



This quarterly statistical release provides summary statistics on applications, payments and purchases made under the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme. The Q2 and Q4 editions also provide statistics on the proportions of payments by region and on the age of personnel using the scheme.

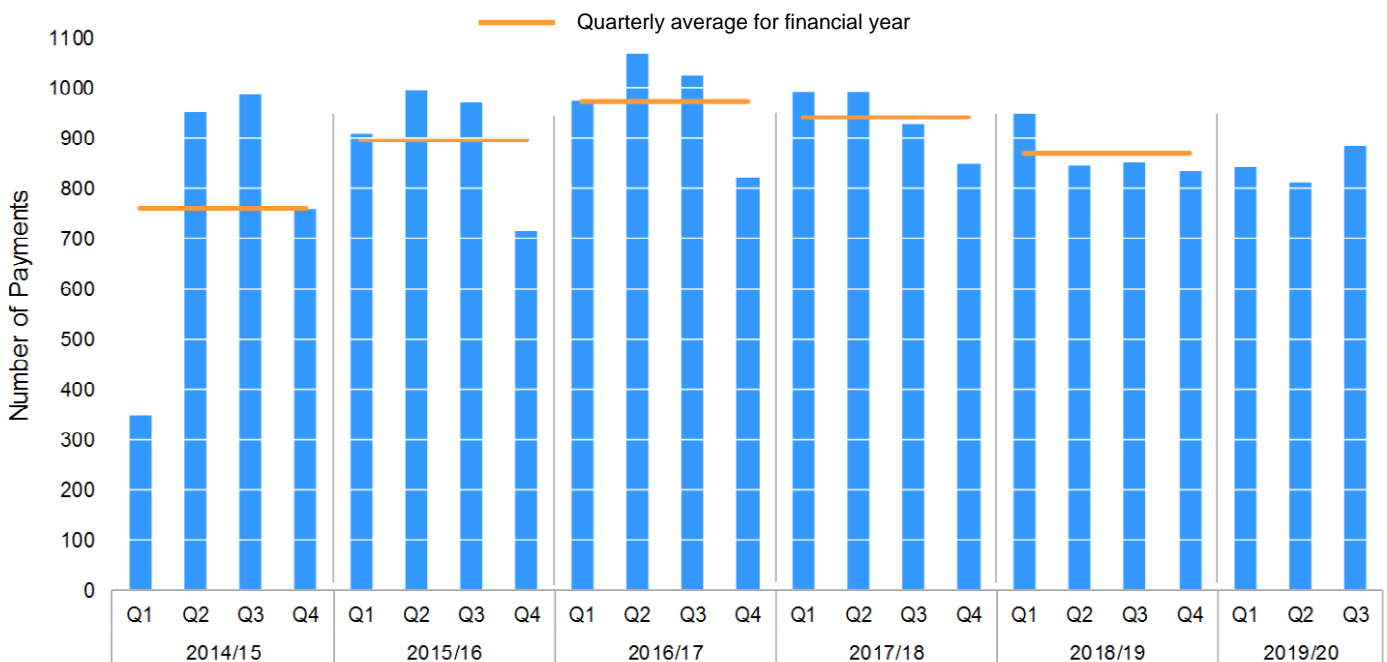
FHTB is an advance of salary scheme which was introduced in April 2014 and allows Regular Armed Forces personnel to borrow money in order to buy their first home or move to a new location.

Key Points and Trends

Since the Scheme began:

- **44,168** First Stage FHTB applications have been received.
- **23,694** of these applications have proceeded to the Second Stage.
- Payment has been made to around **20,300** applicants, totalling around **£306 million**, an average of approximately **£15,100** per claim.
- At least **95%** of payments, as at 31 December 2019, have already resulted in a purchased property or extension.

Figure 1: FHTB Payments - Q1 2014/15 to Q3 2019/20



In Q3 (1 October to 31 December) 2019/20:

Source: DBS

- **1,929** First Stage applications were received.
- **826** Second Stage applications were received.
- **883** payments were made to Service personnel.

