

---

**To: Housing and Community Safety**

**On: 25 August 2015**

---

**Report by: Director of Development and Housing Services**

---

**Heading: Housing Equalities Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15**

---

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 The Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities. This report provides housing equalities monitoring information for the year 2014/15 and outlines recent activity within Housing Services to ensure equality in service delivery. .
- 

**2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Policy Board:

- 2.1 notes the content of the Housing Equalities Monitoring Report for 2014/15 which is attached as Appendix 1 and the action taken by Housing Services to ensure equality in service delivery as outlined in section 4 of this report
- 

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The provision of council services is covered by The Equality Act 2010 which requires local authorities to pay due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2 The key purpose of the Act is to harmonise, streamline and strengthen previous equality legislation and ensure that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and protected from discrimination. The single duty covers 9 protected characteristics:-
- Age
  - Disability

- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion & Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & Civil Partnership (only the first part of the duty – eliminate discrimination, harassment & victimisation applies to this characteristic)

A new Equalities Monitoring form to reflect the requirement of the Act was introduced in 2012/13. It should be noted that the response rate on the collection of Equalities information across the service has improved significantly. Within Owner Services for example, there has been an increase from 1 return (2012/13), to 129 in 2013/14 up to 356 during 2014/15.

- 3.3 In addition to the general duties set out in the Act, the Scottish Government published specific duties in May 2011. In summary, each authority is required to:
- Report on mainstreaming equality duty
  - Publish equality outcomes and report progress
  - Assess and review policies and practices
  - Gather and use employee information
  - Publish gender pay gap information
  - Publish statements on equal pay
  - Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
  - Publish in a manner that is accessible.
- 3.4 The Scottish Social Housing Charter requires all social landlords to demonstrate that service users are 'treated fairly and with respect, and receive fair access to housing and housing services'. We have collected and submitted equalities information on service users as part of Renfrewshire Council's submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator for 2014/15.
- 3.5 Housing Services are striving to ensure that all customers are able to access services and that activities do not have a negative impact on any group. Section 4 of this report outlines work undertaken during 2014/15. The collection and analysis of equalities monitoring information is an important tool to identify if any additional action needs to be taken to promote equal opportunities and to inform future planning. The Equalities Monitoring Report, attached as Appendix 1, provides a range of information for 2014/15 to support this.

---

## **4. Equalities Activity during 2014/2015**

- 4.1 The Council aims to make services as accessible as possible to all service users and over the last year in relation to housing services this has included:
- Continued use of translation and telephone interpretation services by Housing Services through 'Language Line' (45 telephone interpretations in 2014/15 for 8 different languages) and support for wider use within the Council to assist customers accessing through other services (e.g. Customer Contact Centre).
  - Information offered in a variety of formats, including, large print, audio and Braille. We have also produced the council tenants' newsletter in audio format when

customers have asked for this.

- Use of in-house translation service based within the communications team to enable easy and cost effective translation of documents into Audio, Large print and Braille.
- In October 2014 we produced our Tenants Report on our performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The report's content and layout were agreed in conjunction with a group of our tenants including residents of our sheltered housing complexes. The final version of the report reflected their comments in terms of font size and colour schemes which they felt suited those with partial sight loss. We also produced this report in an audio format.
- Ongoing use of the updated equalities monitoring forms which cover the 9 protected characteristics, with improved response rates in 2014/15.
- Ongoing use of language cards which enable officers to communicate with customers using 11 different languages.
- Continued promotion of staff training opportunities covering a range of equalities issues.
- Equality Impact Assessments carried out when implementing new policies and procedures. Guide on Equalities and Human Rights Assessments prepared for Development and Housing Services staff to complement corporate guidance.
- Updated translation box included as standard in publicity information.
- Participation in corporate Equality Week activities (October 2014)
- Advice and assistance provided to Council tenants with disabilities and older people who may require adaptations to enable them to remain safely in their own home and maintain and their independence.
- Help with the funding and promotion of the Care and Repair service (provided by Bridgewater Housing Association in partnership with the Council) which provides advice and assistance to older and disabled owners and private sector tenants.
- Continued provision of emergency accommodation to women and/or children who have experienced domestic violence. Specialist support groups have been set up to address social inclusion and interpreting services used to break down communication barriers and ensure that health and wellbeing is maintained.
- Work in partnership with Social Work and housing associations, funded through the Change Fund programme, to ensure that older people are able to live in housing which is suitable for their needs and able to live independently for as long as possible. (Older Persons' Housing Advice Officer and handyperson service managed by Bridgewater Housing Association; Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator based with the Council's Housing Services.)
- The Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator has developed a broad programme of new activities and health initiatives with a range of partners for older tenants to participate in, and the post was mainstreamed in early 2015, along with a new part-time Activities Officer post. As a monthly average over 1410<sup>1</sup> people participated on monthly activities with over 97% being over 60 years old.

