



Hampshire Home Choice



Figure 1 Hampshire Home Choice logo

Hampshire Home Choice

Annual Report

2026

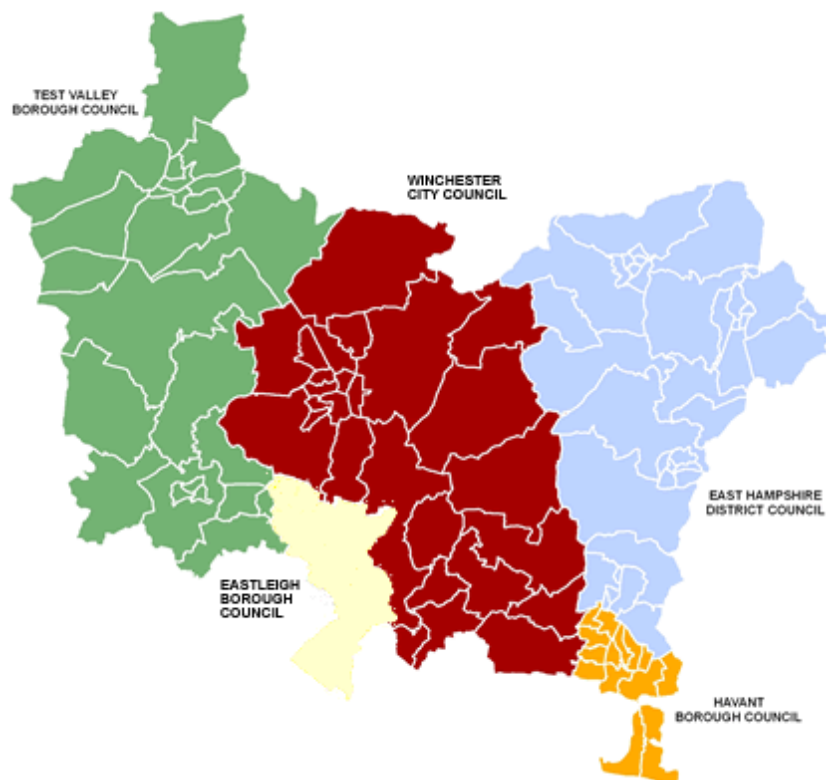


Figure 2 Map of Hampshire Home Choice Sub-Region

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12 April 2026

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Hampshire Home Choice - Annual Report 2026

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the key activities and outcomes from the past year for the Hampshire Home Choice (HHC) scheme. HHC is a partnership between East Hampshire District Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Havant Borough Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Winchester City Council. These five councils use the same approach to allocate social housing and run a shared choice-based lettings scheme called Hampshire Home Choice.

Background

HHC was launched in April 2009 by East Hampshire District Council, Havant Borough Council and Winchester City Council. Test Valley Borough Council joined the scheme in June 2011, followed by Eastleigh Borough Council in February 2014.

In 2012, a dedicated HHC Manager was appointed and is employed by Test Valley Borough Council on behalf of all partner councils.

How the Scheme Works

All partner councils use the same system to advertise and allocate social housing. The scheme operates as follows:

- One shared IT system and website is used for registering applicants and advertising available homes.
- Social housing vacancies across the five council areas are advertised weekly on the HHC website.
- Applicants accepted onto the Housing Register can bid for up to three properties each week, online or by phone.
- All properties advertised are owned by Eastleigh Borough Council, Winchester City Council or Registered Providers (RP's).
- All councils follow the same HHC Allocations Framework.
- The Allocations Framework sets out how applications are assessed, how decisions are made, and how applicants are offered choice.
- Each council also keeps its own local Scheme of Allocations, which may include additional policies to meet local needs.

Qualification Criteria

To qualify to join the HHC Register and be considered for housing, applicants must normally:

- Be in housing need, and
- Have a single or joint household income of less than £60,000 per year (or £55,000 for Eastleigh applicants), and/or
- Have assets or savings of less than £16,000, and
- Have a local connection to one of the partner council areas through residence, family, or employment.

Advertising of Available Properties

Available homes are advertised on the Hampshire Home Choice website every week. Properties are listed from 00:01 on Wednesday until 23:59 on Sunday.

The system works on the principle that properties are usually offered to the applicant who:

- Has the highest priority band,
- Meets all the advert criteria and any stated preferences, and
- Has the earliest priority date within their priority band.

Once a property is allocated, the letting process is carried out by the relevant Registered Provider (RP), Eastleigh Borough Council or Winchester City Council Landlord Services.

The Hampshire Home Choice website can be accessed at:

www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk

Other Information

Rent in Advance

Most partner landlords within Hampshire Home Choice require new tenants to pay rent in advance before moving into their home.

Details of which landlords apply this requirement are available on the HHC website.

Notice Periods

Some applicants may need to give notice to end their current tenancy before accepting a new home offered through HHC.

If applicants are unsure about how much notice they must give, they should contact their local Housing Service or the Citizens Advice for guidance.

Local Lettings Policies

Local Lettings Policies may be used to help create and maintain balanced and sustainable communities.

For certain existing properties or new-build developments, these policies may set different priorities for allocating homes.

Where a Local Lettings Policy applies, this will be clearly stated in the property advert.

Local Lettings Policies may be used alongside any planning restrictions linked to a development, such as those set out in Section 106 Agreements. These policies cannot override planning requirements.

All Local Lettings Policies are agreed jointly by the relevant Registered Provider (RP), Eastleigh Borough Council, Winchester City Council and the local authority Housing Manager.

Section 106 Agreement

A Section 106 Agreement is a legal agreement linked to the planning process. It sets out obligations that a landowner or developer must meet, which can include the provision of affordable housing.

In some cases, the agreement will set specific rules about who is eligible for the properties provided through the development.



