



North Yorkshire
County Council

North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund

Stakeholder Workshop
5th November 2019



North Yorkshire
County Council

Welcome

Neil Irving

Assistant Director

Policy, Partnerships and Communities

NYCC



This session:

- High level update on the Fund.
 - Update from Family Fund Business Services.
 - Group discussion one – discuss experiences of the scheme and any issues to be addressed.
 - Group discussion two – consultation on potential scheme design changes.
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Fraud Awareness Workshop

(March 19)

- Partners had expressed their concern about fraud/individuals who apply regularly.
 - Presentation from Veritau.
 - What is fraud
 - How to identify and reduce fraud
 - How to report any incidents
 - What Veritau can do
 - Please continue to report any concerns to Veritau:
 - T: 0800 9179 247
 - E: counter.fraud@veritau.co.uk
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Session One

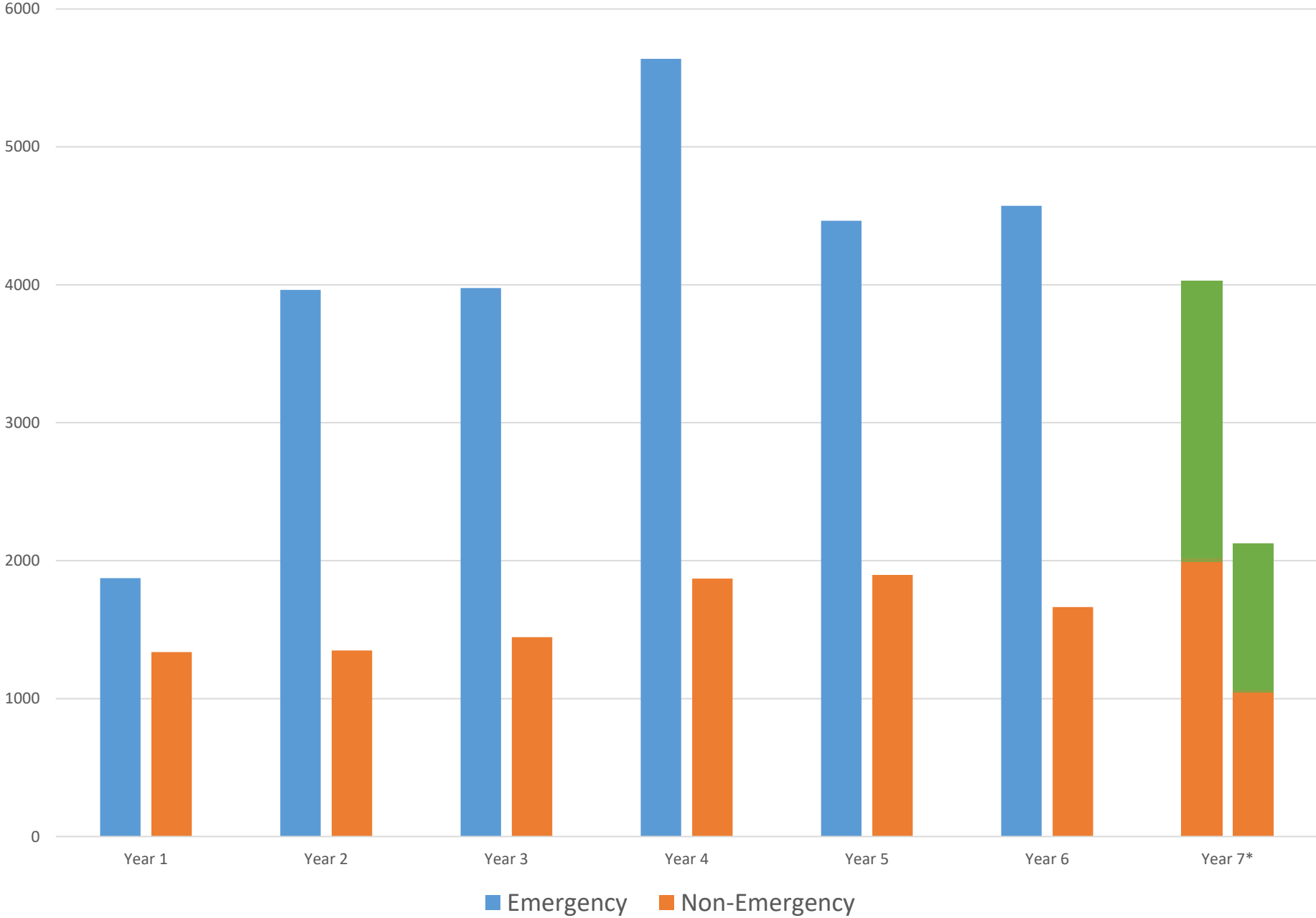
Fund overview

Mark Taylor
Policy and Partnerships, NYCC

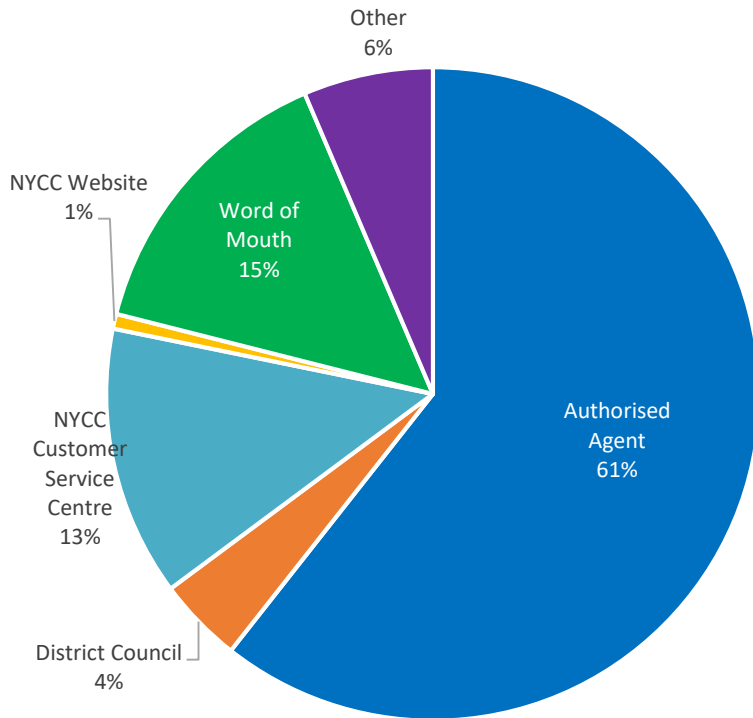
Local Welfare Assistance Schemes in England

- Report and campaign earlier in 2019 by Church Action on Poverty and the Children's Society.
 - 27 top tier authorities no longer provide a Local Welfare Assistance Scheme.
 - Spend on schemes in 2017-18 was just one-third of the £129.6m that Government had indicated should be spent on LWAS that year.
 - Seven local authorities, including North Yorkshire spent more than the indicative amount.
 - Average number of applications per scheme was 2,418.
 - Food was the most commonly awarded item – 89,401.
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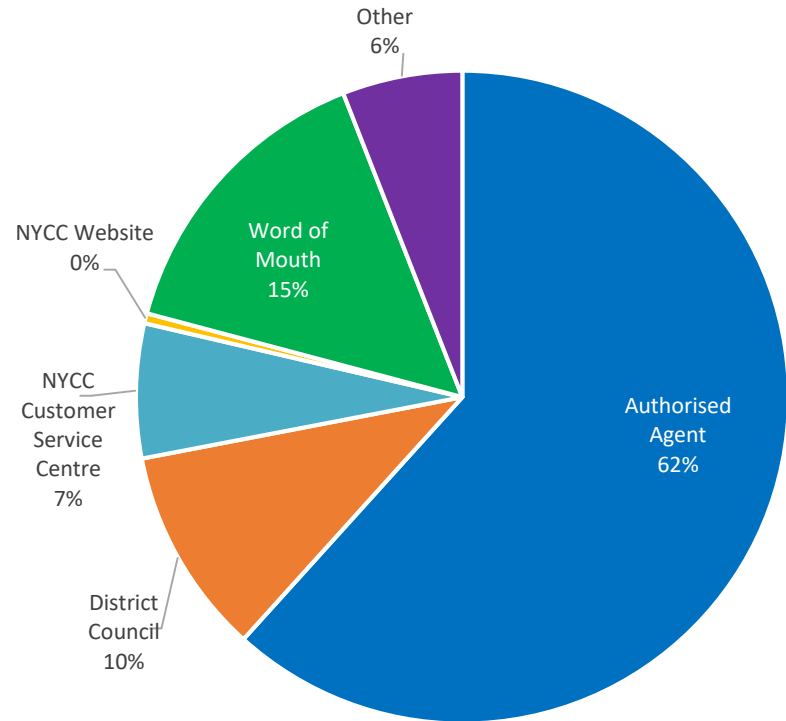
Applications Received



How Do People Find Out?