---

<sup>1</sup> number might include multiple counts of the same people if participated in more than one event

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial**-None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community Planning** – This report outlines the steps Housing Services (part of Development and Housing Series) are taking to ensure equality of access to its services  
  
**Empowering our Communities** – Housing Services (part of Development and Housing Services) empowers communities by treating everyone with respect and ensuring that customers are aware of the services regardless of their characteristics
4. **Legal** - The equality monitoring statistics included in this report help inform discussions on how well Housing Services (part of Development and Housing Services) are discharging its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
5. **Property/Assets** - None.
6. **Information Technology**- None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -  
  
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - None.
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** - None
11. **Privacy Impact** - None

---

## List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1 Report to the Housing and Community Safety Policy Board 25 August 2015 'Housing Equalities Monitoring Report 2014/15.'

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Development and Housing Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

The contact officer within the service is Dr. Evi Viza, Service Review and Development Officer,  
Tel: 0141 618 6150, e-mail: [evi.viza@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:evi.viza@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX 1

### Housing Equalities Monitoring Report 2013/14

#### Introduction

2014/15 was the third year that the new monitoring form was used to collect equalities information from customers. The monitoring form is used to collect equalities information across the main customer groups: tenants; new tenants; housing applicants; homelessness applicants; and private sector grants customers. This provides valuable information on the customer base to inform future planning and improve service delivery.

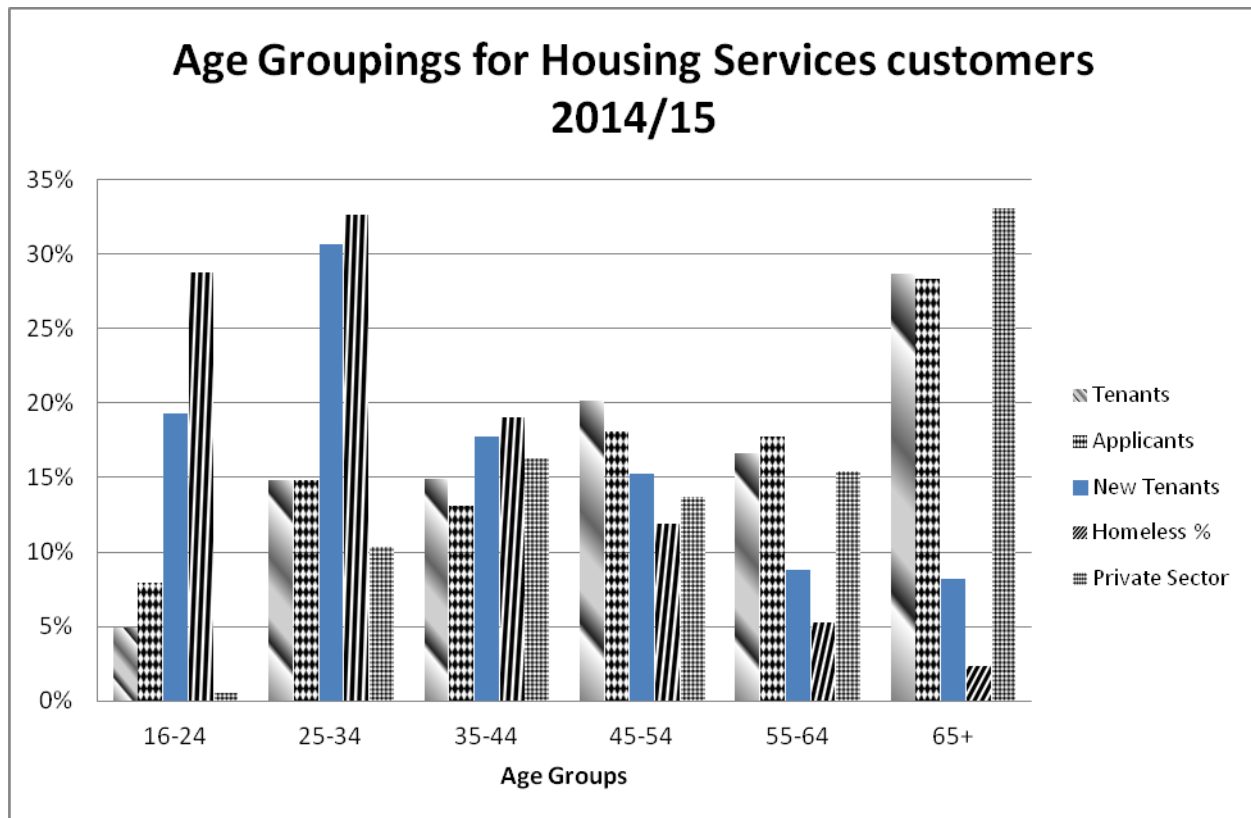
While there were still a number of equalities questions which many customers were not willing to answer, the response rate was generally slightly higher than last year. (The lowest response rates were for questions relating to sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion.)

