we have on the impact which is not reflected in the data?

We are anticipating a spike in family homelessness post lock down, due to family/friends no longer being able to accommodate people and also an increase in tenants approaching for help because their landlord has served them with a Notice. The eviction ban was due to be lifted on 23 August but has been extended until 20 September. On 21 August, Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick stated that landlords are required to serve six month Notice periods for the majority of tenants (exceptions including tenants causing anti social behaviour and domestic abuse perpetrators.)

People approaching due to Notice from private landlord



Overall, what do you think are the biggest risks/consequences of the impact?

Moving homeless applicants on from emergency housing, which is challenging due to the lack of availability of private rentals for people on a low income/benefits. As of 31 August 2020, we have 36 single people being housed in emergency housing who have been accommodated due to Covid 19. This puts additional pressure on the Housing Service’s staffing resources and rent deposit scheme.

We are also likely to experience difficulties finding alternative accommodation for families where we can’t prevent their evictions from private rentals. Letting agents have advised that the rental market is very competitive since moving house has been permitted again. This means that our customers, who are often in receipt of benefits or on a low income, are likely to find it more difficult to secure a private rental.

Whilst the Housing Service has not as yet seen an increase in approaches from owner occupiers, we are predicting in

the forthcoming months once furlough arrangements end, more people contacting us because of problems paying their mortgage.

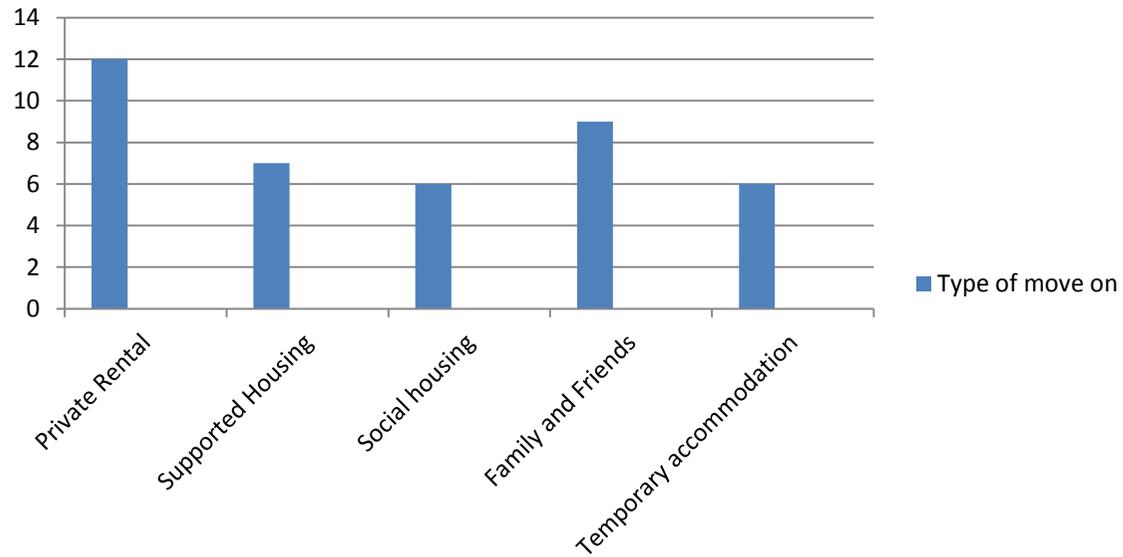
Overall, what do think are the biggest opportunities?

Ending rough sleeping

The Government asked all local authorities to get 'Everyone in' by 27 March. This meant TWBC provided emergency accommodation to single people who were sleeping rough, or were at risk of sleeping rough. We have kept these bookings going, and will continue to do so until 31 March 2020. The Government have launched the Next Steps Accommodation Programme, which provides £105m revenue funding and £161m capital funding for local authorities to bid for, in order to fund longer term homes for rough sleepers.

The fact that most of our rough sleepers are now off the streets in emergency housing means that we have a better opportunity to end rough sleeping for good. We have moved on 40 rough sleepers already since the 'Everyone in' initiative started.

Move ons after 'Everyone in'



As of 31 August 2020, we have 36 rough sleepers in emergency housing. TWBC has applied to the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to request a mixture of Revenue and Capital funding. We have requested funding for the following:

- Further emergency accommodation
- To fund rent deposits for privately rented accommodation
- Funding for two support workers to help sustain the private tenancies we want to set up
- Capital funding to renovate three empty TWBC owned houses into 6 one bedroom flats for rough sleepers
- Funding to provide support staff for the rough sleepers who move into the flats

Are there any quick wins?

The Housing team intend to contact the customers we are already aware of who have been served with a Notice pre and during Covid-19, to try and save their tenancies.

The increase to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates has made renting privately a more realistic option for many people in a homeless situation.

Using Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to prevent homelessness for people who have been affected financially by Covid-19 is another quick win.

Is there anything we should stop doing now to aid recovery?

- Providing a 'gold standard' service in terms of timescales for contacting customers. We have set up an automatic email that customers receive when they complete an online referral form for housing advice/homelessness help. This manages customers' expectations more effectively- it explains that we will respond within 5 working days. Previously we were usually contacting customers the following working day.

Are there any media/communications issues or requirements that need to be flagged as a result?

We may want to consider doing a piece for the paper on how to keep a private rental and how to contact us if someone has been given a Notice or is struggling to pay their rent etc.

The Communications Team are putting some wording in the next Local which will explain about our rough sleeper work and asks for private landlords to contact us if they have a property to rent.

Does the impact have a disproportionate impact on those with protected characteristics?

It is reasonable to anticipate that more vulnerable residents may be disproportionately affected by Covid-19, including those with underlying health conditions such as mental health issues, and those experiencing financial challenges. Also, as contracting Covid-19 is considered more serious for those over 70 years old, older people may not have been able to obtain face to face advice and help with their housing issues, and could therefore be more at risk of eviction.

Relevant protected characteristics: Disability and Age