Figure 3 Photo of 3 development images

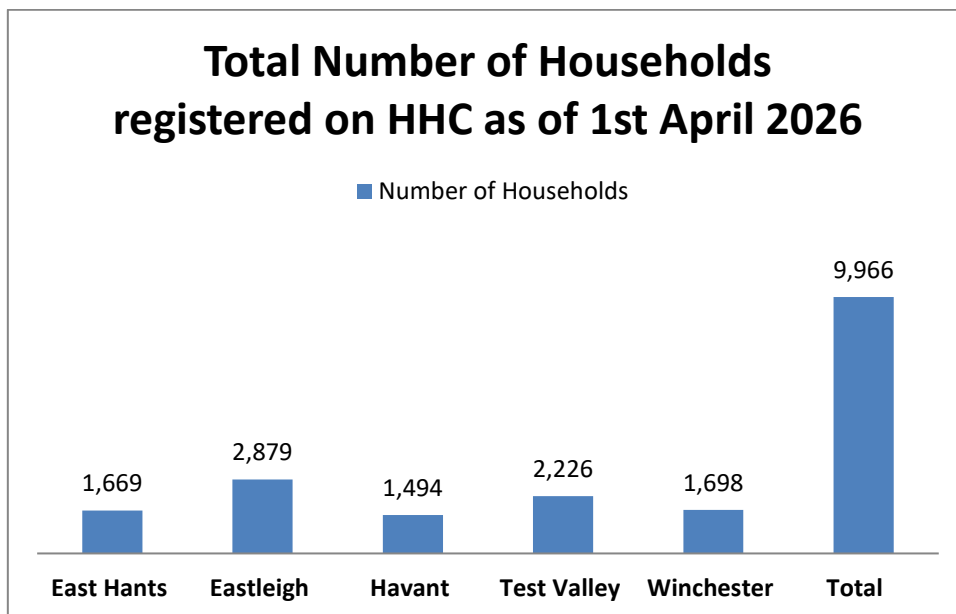
Housing Register

As of the 1 April 2026 a total of 9,966 households were registered on Hampshire Home Choice. 2,879 households are registered, with Eastleigh, 2,226 with Test Valley, 1,698 with Winchester, 1,669 with East Hampshire and 1,494 with Havant.

Compared with the figure of 9,952 recorded on the 1 April 2025, there has been an overall increase of 14 households registered on HHC.

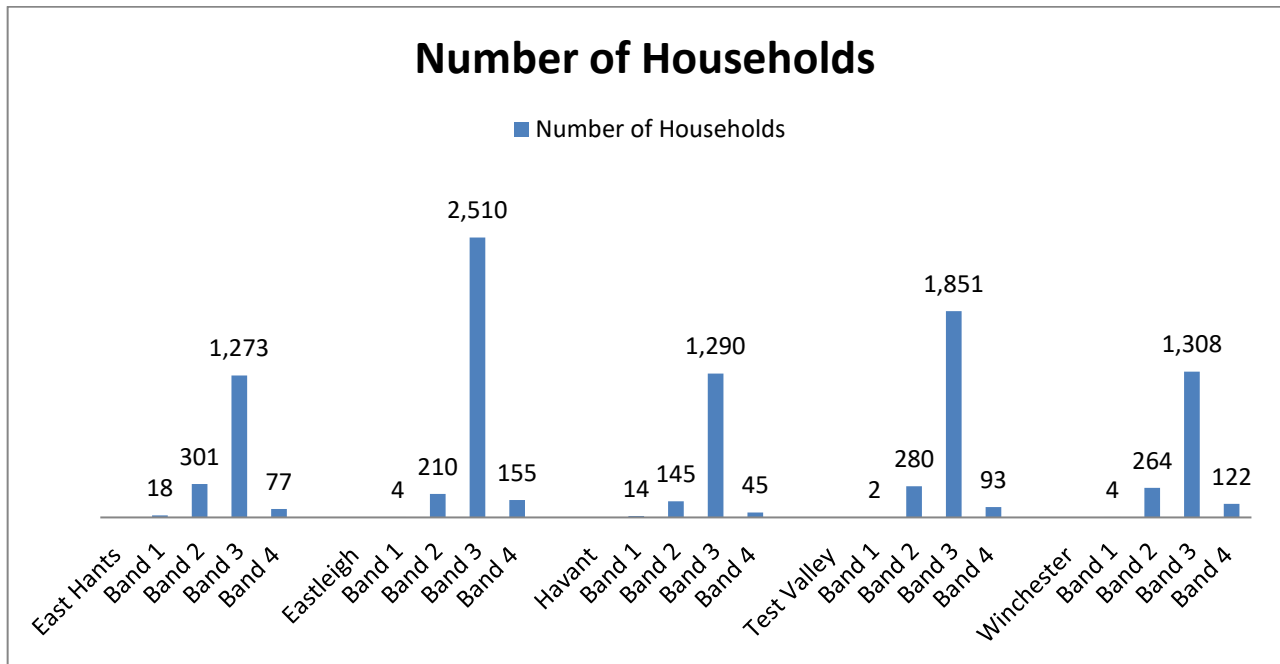
The following details the total number of households registered on HHC as of 1 April 2026 by:

Local authority area the applicant is registered with:



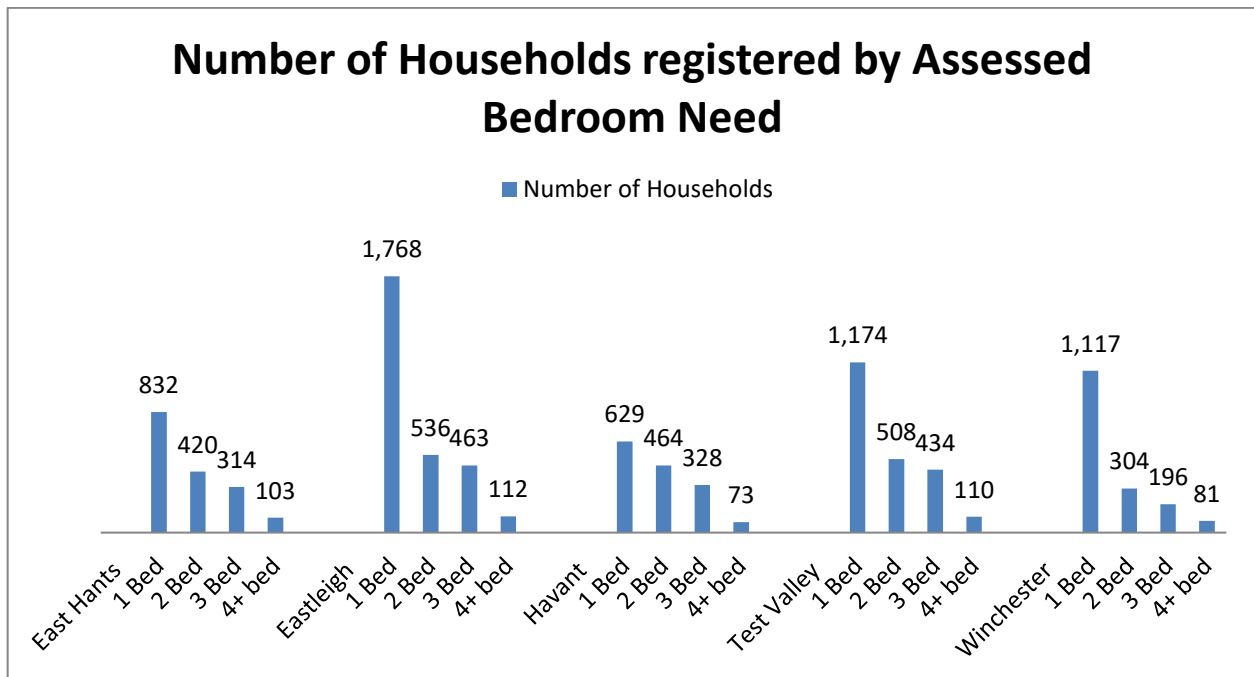
2,879 (29%) of households are registered with Eastleigh, 2,226 (22%) with Test Valley, 1,698 (17%) with Winchester, 1,669 (17%) with East Hampshire and 1,494 (15%) with Havant.

Local authority area the applicant is registered with and assessed band:



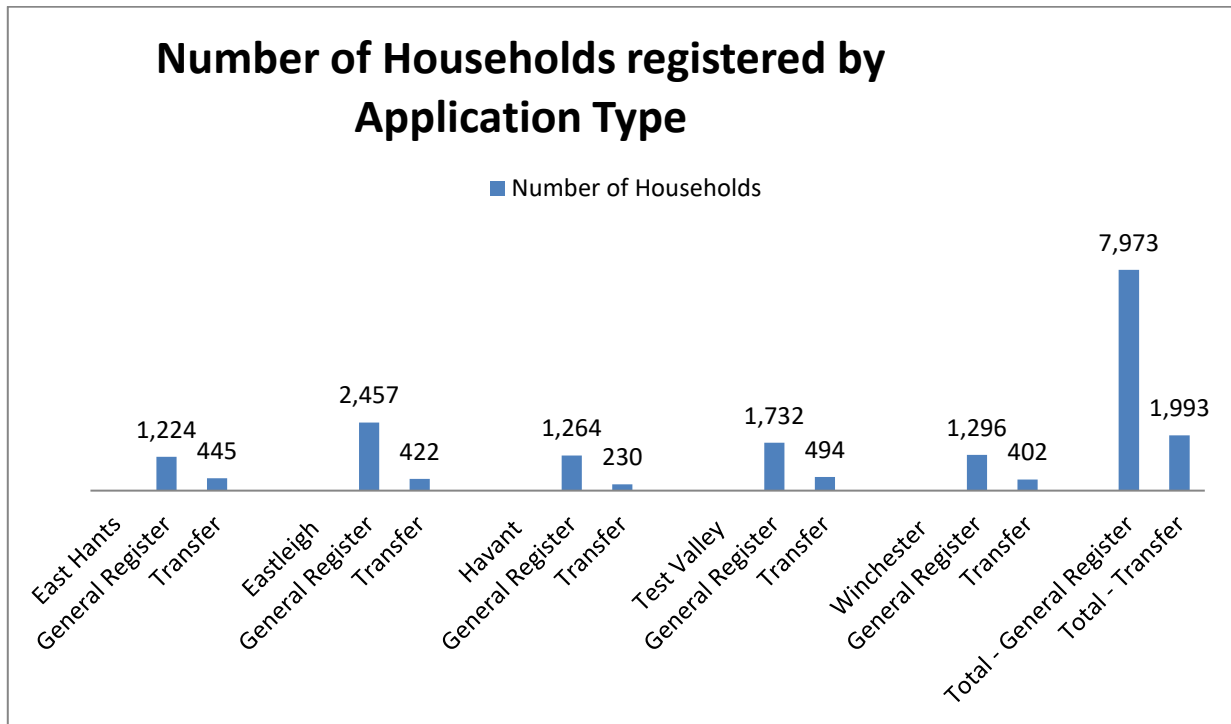
Of the 9,966 households registered on the Housing Register, 42 (0.4%) are in Band 1, 1,200 (12%) in Band 2, 8,232 (83%) in Band 3 and 492 (5 %) in Band 4.