#### Summary of Key Points

- **Age** A high proportion of existing tenants and applicants come from the 65+ age group (28.6% and 28.4% respectively) but the profile is radically different for new tenants, with 50% in the 16-34 age group and only 8.2% aged 65+ years. Homeless applicants are predominantly younger people - people under 34 years old account for over 60% of homeless applicants in 2014/15. (Table 1 and Chart 1)
- **Gender** Most existing tenants (57%), applicants (59.5%) and new tenants (52%) are women. In sharp contrast, more than two-thirds of homeless applicants are men. (Table 2 and Chart 2)
- **Religion** Information on religion is only available for a small proportion of customers. Of those who provided information, the majority of people described themselves as having no religion. (Table 3 and Chart 3)
- **Race** The majority of customers in all groups are 'White' with most of them being 'White Scottish'. The most diverse customer base appears to be homeless customers with 2.3% being non white followed by new tenants where the corresponding figure was 2%. Chart 4 shows the graphical representation of the responses without taking into consideration the percentage of non responses.
- **Disability** Physical disability was the most frequently reported disability across all customer groups (9.8% of existing tenants, 8.2% of housing applicants, 8.6% of new tenants, 10.2% of homeless applicants) except private sector. Within the private sector, long term illness, disease or condition (8.4%) was the most frequently reported. Learning disabilities were most often reported by homeless applicants (2.2%) and new tenants (2.4%). (Table 5 and Chart 5)
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership** The most popular status across all customer groups is "single" (42% of existing tenants and 66% of homeless service users). This is in line with current research emphasising the smaller households around Scotland. The option "married/civil partnership" is the second most frequently reported status. (Table 6 and chart 6).
- **Pregnancy and Maternity; Sexual Orientation; and Gender Reassignment** The last three questions of the Equalities monitoring form are the ones with the highest level of non-responses. Although the response overall in equality related questions has been improved

and we have arranged for staff to be trained to deal with these questions, we still encounter difficulty in trying to collect this information. It is hoped that this will improve in the future. Given the low response rate, it is not possible to draw reliable conclusions for the customer groups on these issues. (Tables 7- 9)