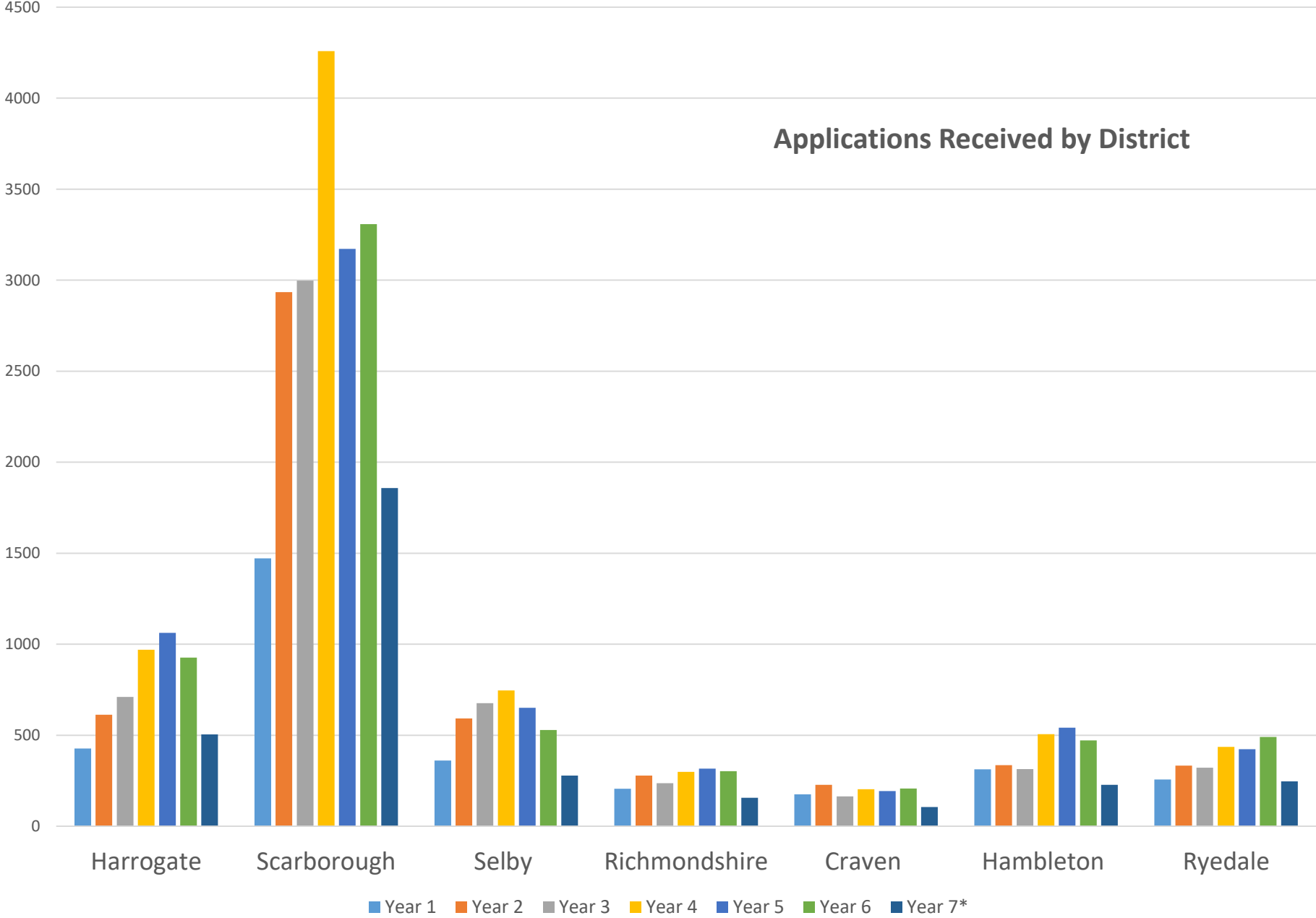


Last year

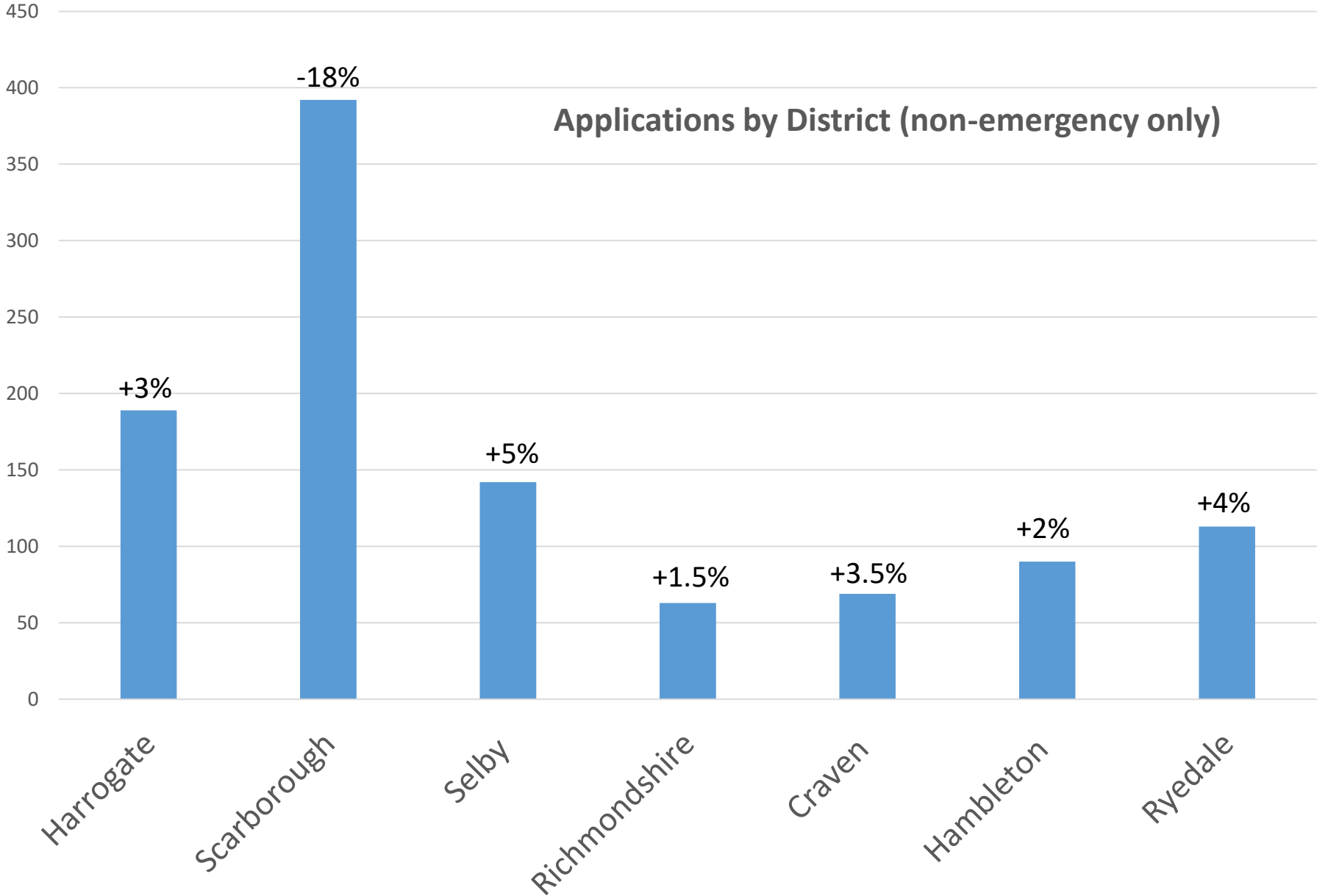