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Supplementary tables containing all data presented in this publication can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forces-help-to-buy-scheme-quarterly-statistics-201920>

Introduction

The FHTB scheme was launched in April 2014 with the aim of supporting and encouraging home ownership amongst Service Personnel whose level of home ownership has historically been lower than the rest of the UK population. Regular Service Personnel can borrow up to 50% of their gross annual salary (to a maximum of £25,000) to buy their first home, move to another or, in exceptional circumstances, extend an existing property.

First Stage applications are those which pass initial eligibility checks and second stage applications are those which pass detailed eligibility checks.

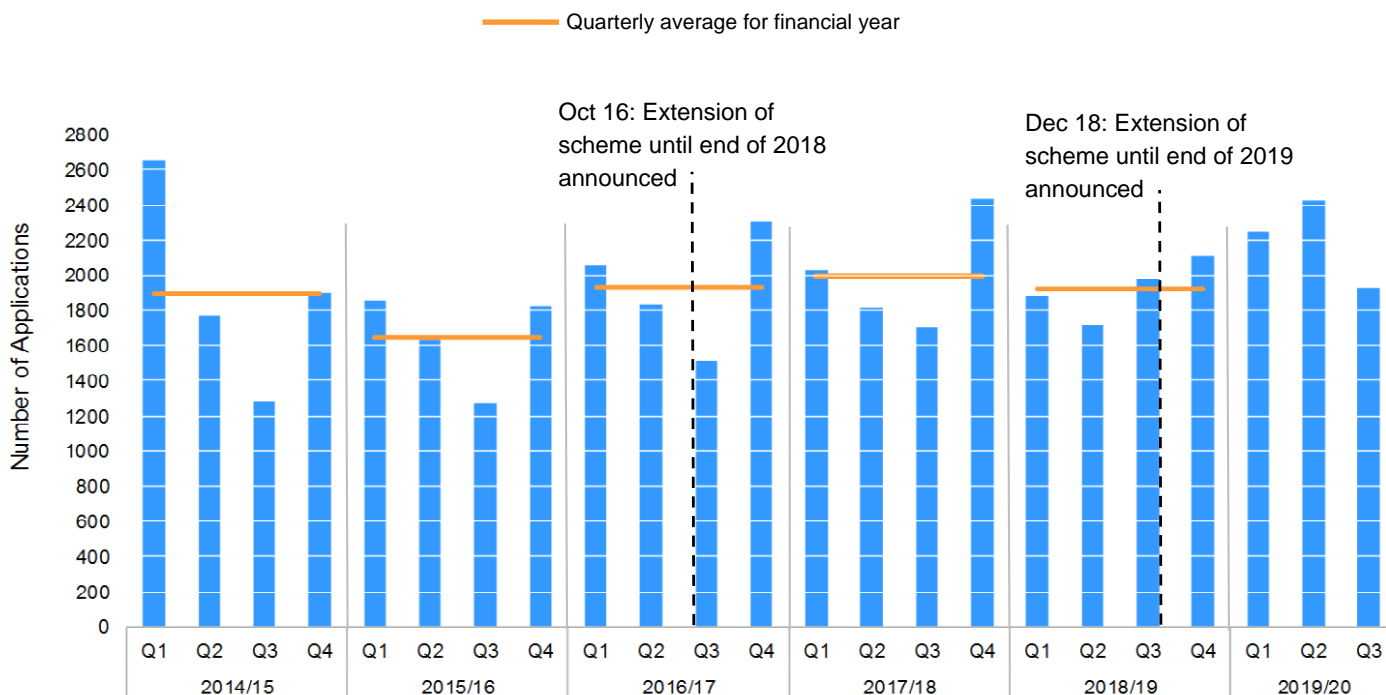
First and Second Stage application data and the values of FHTB payments are provided by Defence Business Services (DBS). The Service and Rank breakdowns are provided from Joint Personnel Administration (JPA). The two sets of data are 'as at' different dates in a month. DBS data is as at the end of the preceding month and JPA data is produced according to when the last pay run for military personnel was completed. The pay run occurs in the middle of the month, and varies according to the month length.