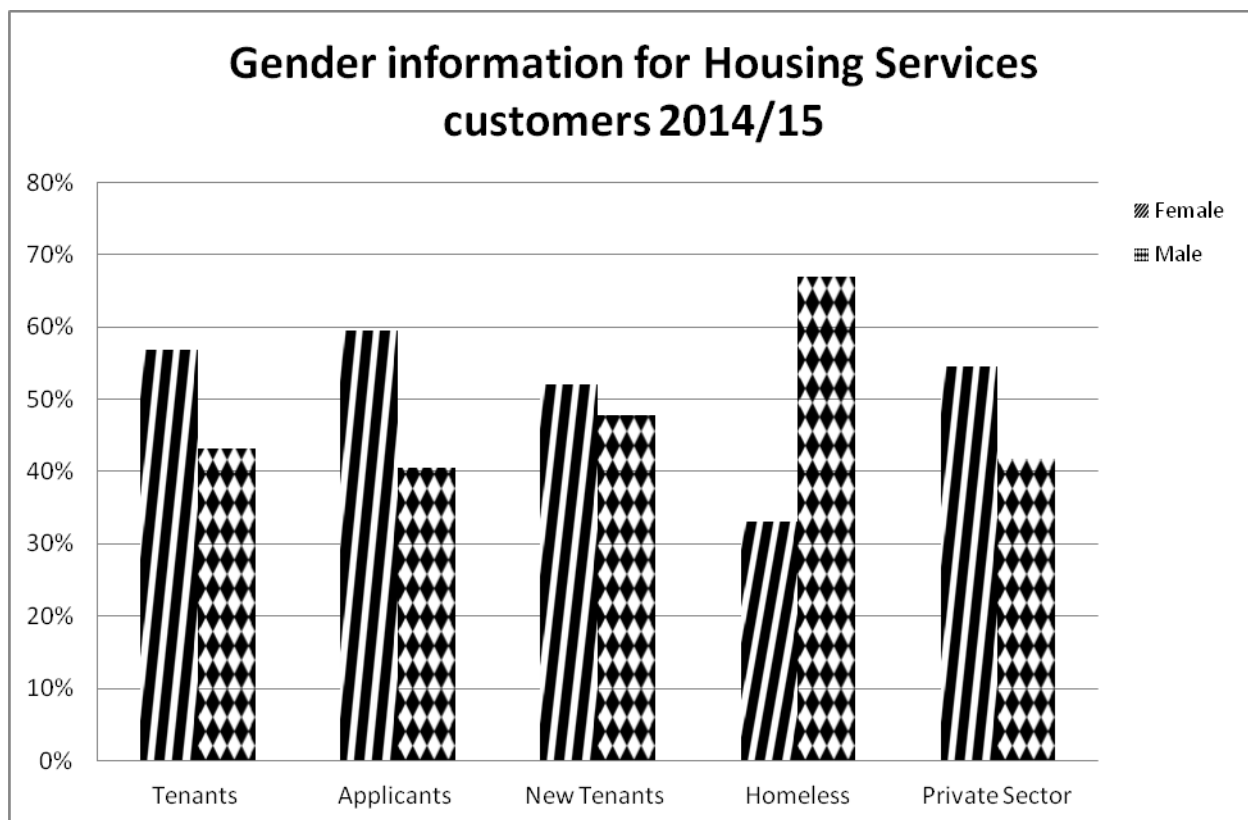
**Note:** *The figures shown in the tables and charts below represent the service users in each customer group so they may appear different than the year end figures reported elsewhere. For example, the “tenant” figures include all tenants shown on the tenancy document (ie joint tenants) so it will be higher than the number of actual tenancies.*



**Chart 1: Age Groups for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**

Age Group	Tenants	Applicants	New Tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
16-24	4.9%	7.9%	19.3%	28.8%	0.6%
25-34	14.8%	14.8%	30.7%	32.6%	10.4%
35-44	14.9%	13.1%	17.8%	19.1%	16.2%
45-54	20.2%	18.1%	15.2%	11.9%	13.7%
55-64	16.6%	17.7%	8.8%	5.3%	15.4%
65+	28.6%	28.4%	8.2%	2.4%	33.1%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	0%	0%	10.6%
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

