
To: Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board

On: 22 November 2019

Report by: Chief Officer

Heading: Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for Renfrewshire 2019-2024

1. Summary

- 1.1. In July 2018, the Scottish Government issued guidance to local authorities on the production of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (RRTP). The five year plans are required to demonstrate how local authorities and partners will ensure that those who are homeless are provided with a settled housing option as quickly as possible and therefore minimising the use of temporary accommodation.
 - 1.2. As a result, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has worked in partnership with Renfrewshire Council and representatives from the Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership to develop the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for Renfrewshire 2019-2024, as detailed in Appendix 1.
 - 1.3. Following this, the inaugural meeting of Renfrewshire's RRTP steering group met on 15 October 2019. The Group's membership is composed of social housing providers in Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire HSCP and Renfrewshire Council Homelessness and Housing Support Services.
 - 1.4. Renfrewshire HSCP will continue to support the work of the Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership and the implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Transition action plan with a focus on improving the health and wellbeing of all service users.
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2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the IJB:

- Continues to support the work of Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership; and
 - Endorses the Rapid Rehousing Plan for Renfrewshire 2019 – 2024.
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3. Background

- 3.1 In October 2017, the Scottish Government established the Homelessness Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to advise and recommend to Scottish Government Ministers the actions and solutions

needed to eradicate rough sleeping and transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland.

HARSAG also advised Ministers on how to ensure the recommendations are successfully implemented to secure rapid change and improvement towards the Government's goals.

- 3.2 The final HARSAG report 'Ending Homelessness in Scotland' was published in June 2018, setting out 70 detailed recommendations which form the basis of a whole system approach where prevention is always prioritised, and where homelessness does occur, all parts of the public sector collaborate to enable fast access to settled accommodation with person-centred support to enable housing sustainment.

The Scottish Government accepted the recommendations of HARSAG, including the recommendation that every local authority in Scotland should develop a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan setting out how a housing-led approach to ending homelessness will be achieved locally.

The plan should document a 5-year transition to securing settled housing for all homeless households as quickly as possible, with the right support in place to enable successful housing sustainment. As a result, the use of temporary accommodation will be minimised. To support this, the Scottish Government provided national guidance and a planning and implementation framework to enable local authorities and their partners to plan the transition to rapid rehousing.

- 3.3 In July 2019, the Scottish Government announced an additional £9 million of funding for local authorities to prevent homelessness and help people into more permanent accommodation. The investment increased the local authority funding being provided for Rapid Rehousing from £15 million to £24 million over three years.

At the present time, the Scottish Government are currently reviewing all RRTP submissions made by local authorities, and it has been agreed with Cosla meantime that funding for 2019/20 only will be allocated using a formula based distribution model based on a 3 year average of homelessness assessments rather than on full evaluations of RRTP's. As a result, Renfrewshire Council has now been awarded £186,000 for the implementation of rapid rehousing related initiatives during 2019/20.

In line with the Scottish Government guidance on RRTP's, the funding will be utilised to upscale the Housing First approach and ensure that those who are homeless are provided with settled housing. As a result, there will be a number of homeless applicants who will receive 'wraparound' support and resettlement assistance will be provided for those moving from temporary accommodation to settled tenancies.

4. Implications for Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership

- 4.1 Renfrewshire HSCP continues to be an active and key partner in the Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership and also meets on a bi-monthly basis at the joint strategic officers group to review: high level issues; individual cases and ensure early intervention is in place.

- 4.2 The HSCP will support the implementation of the action plan with a specific focus on improving the health and wellbeing of all users of the homeless service.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Renfrewshire Council has been awarded £186,000 for the implementation of rapid rehousing related initiatives during 2019/20
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – n/a
3. **Community Planning** – The vision for our Community Plan is: "working together to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive". The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019 -2024 supports the community planning priority that "Our Renfrewshire is well: supporting the wellness and resilience of our citizens and communities".
4. **Legal** – n/a
5. **Property/Assets** – property remains in the ownership of the parent bodies.
6. **Information Technology** – n/a
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 have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. 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** – n/a
9. **Procurement** – procurement activity will remain within the operational arrangements of the parent bodies.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – n/a.

List of Background Papers

- Overview of the HARSAG <https://www.gov.scot/groups/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group/>
- Scottish Government Ending homelessness and rough sleeping action plan - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-high-level-action-plan/>

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2019-2024

Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan for Renfrewshire

Updated – August 2019

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1. Executive Summary

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was established by the Scottish Government in October 2017.

One of the key recommendations made by HARSAG, which has been accepted by the Scottish Government, is that each local authority should, in consultation with partners, develop a 5-year Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (RRTP).