Local authority area the applicant is registered with and assessed bedroom need:



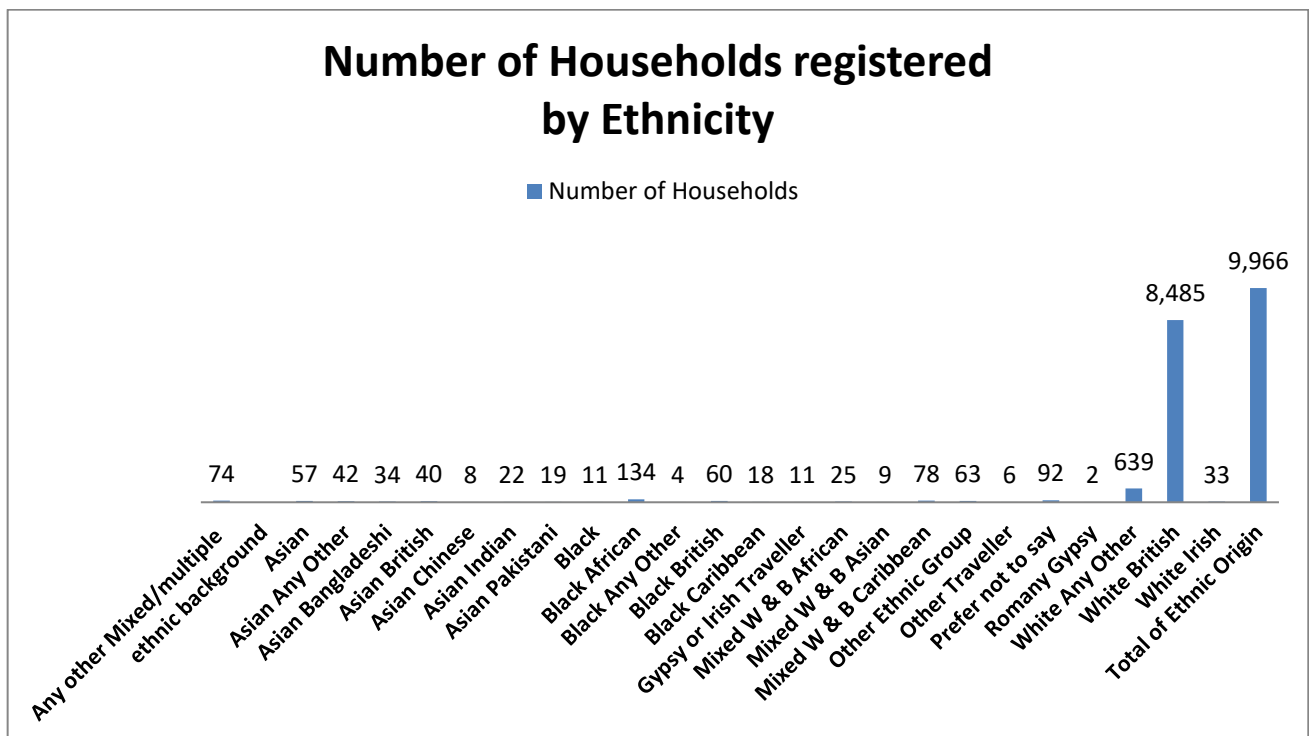
Of the 9,966 households registered on the Housing Register, 5,520 (55%) have a 1-bed assessed need, 2,232 (22%) have a 2-bed assessed need, 1,735 (18%) have a 3-bed assessed need and 479 (5%) have a 4+ bed assessed need.

Local authority area the applicant is registered with and application type:



Of the 9,966 households on the Housing Register, 1,993 (20%) are Transfer applications. A Transfer Application means an applicant is an existing social housing tenant who has been assessed as having a need to move, whilst General Register application is applied to all other applications.

Ethnicity:



8,485 (85%) applicants registered on Hampshire Home Choice have stated on their application form they are White British.

639 (6%) applicants registered on Hampshire Home Choice have stated on their application form they are White Any Other.

744 (7%) applicants registered on Hampshire Home Choice have stated on their application form they are; Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, Asian, Asian Any Other, Asian Bangladeshi, Asian British, Asian Chinese, Asian Indian, Asian Pakistani, Black, Black African, Black Any Other, Black British, Black Caribbean, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Mixed W & B African, Mixed W & B Asian, Mixed W & B Caribbean, Other Ethnic Group, Romany Gypsy or White Irish.

92 applicants registered on Hampshire Home Choice have stated on their application form they Prefer not to say what their ethnic origin is.

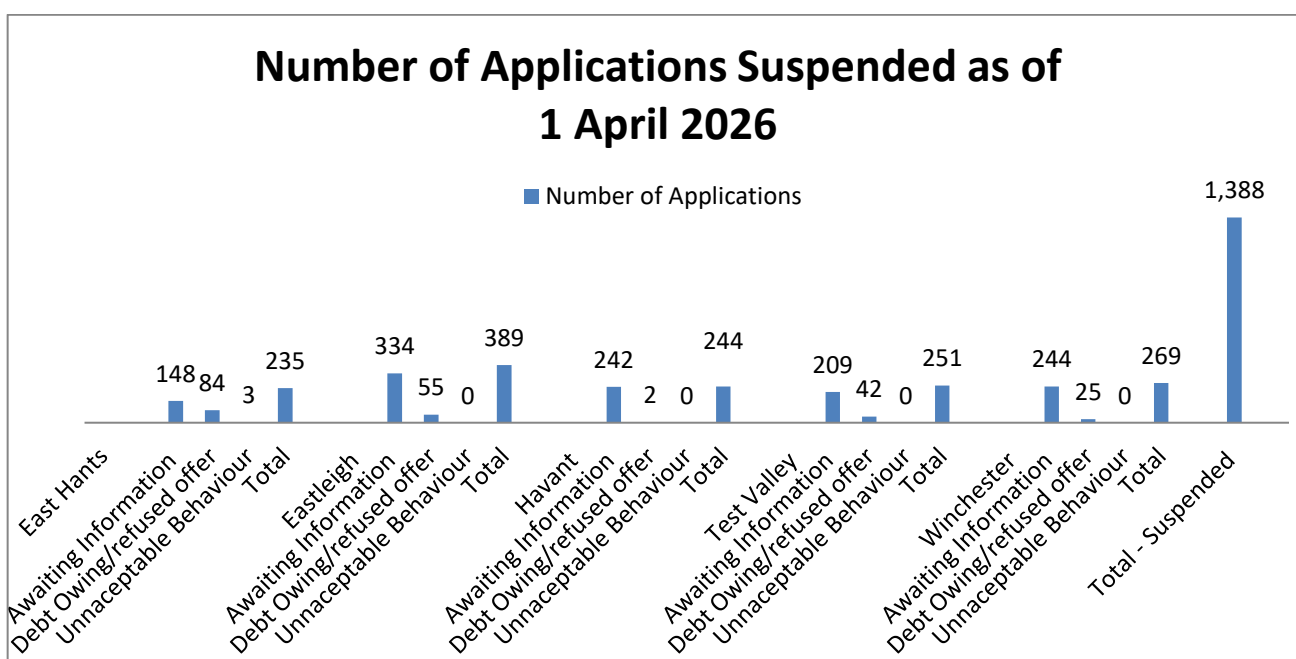
Suspended Applications

At any time, some applications may be suspended because the Council is waiting for information needed to assess the application.