**Table 1: Age Groups for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**

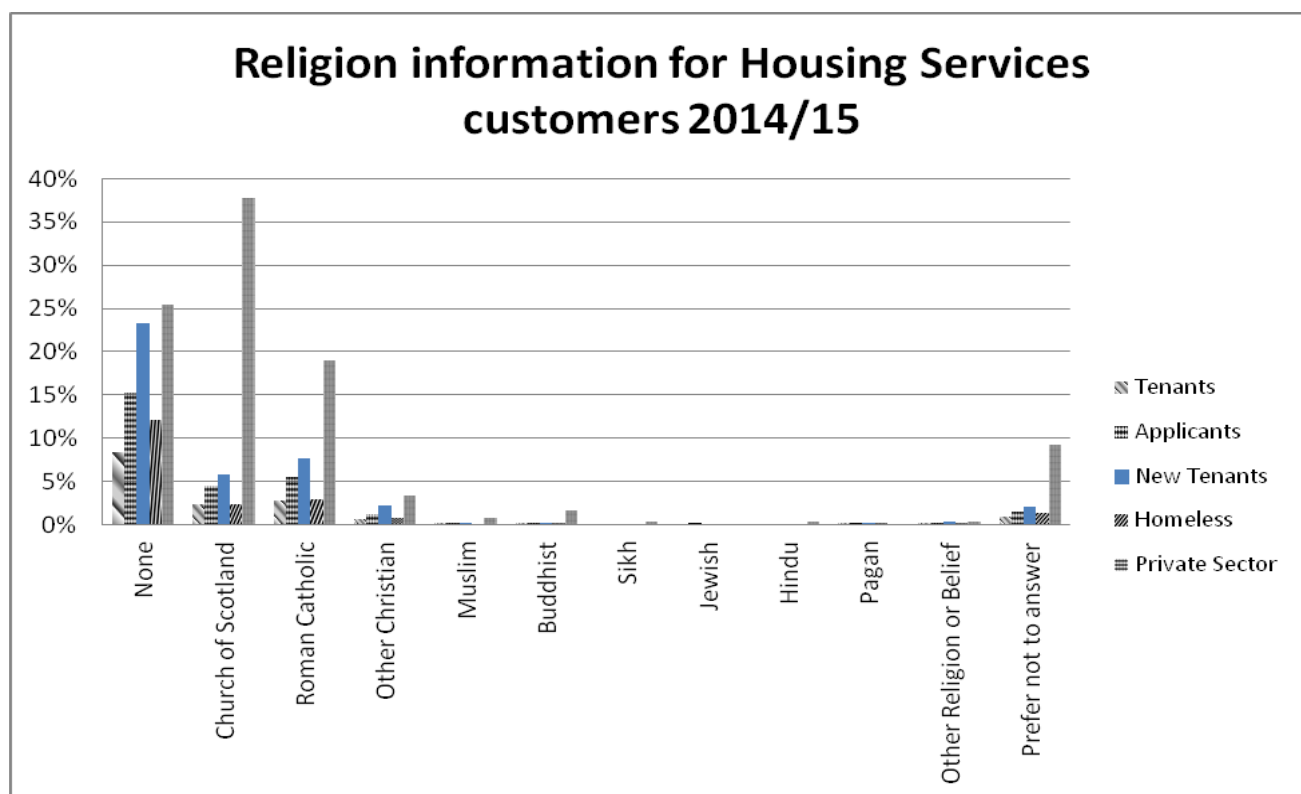


**Chart 2: Gender information for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**

Gender	Tenants	Applicants	New Tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
Female	56.8%	59.5%	52.1%	33.0%	54.6%
Male	43.2%	40.5%	47.9%	67.0%	41.7%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	0%	0%	3.6%

