

Temporary Accommodation

The Council has a statutory duty to provide accommodation for households who are deemed by strict definition of law to be 'homeless'. This duty will either be an 'interim' duty while investigations are made to establish the full facts of the case, or a 'full' duty where the case is decided. In both cases the Council must provide Temporary Accommodation (TA) until suitable alternative accommodation can be found.

The Council has several types of TA available to it, with significant cost variations dependant on the type. The Council use a mix of self-contained accommodation provided by Registered Providers (RPs)(or Housing Associations), single rooms in Houses in Multiple Occupation in the private rented sector and rooms in Bed & Breakfast establishments and in Hotels/Motels (as a last resort). The Council's Temporary Accommodation Strategy envisaged the provision of new temporary accommodation through RSL's would provide better quality accommodation at social housing rent levels with no additional costs for the Council and minimal use of the more expensive types of temporary housing above.

However more recent changes in the economic climate and the proposals for change in the welfare benefits system indicate there may be an increased demand for TA in future which could in turn lead to greater use of the more expensive B&B, hotel and guesthouse TA placements. Although households in this type of TA do not have a tenancy agreement and are there on a 'licence', they are expected to pay for their accommodation either through Housing Benefit or paying themselves. However, there is often a shortfall between what can be recovered from the household or under benefit rules and the actual cost of the accommodation.

Fig. 1 Average numbers of households in TA per month during 2011

Month (2011)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of households (averaged over the month)	28	31	30	29	31	36	36	40	32	33	31	27

Due to the fluctuating nature of TA usage, and in order to illustrate the spread of accommodation used, figures for the week ending 28/10/2011 are used below as an example. During that week there were 35 households in TA, of those:

- 23 households were in self contained RP units (2 RP units were void),
- 4 households were in HMO type accommodation
- 5 households were in the Muskateer Motel (B&B)
- 3 households were in Calthorpe Lodge (B&B)

Cost of Temporary Accommodation:

During the 9 months up to and including December 2011:

Council's budget for TA was	<u>£39,684</u>
Gross cost of TA was	£78,827 (a)
Costs recovered (Housing Benefit and service charges) was	<u>£51,735</u> (b)
Unrecovered costs (net cost to the Council)	£27,092 (a-b)