This draft RRTP for Renfrewshire has been produced in line with Guidance published in June 2018. An action plan encompassing the various RRTP proposals for Renfrewshire is included in section 8.

Extensive consultation was carried out with our partners, including service users and those with lived experience of homelessness, and our Plan fits in with the vision outlined in the Guidance, which is:

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, rapid re-housing means:

- a settled mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible,
- time spent in any form of temporary accommodation is reduced to a minimum,
- when temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.

In the development and implementation of RRTP's, it is acknowledged that for people with multiple needs beyond housing, responses such as the use of **Housing First** recognises that a safe and secure home is the best base for recovery.

We already have our own **Housing First Renfrewshire** project in place, as well as an in-house **Tenancy Resettlement Service** for those with lower support needs, and the up-scaling of these services figures heavily within our Plan. Both are covered in detail within section 7.

We commissioned Glasgow Homelessness Network, and Indigo House to carry out validation checks on this Draft Plan and associated toolkit, and thank them for their input.

2 Consultation Arrangements

This section provides an overview of the consultation arrangements which were put in place as part of the process for the development of Renfrewshire's RRTP, and the responses received.

Briefings on RRTP's and the associated Guidance were provided to the Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership, Alcohol & Drug Partnership, Adult Protection Committee, Health & Social Care Partnership, Housing Providers Forum. local Housing Managers and Homeless Services staff, and the Community Justice Steering Group between July and October 2018. Separate arrangements were made to ensure existing Council tenants were also consulted via the Forum of Registered Tenants Organisations, and an article published in the newsletter produced by Renfrewshire Council and sent to every Council tenant.

A number of key priority areas emerged following an analysis of our homeless statistics and performance and were explored further during the early briefings with partners.

These priorities ranged from increasing the number / proportion of lets to those who were homeless and an up-scaling of our successful Housing First Renfrewshire programme, to enhancing 'resettlement assistance', and rolling out existing projects such as Keys to Learn and Impact Arts 'Make it Your Own' to more service users.

In October 2018, the Head of Planning and Housing Services circulated a consultation paper on these headings / priorities to a range of partners seeking their views.

Fig 1 – Comments were requested from partners on the following emerging priorities:

- Increase in the number/proportion of lets to homeless applicants
- Housing First Renfrewshire
- Resettlement assistance for new tenants
- Rough-sleeping
- Shared living / tenancies
- Homelessness and prison leavers, victims of domestic abuse, and those leaving the armed forces
- Homelessness and those leaving 'Throughcare'
- The extension of services currently provided e.g. Keys to Learn; Family Mediation and Impact Arts 'Make it Your Own'

Forty four partners were contacted in total, representing a broad range of services and organisations operating within Renfrewshire that have involvement with homelessness and related issues.

Responses were received from the following organisations/services:

- Paisley Housing Association,
- Linstone Housing Association,
- Sanctuary Housing Association,
- Blue Triangle Housing Association,
- Link Housing Association,
- Turning Point Scotland,
- Community Justice, Renfrewshire,
- Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (3 separate responses)
- Communities, Housing and Planning Services, Renfrewshire Council

Conclusion on consultation with partners

Considerable time was spent between July and October to brief a wide range of partners on the move to rapid re-housing for homeless applicants.

Overall, the responses subsequently received from partner organisations and services were very positive and generally supportive of tackling the “emerging priorities” listed in fig 1 on the previous page.

The responses and proposals have been considered for further development and reflected in this Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (see Sections 7 and 8).

Consultation with Service Users

We were keen to hear the thoughts and opinions of service users in order to inform our RRTP.

To obtain representative views from a range of people who are, or have been, homeless the following methods were used:

- a questionnaire for people currently living in our **staffed accommodation**.
- a focus group with people who are currently homeless and living in **supported accommodation**.
- a focus group with people who **have been homeless within the last year and have moved into their own permanent tenancy**.

What did Service Users say?

A questionnaire was completed by 20 out of a potential 31 service users within our staffed accommodation, which generally accommodates those with medium support needs:

- Everyone who responded believed that it was a positive thing that people spent less time in temporary homeless accommodation.
- 90% of service users stated that they would like help to set up their homes with furniture, utilities etc. when they first move into their new home.
- 95% stated that they **would** know where to go in the future if they were having problems in their tenancy.

The 2 focus groups were attended by 11 people with lived experience of homelessness in Renfrewshire, most of whom had previously been, or were currently, living in supported accommodation.