This year

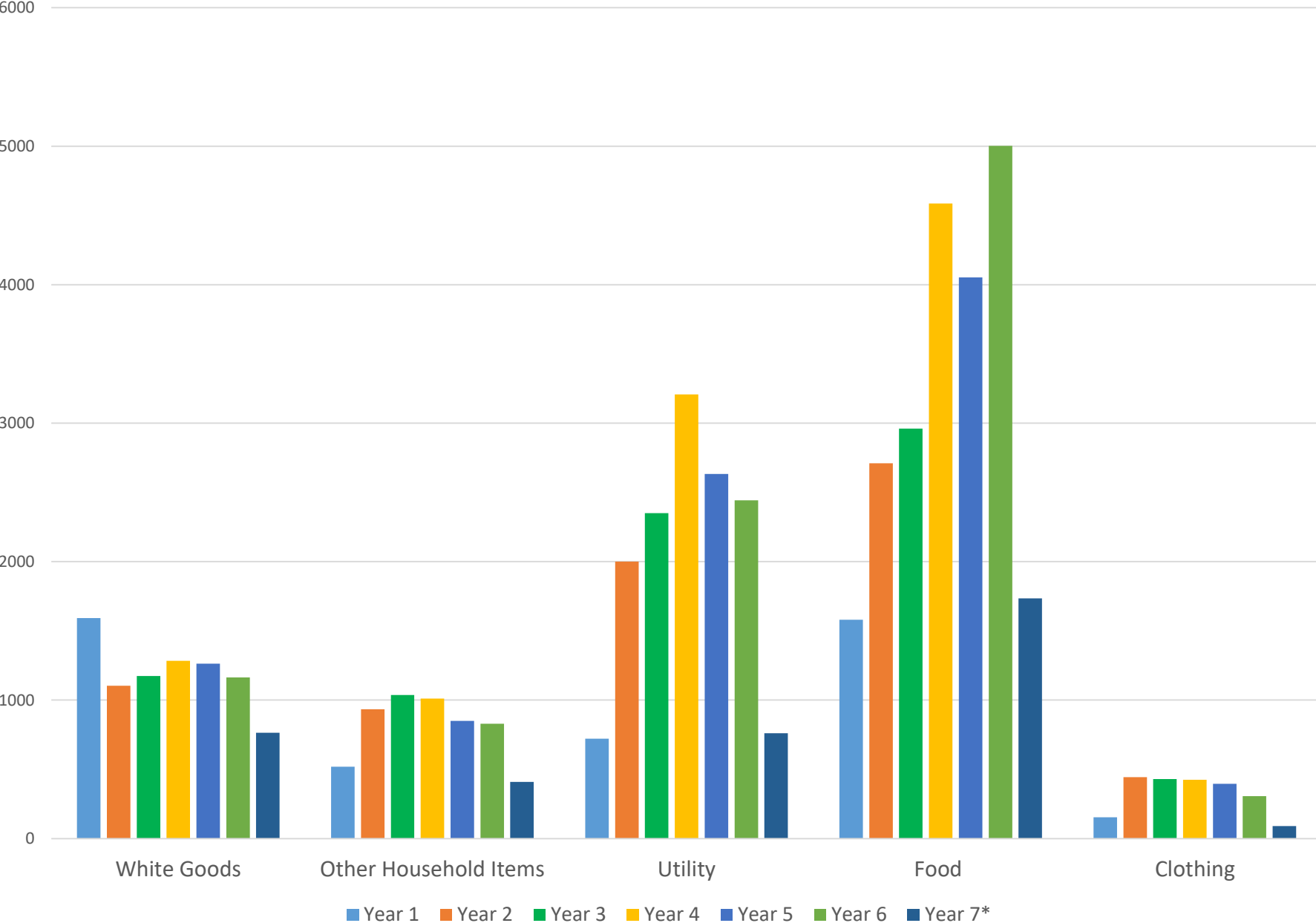
Applications Received by District