Hampshire Home Choice also operates a Suspension Policy, and applications may be suspended in the following circumstances:

- When an applicant has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances
- Where there is unacceptable behaviour
- When a debt is owed to a local authority or a registered housing provider
- When an applicant refuses two suitable offers of accommodation within a six-month period

Suspended applications by local authority area and suspended reason:



The number of applications suspended due to awaiting information is 1,177, whilst 211 applications are suspended due to outstanding debts, refusing 2 offers within 6 months or unacceptable behaviour.

Debts Owed to a Council or Registered Provider

If an applicant and/or their partner owe money to a local authority or a Registered Provider, and no payment arrangement is in place, or an arrangement has not been kept to for at least six months, their application may be suspended.

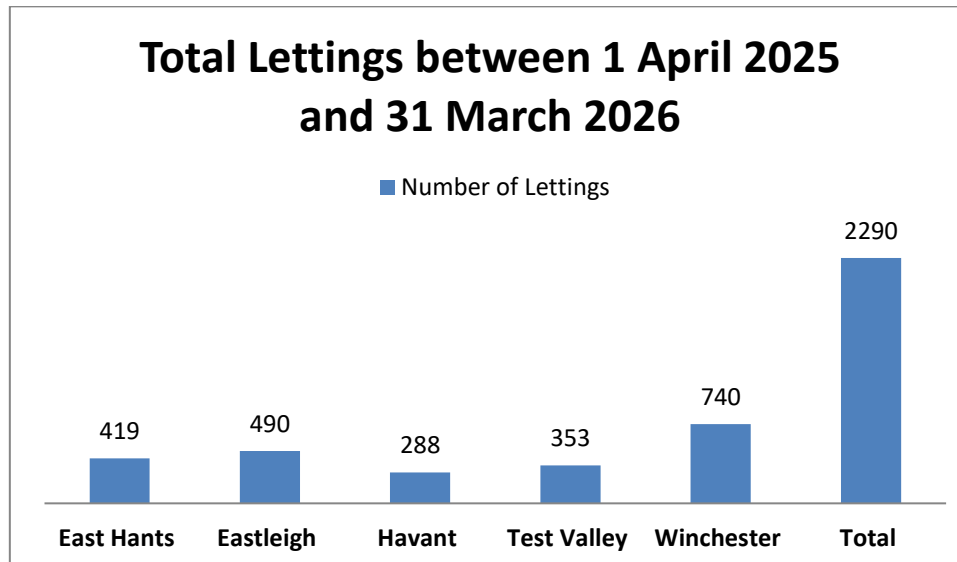
Examples of debts that may lead to suspension include:

- Current rent arrears
- Former tenant rent arrears
- Repair costs or rechargeable works orders
- Charges claimed from a deposit scheme for damage or rent arrears
- Outstanding rent in advance or deposit scheme costs

Lettings

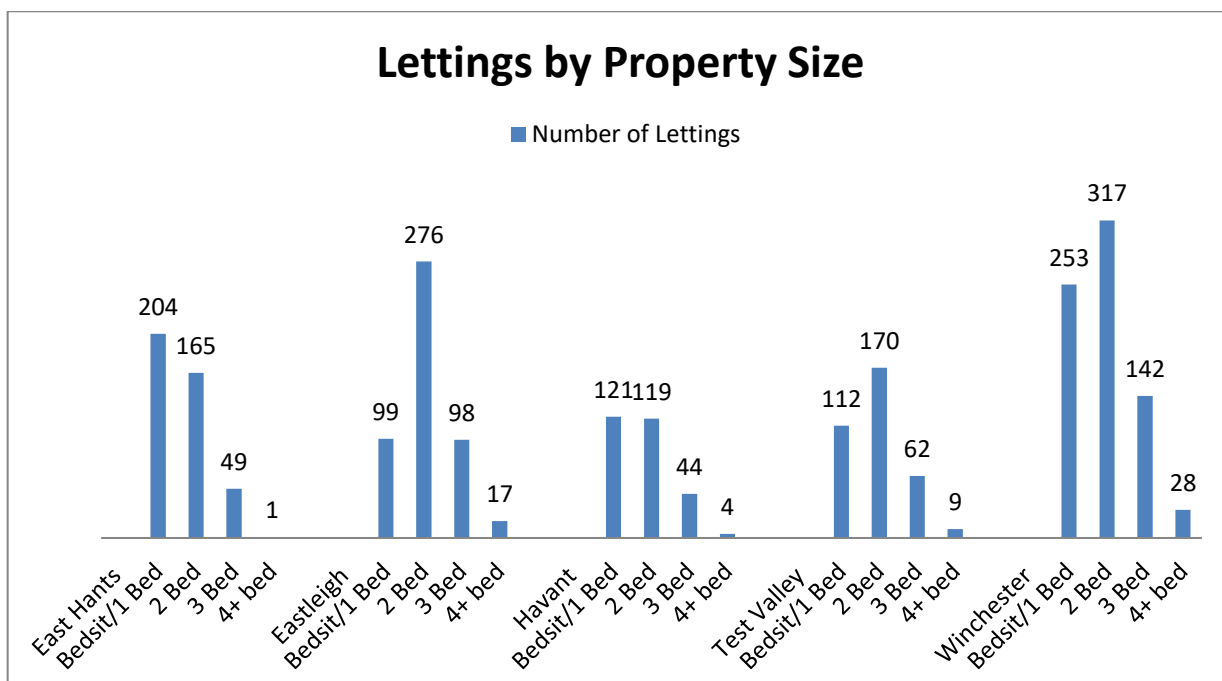
The following details the number of lettings between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 by:

Local authority area:



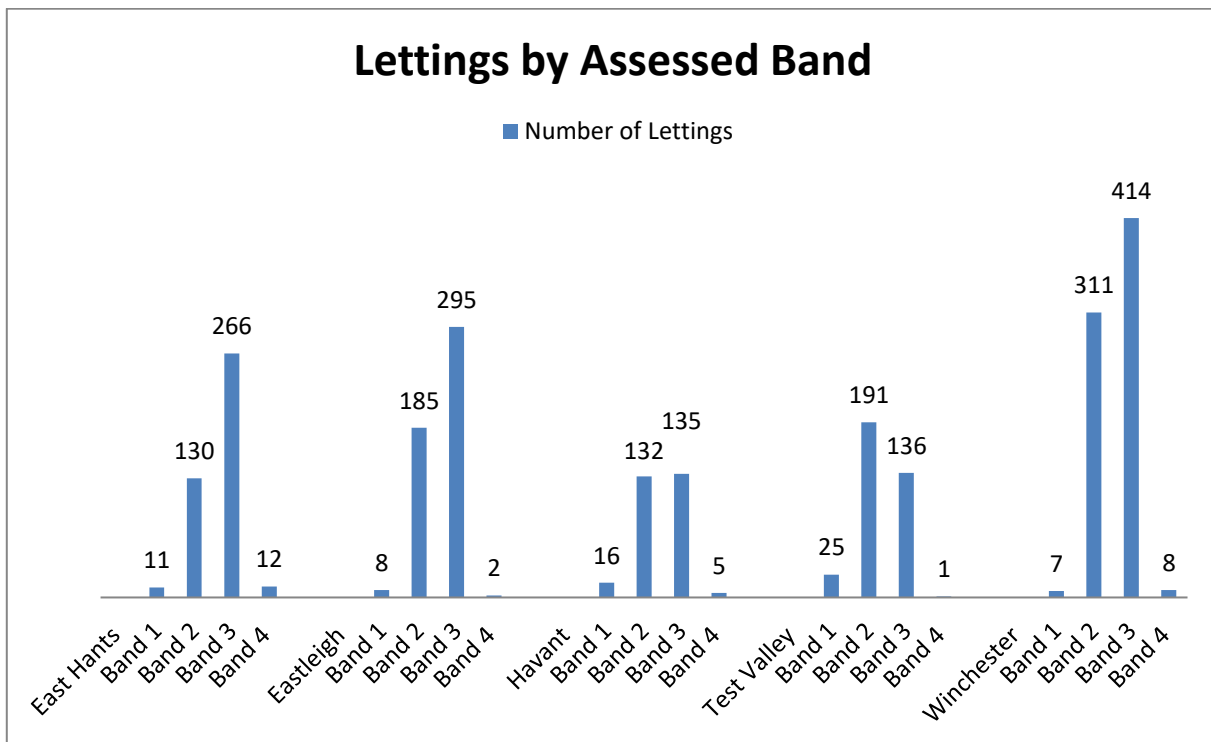
Of the 2,290 lettings there were 740 (32%) in Winchester, 490 (21%) in Eastleigh, 419 (18%) in East Hampshire, 353 (16%) in Test Valley and 288 (13%) in Havant.

Local authority area and property size:



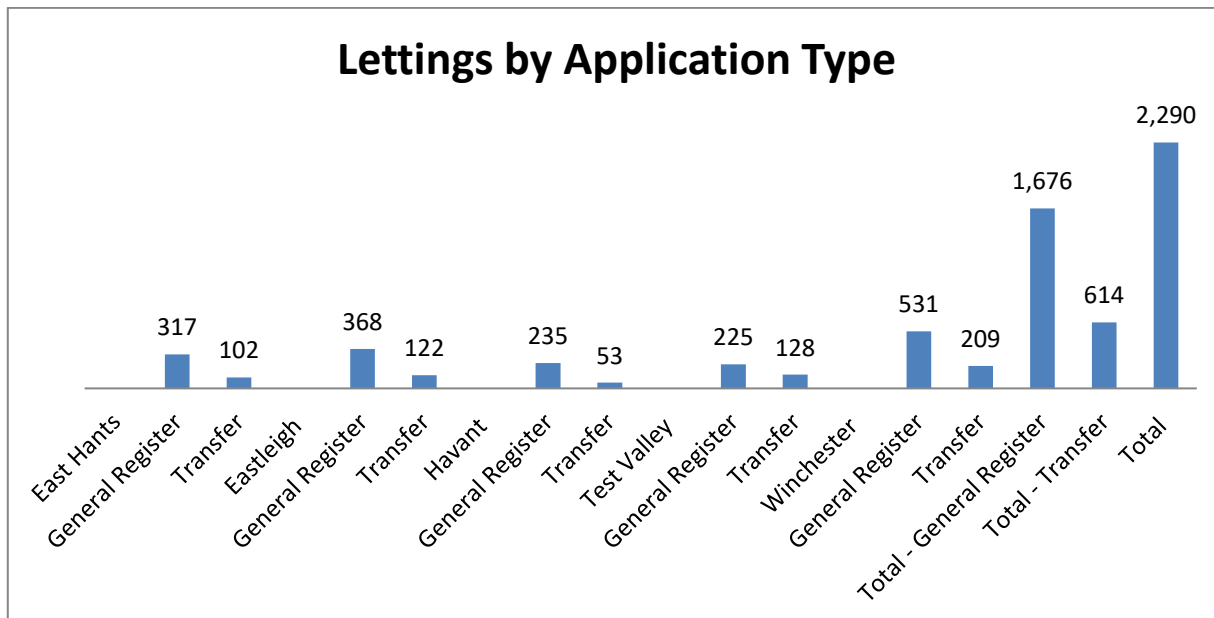
Of the 2,290 lettings, 1,047 (46%) to 2-beds, 789 (34%) were to Bedsit/1-beds, 395 (17%) to 3-beds and 59 (3%) to 4+-beds.