Data on the proportion of payments that result in purchases of properties or extensions under the scheme are provided by Defence Business Services (DBS) on a quarterly basis. Some FHTB payments do not result in the purchase of a property or the extension of an existing property due, for example, to changes in personal circumstances or to the withdrawal of a party from a property chain.

These statistics were published on a monthly basis from March 2016 to November 2017 before being released quarterly.

Applications

Figure 2: FHTB First Stage Applications — Q1 2014/15 to Q3 2019/20



Source: DBS

Figure 2 shows a **3% decrease** in the number of First Stage applications when comparing Q3 2018/19 (1,980 applications) and the latest Q3 2019/20 (1,929 applications). 2019/20 is the first financial year since 2015/16 where Q3 figures have decreased compared to the previous financial year.

2019/20 Q3 First Stage application figures are the second highest Q3 figures seen to date. This follows the highest Q3 numbers seen to date in 2018/19 Q3. It was expected during 2018/19 Q3 that the FHTB scheme was to close at the end of 2018 before an extension was announced in December 2018.

Table 1: Quarterly average number of First Stage applications by financial year

Financial year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Quarterly average number of First Stage applications	1,900	1,646	1,928	1,995	1,923

The quarterly average, which increased by **17%** between 15/16 and 16/17 financial years, has remained relatively stable between 16/17 and the current 18/19 financial year, increasing **3%** between 16/17 and 17/18 and decreasing **4%** between 17/18 and 18/19 (see Figure 2 and Table 1). It should be noted that the average for 2014/15 is inflated by the high number of applications received when the scheme first opened.