**Table 2: Gender information for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**

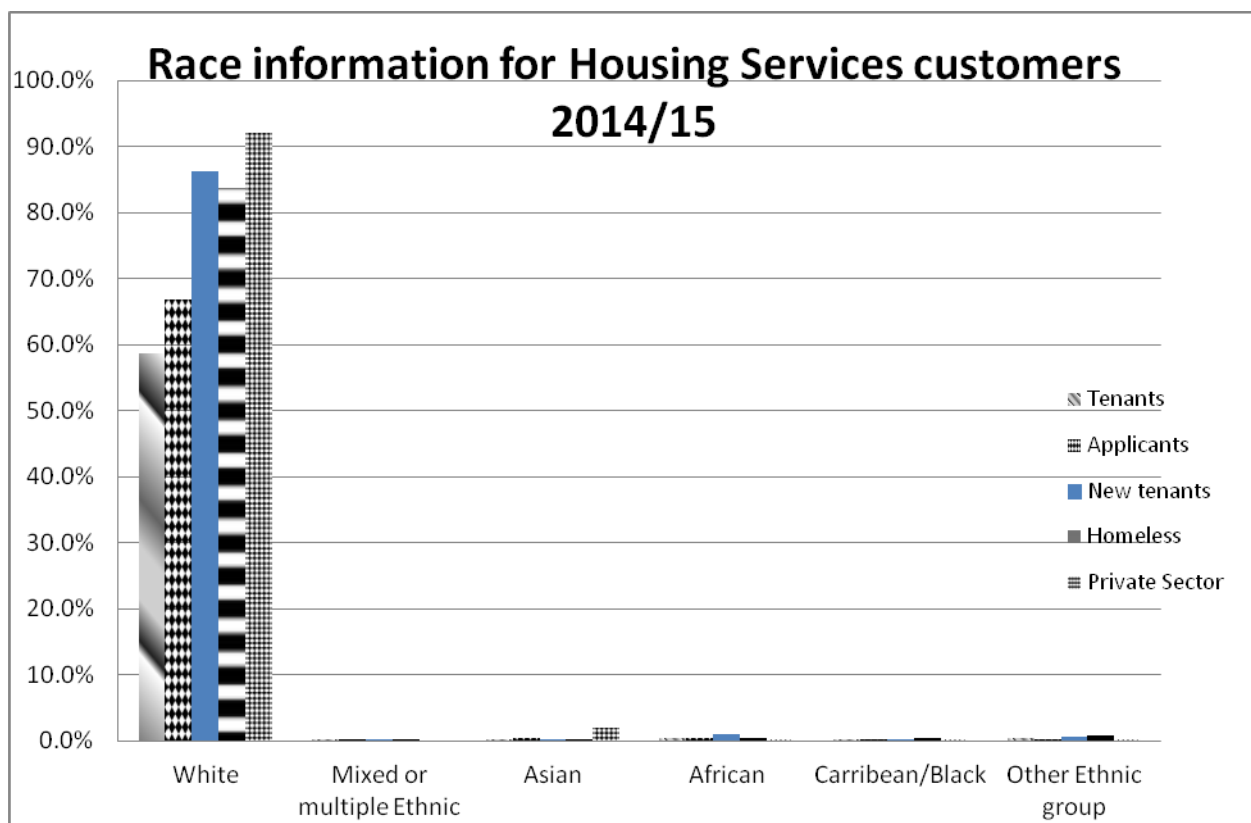




**Chart 3: religion Information for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**

Religion	Tenants	Applicants	New Tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
None	8.0%	15.4%	24.6%	12.3%	25.5%
Church of Scotland	2.3%	4.5%	5.7%	1.7%	37.8%
Roman Catholic	2.6%	5.5%	6.2%	2.3%	19.1%
Other Christian	0.7%	1.2%	2.3%	0.6%	3.4%
Muslim	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%
Buddhist	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	1.7%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%
Jewish	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%
Pagan	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Other Religion or Belief	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%
Prefer not to answer	0.9%	1.5%	2.6%	1.9%	9.2%
(blank)	85.2%	71.3%	57.8%	81.2%	1.4%
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

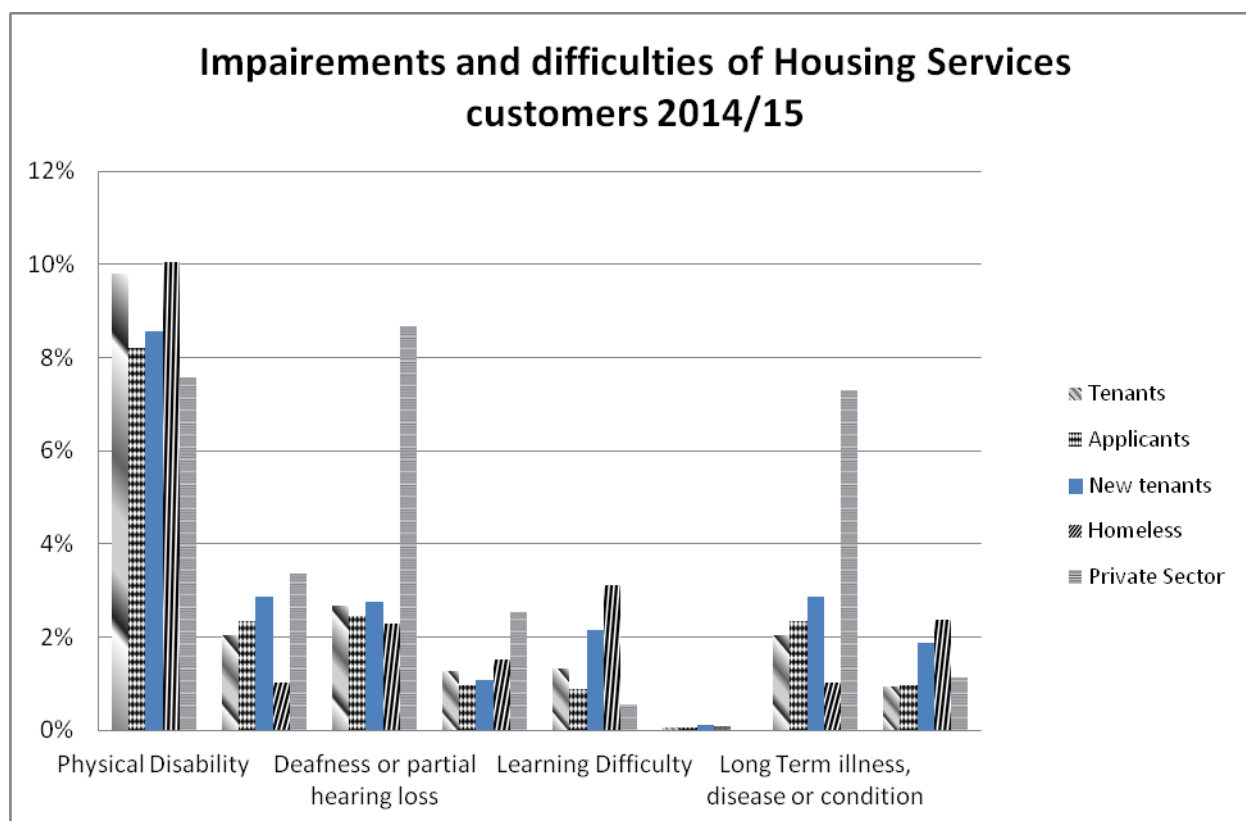
**Table 3: religion Information for main Housing customer groups 2014/15**