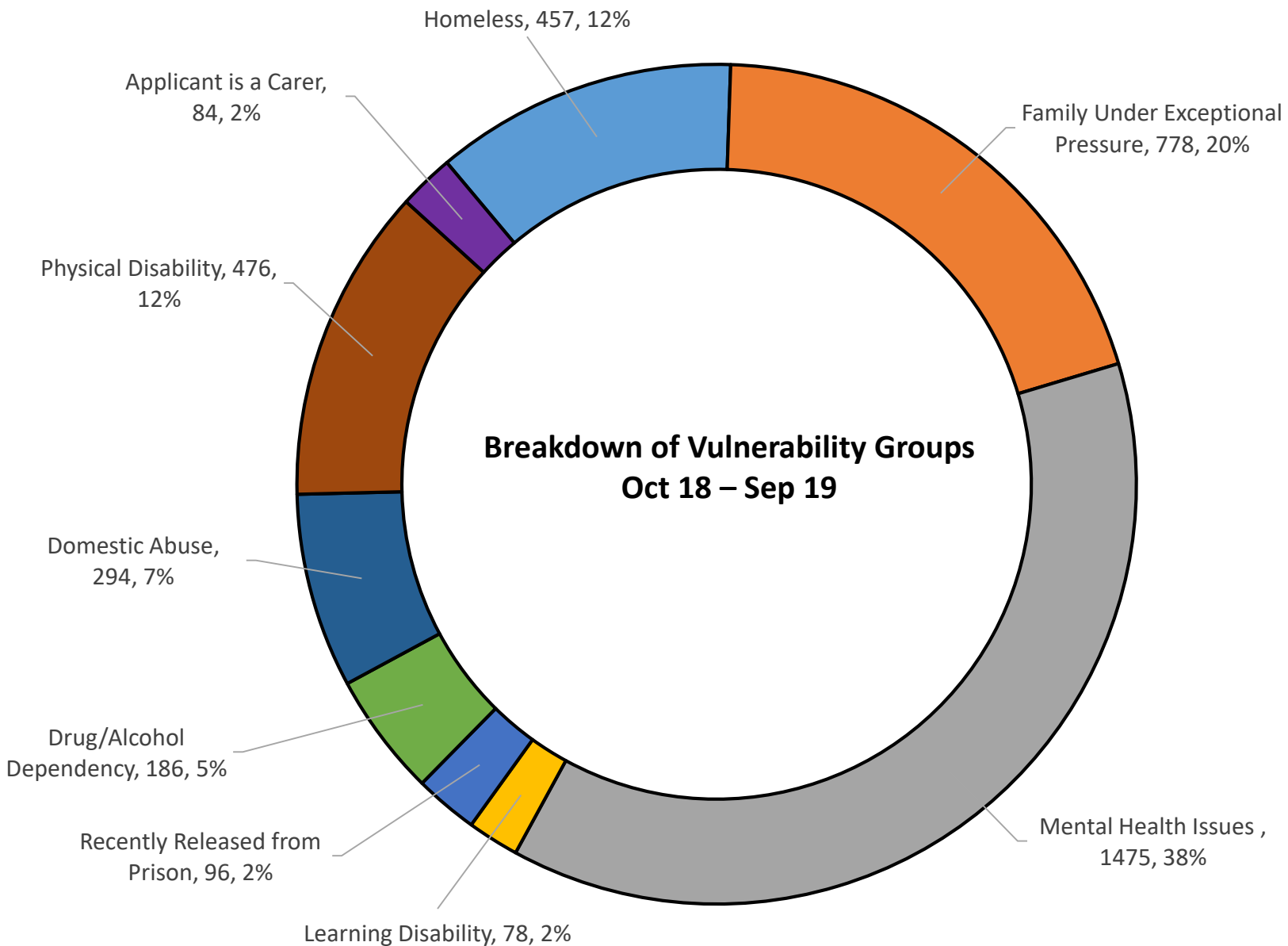
Applications by District (non-emergency only)