Applications

Figure 3: FHTB Second Stage Applications - Q1 2014/15 to Q3 2019/20

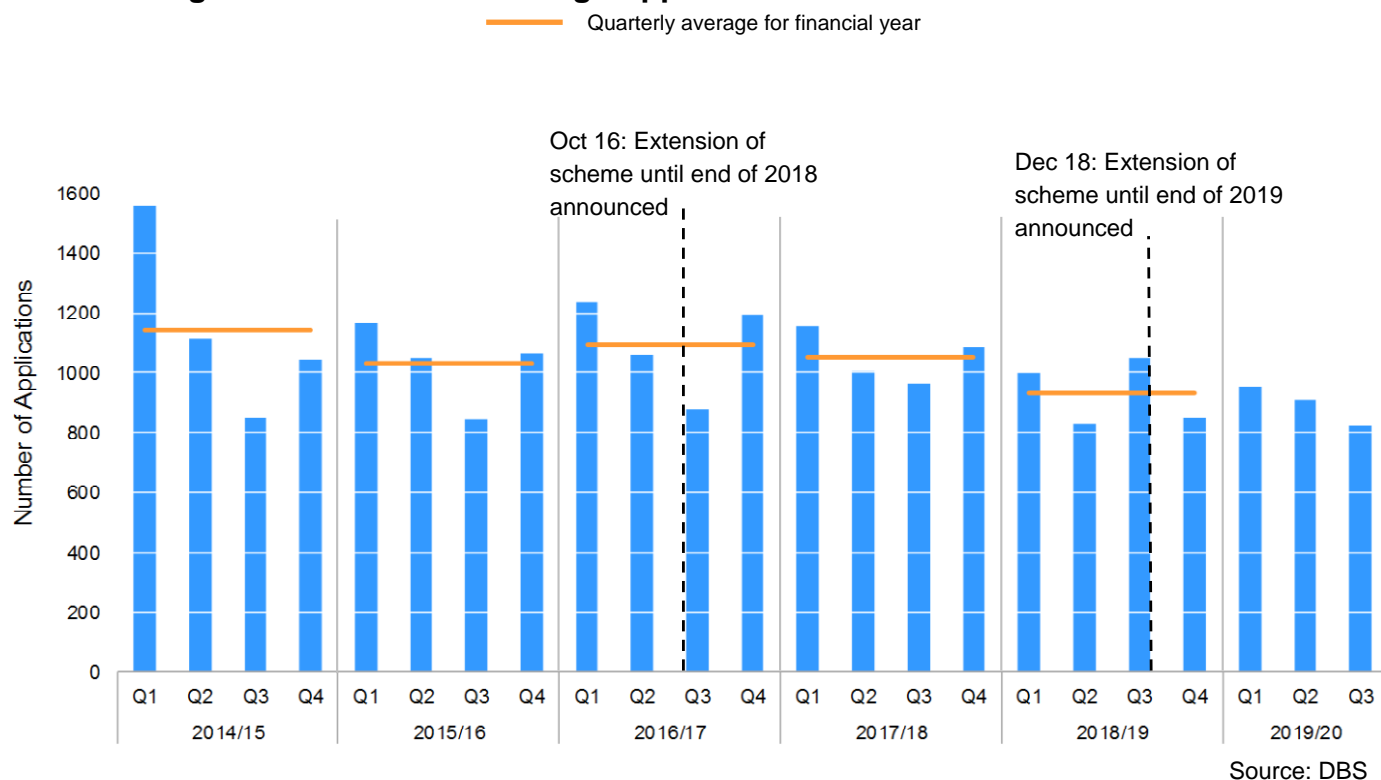


Figure 3 shows a **21% decrease** in the number of Second Stage applications when comparing Q3 2018/19 (**1,050** applications) and the latest Q3 2019/20 (**826** applications).

2019/20 Q3 Second Stage application figures are the lowest Q3 figures seen to date. However, figures have returned to similar levels seen in previous Q3 periods when excluding Q3 2017/18 and Q3 2018/19 figures. It was expected during 2018/19 Q3 that the FHTB scheme was to close at the end of 2018 before an extension was announced in December 2018.

Table 2: Quarterly average number of Second Stage applications by financial year

Financial year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Quarterly average number of Second Stage applications	1,142	1,031	1,093	1,053	932

Although remaining broadly stable between 2015/16 and 2017/18, the quarterly average for the number of Second Stage applications has decreased **11%** between 2017/18 and 2018/19 (see Figure 3 and Table 2). It should be noted that the average for 2014/15 is inflated by the high number of applications received when the scheme first opened.

Payments and Purchases

A total of **20,317** payments have been made under the FHTB scheme since it was introduced in April 2014.¹ With an average claim of approximately **£15,100**, this has resulted in expenditure of around **£306 million**.