Local authority area and assessed band:



Of the 2,290 lettings, 67 (3%) were made to applicants in Band 1, 949 (41.5%) to applicants in Band 2, 1,246 (54.5%) to applicants in Band 3 and 28 (1%) to applicants in Band 4.

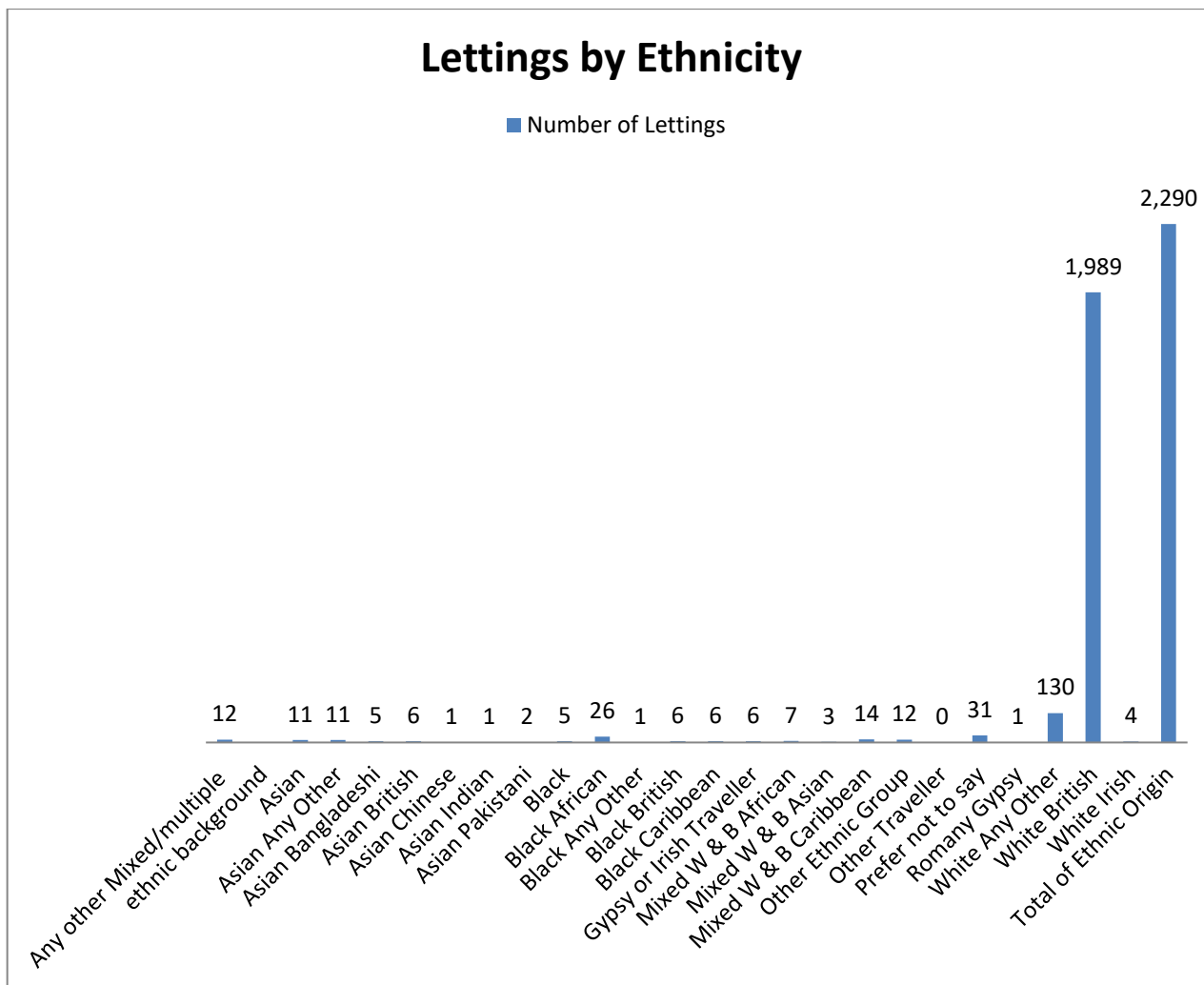
Local authority area and application type:



Overall, 614 (27%) of lettings were made to Transfer applicants. 36% of lettings in Test Valley were made to Transfer applicants, compared with 28% in Winchester, 25% in Eastleigh, 24% in East Hampshire and 18% in Havant. A Transfer Application means an applicant is an

existing social housing tenant and has been assessed as having a need to move, whilst General Application is applied to all other applications.

Ethnicity:



1,989 (87%) properties were let to applicants who stated on their application form they are White British.

130 (6%) properties were let to applicants who stated on their application form they are White Any Other.

140 (6%) properties were let to applicants who stated on their application form they are; Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, Asian, Asian Any Other, Asian Bangladeshi, Asian British, Asian Chinese, Asian Indian, Asian Pakistani, Black, Black African, Black Any Other, Black British, Black Caribbean, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Mixed W & B African, Mixed W & B Asian, Mixed W & B Caribbean, Other Ethnic Group, Romany Gypsy or White Irish.

31(1%) properties were let to applicants who stated on their application form they would Prefer not to say what their ethnic origin is.