Awards

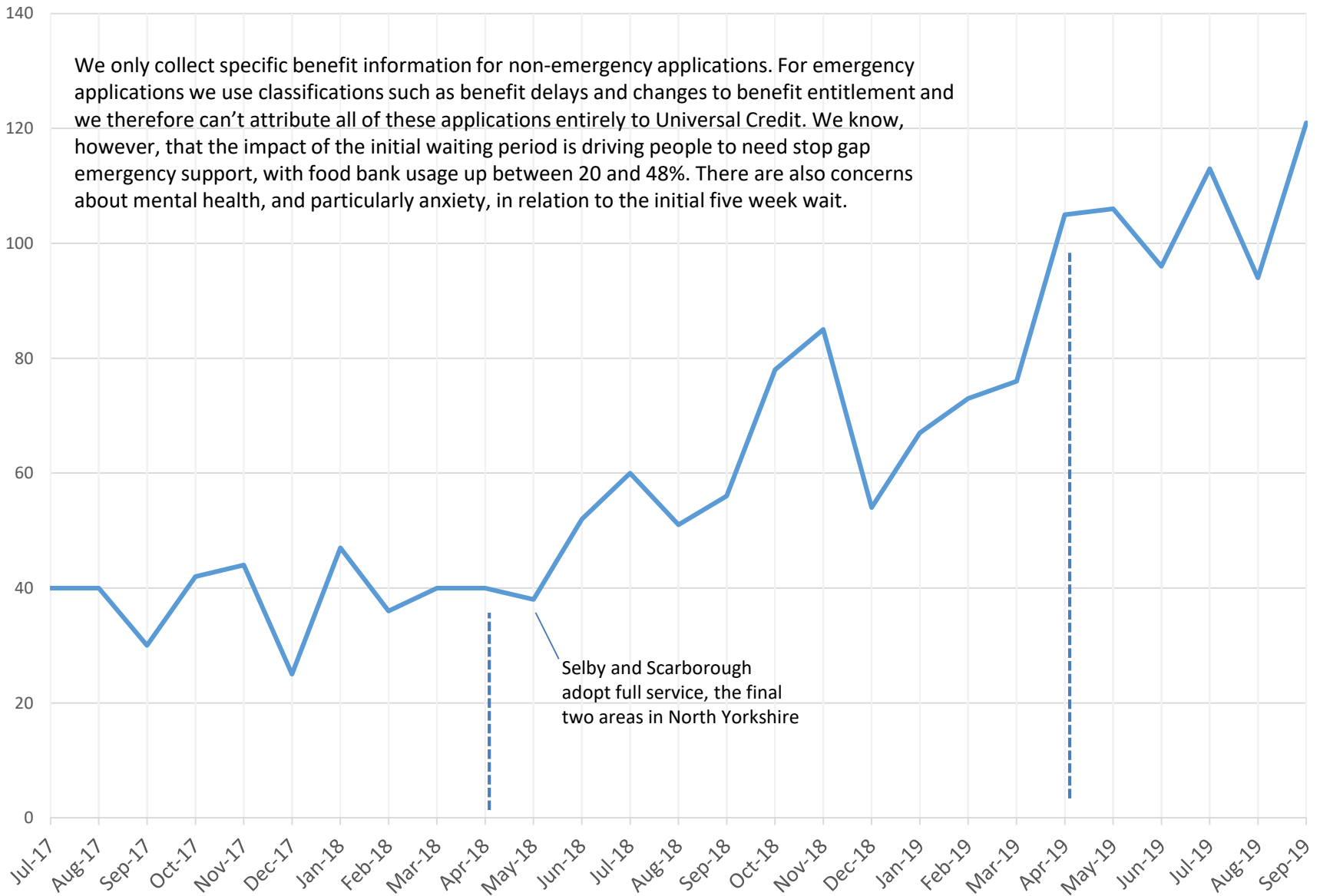


**Breakdown of Vulnerability Groups
Oct 18 – Sep 19**



Universal Credit

We only collect specific benefit information for non-emergency applications. For emergency applications we use classifications such as benefit delays and changes to benefit entitlement and we therefore can't attribute all of these applications entirely to Universal Credit. We know, however, that the impact of the initial waiting period is driving people to need stop gap emergency support, with food bank usage up between 20 and 48%. There are also concerns about mental health, and particularly anxiety, in relation to the initial five week wait.





Family Fund Business Services

Grant Administrator &
Procurement Partner

NYLAF Workshop Presentation



November 2019
Paul McAfee



Family Fund

Helping you, helping others

Business Services

Who we are

Family Fund Business Services is a leading business-to-business fulfilment and grant administration service and a wholly owned subsidiary of Family Fund.

Last year alone, Family Fund Business Services provided over **153,119** grant items or services worth **over £18 million** to families and beneficiaries across the UK.

Through our collective buying power and efficient, industry-leading fulfilment processes, we provide easy access to thousands of discounted products and services.

We supply, deliver and install:



White goods



Furniture



Flooring



Household items



Energy vouchers



Mobility equipment



Computers & tablets