Figure 4:² FHTB Payments - Q1 2014/15 to Q3 2019/20

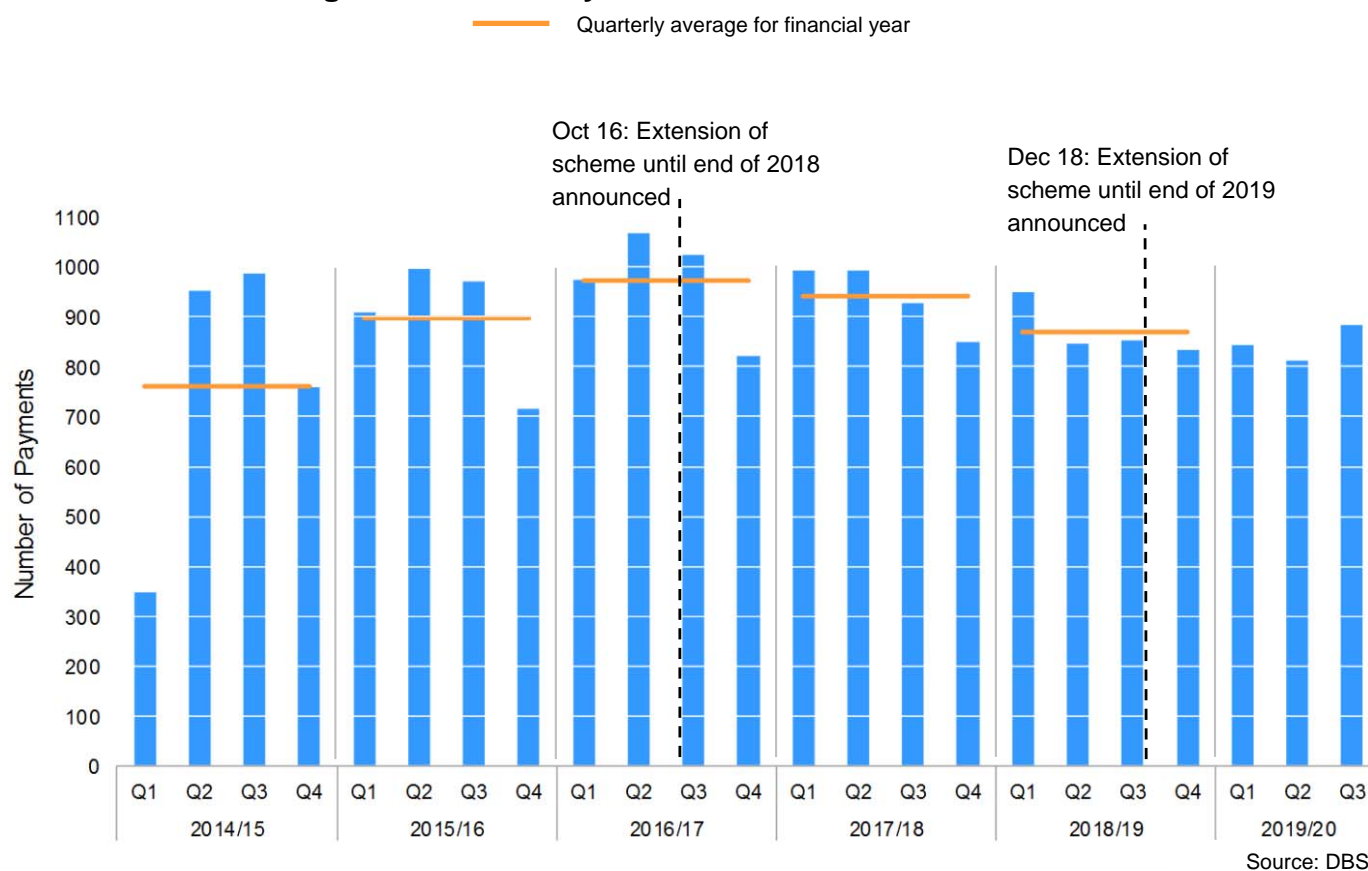


Figure 4 shows a **4% increase** between the number of payments for Q3 2018/19 (**852** payments) and the latest Q3 2019/20 (**883** payments). 2019/20 is the first financial year since 2016/17 when there has been an increase in Q3 payments compared to the previous financial year.

2019/20 Q3 payment figures are the second lowest Q3 figures seen to date.

Table 3: Quarterly average number of payments

Financial year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Quarterly average number of payments	762	899	973	941	871

The quarterly average for the number of payments has decreased **7%** between 17/18 and 18/19. Averages increased to a peak in 2016/17 (973) but have since decreased each financial year. Please note that the average for 2014/15 is reduced by the low number of payments made when the scheme opened.