The following common themes emerged:

- All of the people who had received our in-house Tenancy Resettlement Service (see 7.4) believed that it was helpful and took much of the stress out of moving into their settled accommodation.
“If it is wasn’t for my Tenancy Resettlement worker, I would have lost my house” (Comment from service user, November 2018)
- All of the people in the group who had not yet moved out of temporary accommodation believed it would be useful to be able to access resettlement assistance.
- Both groups were clear that the location of any offer they received was likely to be essential to them sustaining their tenancy.
- Both groups identified that the amount of time spent in supported accommodation was dependent on the needs of the individual. It was felt that whilst it was important that no-one who accessed supported accommodation got ‘stuck in this service’, they should have a degree of control over when they can move on.

The point was made that ‘different people have different needs’.



Consultation session with service users – November 2018

This consultation with partners and service users has informed the proposals outlined in section 7 of this RRTP, and our Action Plan at Section 8.

Before that however, an analysis of the housing market and homelessness in Renfrewshire as well as a review of temporary accommodation provision and an assessment of support needs is provided in sections 3 – 6, as required by the RRTP Guidance.

3 The Housing Market in Renfrewshire

3.1 Housing Need and Demand

Over 77%¹ of all homeless applications made in Renfrewshire in 2017/18 were received from single person households. The delivery of new affordable housing in Renfrewshire through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, should positively contribute directly and indirectly in meeting the housing needs of homeless people through allowing for greater movement within the social rented sector. The increased supply of affordable new build family homes will provide opportunities for overcrowded households to move into larger sized properties, releasing smaller sized homes to meet the housing needs of smaller sized households.

3.2 The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2 (HNDA2), undertaken by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Housing Market Partnership considered the existing and projected stock base across all tenures, demographic trends, the number of people with a current housing need and the requirement to accommodate newly forming households. It produced estimates that there was a need for an additional **140** social and below market rent homes for each year between 2012 and 2029 in Renfrewshire.

3.3 The estimates from HNDA2, supported with findings from a research study on the housing system in Renfrewshire, helped to inform the affordable Housing Supply Targets for Renfrewshire which are included in the Local Housing Strategy 2016-21:

- **2,500** private homes and
- **1,000** affordable homes over the 5 years to 2021.

3.4 The new Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2019/20 - 2023/2024, sets out the investment priorities to meet the target of delivering **1,000** new affordable homes within the 5 year period to 2021. The SHIP places an emphasis on redressing the stock imbalance in Renfrewshire (Council stock is approximately 79% flats and 21% houses), through the building of 'back and front' door homes. This will increase housing choice, in terms of house type and size, within the affordable housing sector.

3.5 Funding allocations (Resource Planning Assumptions) from the Scottish Government to support the delivery of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme are only known until 2020/21. Stakeholder engagement and

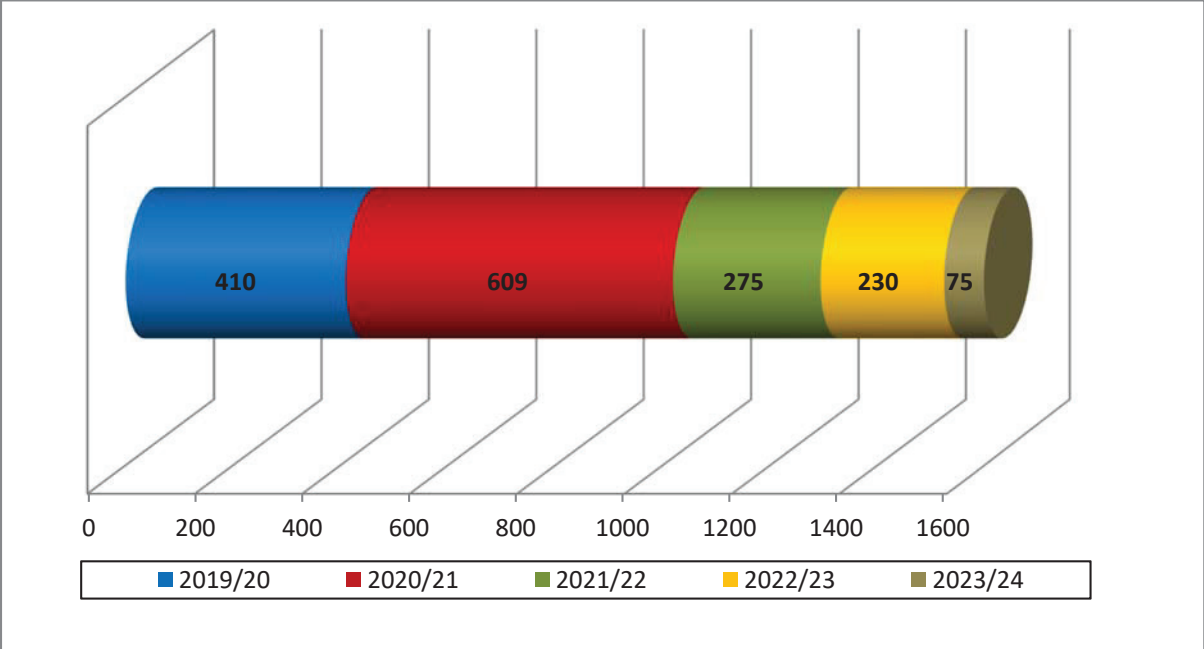
¹ Scottish Government Annual Homelessness Report for Renfrewshire 2017/18

discussions at a Ministerial level are ongoing to determine future funding arrangements post 2021.