Cash out services



Pre-payment cards

+ We also offer uplift and package recycling services



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Who we work with



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



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Key statistics – Sept. 2019

Key Statistics	This Month	%	Year to Date	%
Applications Received				
- Standard Applications	175	35.00%	979	37.42%
- Emergency Applications	325	65.00%	1637	62.58%
	500	100.00%	2616	100.00%
Applications Approved				
- Standard Applications	164	32.80%	976	37.31%
- Emergency Applications	257	51.40%	1428	54.59%
	421	84.20%	2404	91.90%
Applications Rejected				
- Standard Applications	11	2.20%	82	3.13%
- Emergency Applications	79	15.80%	211	8.07%
	90	18.00%	293	11.20%
Average Award Value				
- Standard Applications	£363.93		£364.24	
- Emergency Applications	£64.39		£63.30	
Grant Spend				
- Standard Applications	£64,455.22	76.27%	£340,864.88	78.18%
- Emergency Applications	£20,059.00	23.73%	£95,139.00	21.82%
	£84,514.22		£436,003.88	100.00%
Average Processing Time (elapsed hours)				
- Standard Applications	70 hours		45 hours	
- Emergency Applications	6 hours		7.2 hours	

Key statistics – Sept. 2019

Region (YTD - Approved and Rejected)	Standard Applications	%	Emergency Applications	%
Craven	66	6.36%	36	2.21%
Hambleton	85	8.20%	133	8.16%
Harrogate	188	18.13%	307	18.83%
Richmondshire	61	5.88%	92	5.64%
Ryedale	113	10.90%	130	7.98%
Scarborough	385	37.13%	800	49.08%
Selby	139	13.40%	132	8.10%
	1037		1630	