¹As at 31 December 2019

²A copy of Figure 1 with additional extension announcement reference points

Payments and Purchases

In Q3 2019/20, **17%** of payments were made to Officers compared to **83%** of payments made to Other Ranks.¹ For comparative purposes, 19% of Officers and 81% of Other Ranks make up the Regular Full-time trained strength population.²

48% of the payments in Q3 2019/20 were made to Army personnel, with **28%** of payments made to Royal Navy/Royal Marines personnel and **24%** to RAF personnel.¹ For comparative purposes, 55% of Army personnel, 22% of RN/RM and 23% of RAF personnel make up the Regular Full-time trained Armed Forces strength population.²

Figure 5: Payments by Rank
- Q3 2019/20

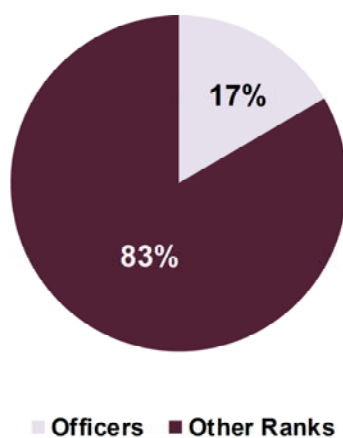
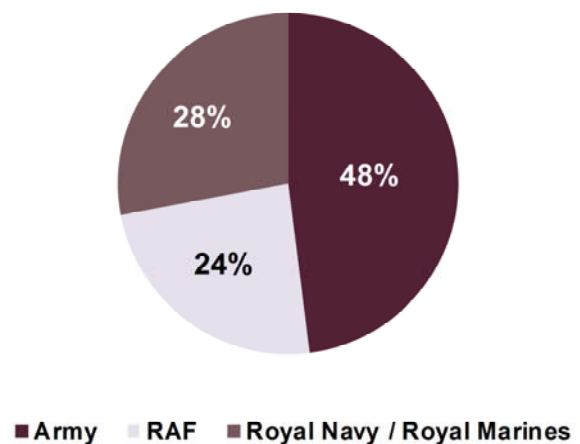


Figure 6: Payments by Service
- Q3 2019/20



Source: JPA¹

It is estimated that at least **95%** of payments, as at 31 December 2019, have already resulted in a purchased property or extension. There is a small lag between payments and loan repayments once a property has been purchased or extended. Some FHTB payments do not result in the purchase of a property or the extension of an existing property, due, for example, to changes in personal circumstance or to the withdrawal of a party from a property chain.

¹JPA data is produced according to when the last pay run for military personnel was completed. The pay run occurs in the middle of the month, which varies according to the month length. Therefore the Officer / Rank and Service breakdowns represent the number of payments recorded between the pay runs in that month and the preceding month.

²Based on figures as at 1 October 2019 taken from the Defence Statistics [Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics publication](#) Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%.

Glossary

- Forces Help to Buy (FHTB): FHTB is an advance of salary scheme which was introduced in April 2014 and allows Regular Armed Forces personnel to borrow money in order to buy their first home or move to a new location.
- Regular Armed Forces Personnel: Full time Service personnel excluding Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) personnel.
- First Stage applications: Applications which pass initial eligibility checks.
- Second Stage applications: Applications which pass detailed eligibility checks.
- Defence Business Services (DBS): Organisation which provides corporate services, such as recruitment and payroll, across the Ministry of Defence.
- Joint Personnel Administration (JPA): The system used by the Armed Forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personnel administrative tasks. JPA replaced a number of single Service IT systems and was implemented in April 2006 for RAF, November 2006 for Naval Service and April 2007 for Army.

Rounding

Payment figures in this publication have been rounded to the nearest £1 and the average payment rounded to nearest £100. Percentages are calculated from unrounded data and rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore may not sum to 100%.

Statistics quoted in the narrative may be rounded for clarity, with more precise figures available in the [accompanying tables](#).

Further Information

Revisions

Corrections to the published statistics will be made if errors are found, or if figures change as a result of improvements to methodology or changes to definitions. When making corrections, we will follow the Ministry of Defence [Statistics Revisions and Corrections Policy](#). All corrected figures will be identified by the symbol “r”, and an explanation will be given of the reason for and size of the revision. Corrections which would have a significant impact on the utility of the statistics will be corrected as soon as possible, by reissuing the publication. Minor errors will also be corrected, but for convenience these corrections may be timed to coincide with the next release of the publication.

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