**Chart 4: Race information for Housing customer groups 2014/15**

Race	Tenants	Applicants	New tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
White	58.6%	66.8%	86.2%	83.7%	92.2%
Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%
Asian	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	2.0%
African	0.4%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%	0.3%
Caribbean or Black	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%
Other	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Not Answered/Blank	40.3%	31.9%	11.8%	14.0%	5.0%
TOTAL	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

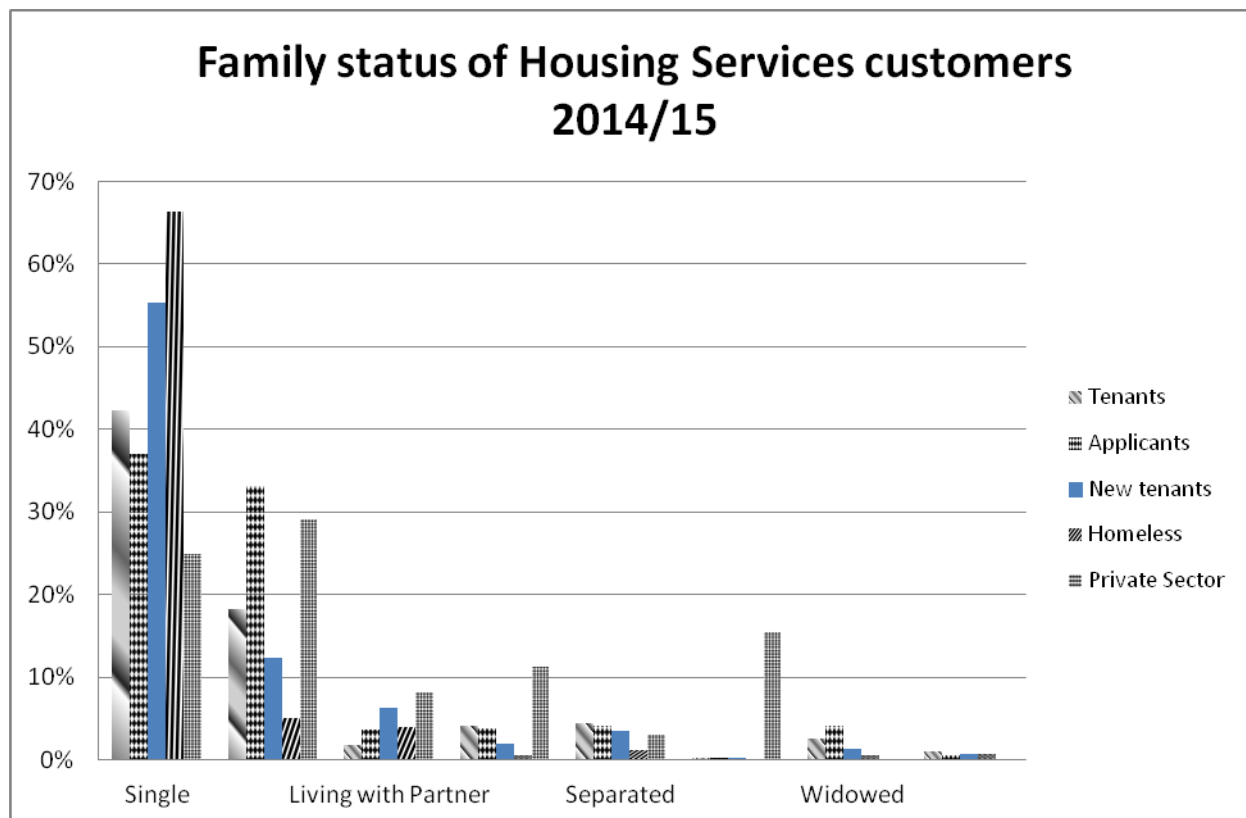
**Table 4: Race information for Housing customer groups 2014/15**