Refusals

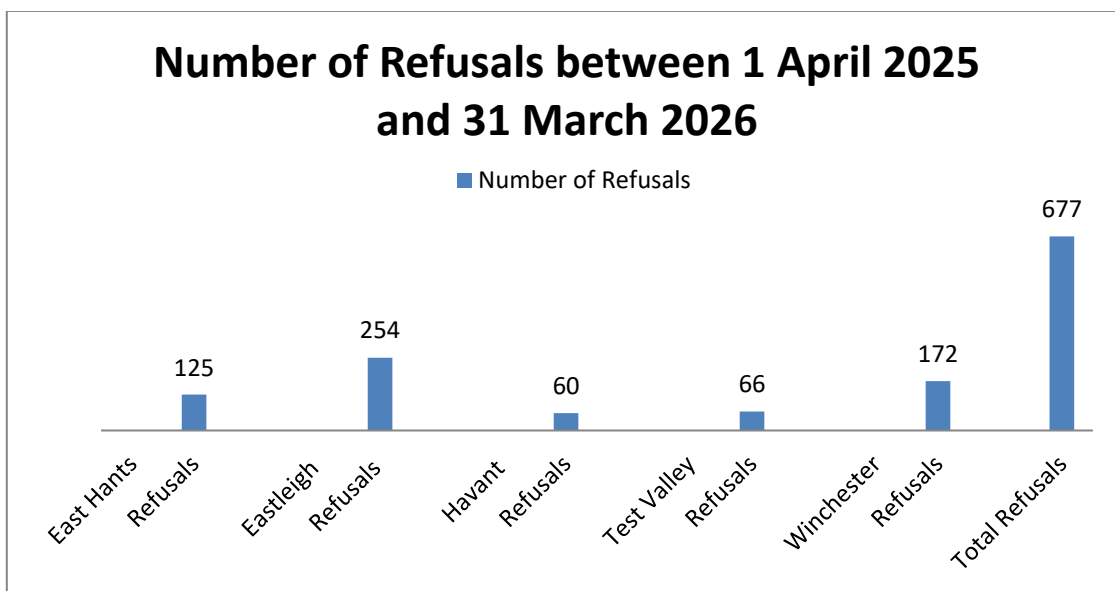
A refusal is when:

- An applicant turns down an offer of a property they have bid for, or
- A landlord decides not to accept an applicant (the nominee) for a property.

Refusals can delay the letting process and increase the amount of time a property remains empty (known as void time), which results in rent loss for landlords. For this reason, it is important that applicants only bid for homes they are genuinely interested in and that meet their needs.

Applicants who are offered two suitable properties and refuse both within a six-month period will have their application suspended for six months from the date of the second refusal. During this time, they will not be able to place any bids.

Refusals by local authority area and refusal type:



Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, a total of 2,967 offers were made for 2,290 properties. Of these, **677** offers were refused, a 23% refusal rate.

East Hampshire - a total of 544 offers were made for 419 properties. Of these, 125 offers were refused, a 23% refusal rate.

Eastleigh - a total of 744 offers were made for 490 properties. Of these, 254 offers were refused, a 34% refusal rate.

Havant - a total of 348 offers were made for 288 properties. Of these, 60 offers were refused, a 17% refusal rate.

Test Valley - a total of 481 offers were made for 353 properties. Of these, 66 offers were refused, a 14% refusal rate.

Winchester - a total of 912 offers were made for 740 properties. Of these, 172 offers were refused, a 19% refusal rate.

Average Waiting Times

The following section shows the average waiting times for applicants who were housed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 across each local authority area.

These figures do not include properties that required a specific village or parish local connection, or properties with any other additional eligibility requirements.

Please note that these waiting times are provided as a general guide only. They do not guarantee that an applicant will be housed within the same timeframe. Waiting times depend on demand, property availability, and changes in housing need, and are likely to be different when reviewed again in 12 months.

East Hampshire

	Band 2	Band 3
1 bed	2 years 3 months	4 years 9 months
2 bed flat	6 months	1 year 6 months
2 bed house	2 years 1 month	4 years 3 months
3 bed	2 years 11 months	Insufficient data
4+ bed	3 years 4 months	No Lettings
55+ properties	1 year	1 year 6 months

Eastleigh

	Band 2	Band 3
1 bed	2 years	5 years 8 months
2 bed flat	5 months	1 year 6 months
2 bed house	1 year 3 months	3 years 6 months
3 bed	1 year 9 months	5 years 7 months
4+ bed	2 years 5 months	No Lettings
55+ properties	1 year 2 months	3 years 9 months

Havant

	Band 2	Band 3
Bedsit	6 months	2 years 4 months
1 bed	1 year	4 years 3 months
2 bed flat	1 year 7 months	2 years 7 months
2 bed house	3 years 8 months	5 years
3 bed	4 years 1 month	5 years 11 months
4+ bed	4 years 4 months	No Lettings
55+ properties	1 year	1 year 8 months

Test Valley (Andover)

	Band 2	Band 3
1 bed	1 year 8 months	5 years 6 months
2 bed flat	1 year 6 months	2 years 10 months
2 bed house	1 year 6 months	6 years 5 months
3 bed	2 years 8 months	Insufficient Data
4+ bed	3 years	No Lettings
55+ properties	2 years	2 years 6 months

Test Valley (Romsey)

	Band 2	Band 3
1 bed	2 years	Insufficient data
2 bed flat	1 year 4 months	2 years 6 months
2 bed house	2 years	3 years 6 months
3 bed	3 years 5 months	No Lettings
4+ bed	3 years 2 months	No Lettings
55+ properties	2 years 9 months	No Lettings

Winchester

	Band 2	Band 3
1 bed	1 year 4 months	3 years 3 months
2 bed flat	1 year	1 year 5 months
2 bed house	11 months	2 years
3 bed	1 year 2 months	1 year 8 months
4+ bed	1 year 6 months	3 years 2 months
55+ properties	10 months	2 years 4 months

Key to Terms Used

- Insufficient Data – Lettings did take place, but all were subject to a local connection requirement, a Section 106 Agreement, or other specific preference criteria. Because these lettings were restricted, they are not included in the standard average waiting time calculations.
- No Lettings – No properties of this type were let to applicants in this band during the reporting period.