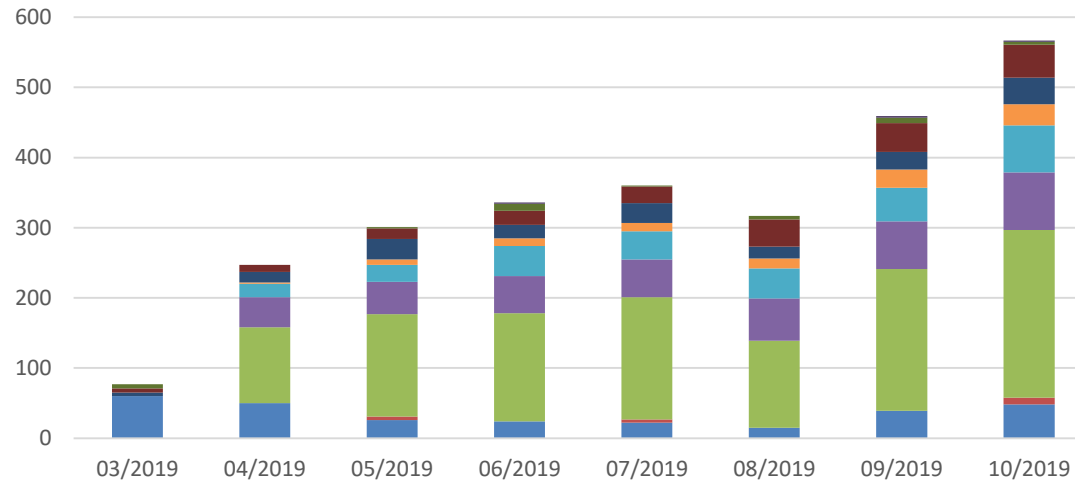
Item	#Month	£Month	#YTD	£YTD
Food Voucher	300	£11,055.00	1387	£53,816.00
Energy Voucher	231	£6,396.00	761	£33,208.00
Clothing	18	£1,225.00	90	£6,200.00
White Goods	133	£42,881.00	764	£242,177.00
Furniture & Bedding	85	£19,054.22	409	£89,140.67
	767	£80,611.22	3411	£424,541.67



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Business
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Helpdesk Volumes



	03/2019	04/2019	05/2019	06/2019	07/2019	08/2019	09/2019	10/2019
Wrong number (401)	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
Non FCT call	6	0	2	10	1	5	8	4
Referred to Agent	6	10	15	20	24	39	41	47
Referred back to NY	5	15	29	19	28	17	25	38
Emergency Declined	0	2	8	11	12	14	26	30
Emergency Approved	0	19	24	43	40	43	48	67
Beneficiary Query	0	43	46	53	54	60	68	82
Agent Query	0	108	146	154	174	124	202	239
Misc	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	10
Other	60	50	26	24	22	15	39	48

■ Other
 ■ Misc
 ■ Agent Query
 ■ Beneficiary Query
 ■ Emergency Approved
■ Emergency Declined
 ■ Referred back to NY
 ■ Referred to Agent
 ■ Non FCT call
 ■ Wrong number (401)



Business Services

Sustaining the fund – some changes introduced by FFBS

- Online redemption of white goods
- Increased warranties – 3 years on white goods
- More choice of goods
- Online vouchers
- New suppliers
- Partnership engagement

Challenges

- Increasing number of enquiries and demand
- Limited onward referral – more agents only working with their own clients
- Pre-qualification for eligibility
- We are not in a position to undertake vulnerability checks
- Risk – fraud and safeguarding
- Increased use of audits – increase in applications where confirmation of eligibility hasn't been done

Finding a Sustainable Solution

We are currently working with NYCC to consider solutions to some of these issues – for example:

- Increasing the Agent network
- Use of IVR
- Additional resource (FFBS staff)
- More support for Agents
- Greater online presence and resources
- Applicant self-service for first time food/utility



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Business Services



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Group Discussion One



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1. Please share your experiences, thoughts and comments about the Fund as well as your key messages for the external administrator (Family Fund Business Services) and/or NYCC.
 2. There has been a gradual shift since the Fund started, away from drop-ins and open referrals, to Authorised Agents only working with those individuals/families who are in receipt of their service. Should this be the blanket position now for the Fund? What problems might this cause? How can applicant's expectations be managed? Should the list of Agents be published so that applicants are aware?
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Group Discussion Two



Possible Changes to the Fund

- Pressure on Local Authority budgets nationally – this has had an impact on Local Welfare Assistance schemes across England.
 - Asked to consider possible changes to the NYLAF.
 - A range of options drawn up and five discounted – disproportionate impact, logistically difficult, too high priority.
 - Consult with partners today on the remaining three options.
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What are your thoughts on the following:

1. **Restrict non-emergency awards to a lifetime award.**
 - Would drastically reduce or eliminate abuse of the Fund by ‘repeat’ applicants.
 - This option has a cumulative effect on the number of applicants over time.
 - What happens to couple/families who break up?
 2. **Removing the eligibility criteria – low income threshold.**
 - Many applicants on low income would also qualify through being on a means tested benefit.
 - Slight impact on the vulnerable groups: physical disability, carer, homeless.
 3. **Removing duplicate emergency awards in year.**
 - Bring emergency provision in line with non-emergency potentially making the Fund simpler to understand and easier to administer.
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Feedback



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Thank you for coming

Contact: nylaf@northyorks.gov.uk

Public site: www.northyorks.gov.uk/nylaf

Agency site: www.nypartnerships.org.uk/nylaf