**Chart 5: Impairments and Difficulties for Housing Customer groups 2014/15**

Disability	Tenants	Applicants	New tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
Physical Disability	9.8%	8.2%	8.6%	10.2%	7.6%
Mental Health issue	2.0%	2.4%	2.9%	1.1%	3.4%
Deafness or partial hearing loss	2.7%	2.4%	2.8%	2.8%	8.7%
Blindness or partial sight loss	1.3%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	2.5%
Learning Difficulty	1.3%	0.9%	2.2%	2.2%	0.6%
Development Disorder	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Long Term illness, disease or condition	2.0%	2.4%	2.9%	1.1%	11.2%
Other condition	0.9%	1.0%	1.9%	1.4%	1.1%
Prefer not to answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
Total who reported a disability	21.03%	18.23%	23.40%	21.47%	36.13%

**Table 5: Impairments and Difficulties for Housing Customer groups 2014/15**



**Chart 6: Family status for Housing customer groups 2014/15**

Marriage & Civil Partnership	Tenants	Applicants	New tenants	Homeless	Private Sector
Single	42.3%	37.1%	55.3%	66.3%	24.9%
Married/Civil Partnership	18.2%	33.2%	12.4%	5.0%	29.1%
Living with Partner	1.8%	3.6%	6.2%	4.0%	8.1%
Divorced	4.2%	3.7%	1.9%	0.5%	11.2%
Separated	4.5%	4.3%	3.6%	1.2%	3.1%
Widowed	2.6%	4.2%	1.3%	0.6%	15.4%
Engaged	1.0%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Not Given	8.0%	11.5%	14.6%	18.8%	8.4%
(blank)	17.5%	1.9%	3.9%	2.9%	0.0%
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

**Table 6: Family status for Housing customer groups 2014/15**

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<b>Tenants</b>	<b>Applicants</b>	<b>New Tenants</b>	<b>Homeless</b>	<b>private sector</b>
Pregnant	0.8%	1.3%	2.5%	0.2%	0.3%
On maternity leave	0.4%	0.5%	1.5%	0.0%	1.1%
Neither	7.4%	13.8%	18.6%	9.2%	45.7%
Prefer not to answer	0.4%	0.6%	1.2%	0.4%	18.5%
Not applicable	5.1%	11.1%	16.4%	6.3%	34.5%
(blank)	85.9%	72.7%	59.8%	83.9%	
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

**Table 7: Pregnancy and maternity of main customer groups for Housing 2014/15**

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Tenants</b>	<b>Applicants</b>	<b>New Tenants</b>	<b>Homeless</b>	<b>private sector</b>
Bisexual	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	1.4%	0.6%
Gay	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	1.1%
Hetrosexual/straight	12.3%	24.6%	34.4%	12.1%	84.3%
Lesbian	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%
Other	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Prefer not to answer	1.6%	2.9%	4.2%	2.3%	9.0%
(blank)	85.6%	71.9%	59.5%	84.3%	4.8%
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

**Table 8: Sexual Orientation of main customer groups for Housing 2014/15**

<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>	<b>Applicants %</b>	<b>New Tenants %</b>	<b>Homeless %</b>	<b>private sector</b>
Yes	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%
No	13.0%	25.7%	37.4%	13.6%	85.7%
Prefer not to answer	1.3%	2.1%	2.8%	2.1%	6.4%
(blank)	85.7%	72.1%	59.8%	84.4%	7.3%
Total	100% (13938)	100% (7460)	100% (1636)	100% (1018)	100% (356)

**Table 9: Gender reassignment of main customer groups for Housing 2014/15**