3.6 Affordable housing completions for the five year period 2019/20 to 2023/24 will progress based on known allocation to 2020/21 with an assumption that funding will continue to be made available to support the Affordable Housing Supply Programme post 2021. The estimated affordable housing completions for the period 2019/20 - 2023/24 are shown in the table below.

Estimated Affordable Housing Completions delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in the 5 year period 2019/20 – 2023/24

It is estimated that there will be 1,599 affordable completions over the five year period 2019/20 to 2023/24 with the following annual completions predicted:



Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

3.7 Average private rented sector monthly costs relative to the Local Housing Allowance

Scottish House Condition Survey Estimates (2014 - 2016) indicate that the proportion of people living in the private rented sector in Renfrewshire doubled from 5% of all properties in 2008 - 2010, to 10% in 2014 - 2016. Privately owned homes account for 64% of all properties located in the Council’s area, with socially rented properties accounting for 26%.

3.8 The table below shows ranges of private rented sector rents in Renfrewshire as at April 2018, broken down into average, median and lower quartile rent levels set against Local Housing Allowance rates for different property sizes. The

figures indicate the potential affordability issues faced by those dependent on the Local Housing Allowance to meet rental costs - e.g. Local Housing Allowance for a one bedroom property is £322.20, with a shortfall of £47.80 per month, when looking at **average** rental costs - the average monthly rent for a one bedroom privately rented property across Renfrewshire in April 2018 was £370.00. The rent for a similar sized Council owned property is around £240.00.

Renfrewshire Private Rented Sector Rents – April 2018

One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed
Local Housing Allowance Rate			
£322.20	£406.16	£501.68	£763.20

2018 Rent											
Average	Median	Lower Quart	Average	Median	Lower Quart	Average	Median	Lower Quart	Average	Median	Lower Quart
£370	£360	£325	£522	£495	£450	£662	£650	£513	£1,199	£1,125	£1,015

Based on 296 Private Sector Rents taken from Rightmove – April 2018

3.9 The **lower quartile** monthly rent for a one bedroom property in April 2018 was £325.00, which is potentially more affordable for those on lower incomes. As Local Housing Allowance is aimed at meeting housing need at the lower end of the rental market, privately rented properties with rents in the lower quartile, tend to be situated in areas of lower demand.

3.10 Where families require larger properties, financial shortfalls are considerably higher, making access to the private rented sector unaffordable for those dependent on Local Housing Allowance. The impact of recent welfare reform changes has contributed greatly to private sector properties being less affordable for homeless applicants.

3.11 Single people under 35 years of age seeking a private rented sector home and dependent on Local Housing Allowance, are entitled to a shared property Local Housing Allowance 4 weekly rate (£240.00). They would need to identify a 'flatmate' which would allow for a combined Local Housing Allowance every 4 weeks, with both parties required to make up the rental shortfall. While the formation of "combined" households may assist in widening tenure choice and in reducing overall housing costs, these relationships can be difficult for young

homeless people to establish and sustain in the longer term without structured support.

This is discussed in more detail in section 7.6 of this R RTP.

- 3.12** The majority of letting agents and landlords operating within the Renfrewshire area seek cash deposits and rental payments in advance from prospective tenants, as well as the provision of references or named guarantors. These requirements make it more difficult for vulnerable homeless people with limited financial incomes to access housing in the private rented sector. The Council operates a Deposit Guarantee Scheme in partnership with some private sector landlords, which offers a “bond” in place of a cash deposit to private landlords to assist homeless clients secure a tenancy. This initiative is aimed at those who may otherwise not have the financial means to secure a property in the private rented sector. The successful operation of this scheme requires ‘buy in’ from letting agents and landlords but unfortunately not all are willing to participate.
- 3.13** The Deposit Guarantee Scheme positively contributes to the prevention of homelessness in Renfrewshire. Of all clients assisted through the scheme in 2017/18, 96% stated they were “very satisfied” and 4% said they were “satisfied” with the quality of service that they had received when participating in the scheme.

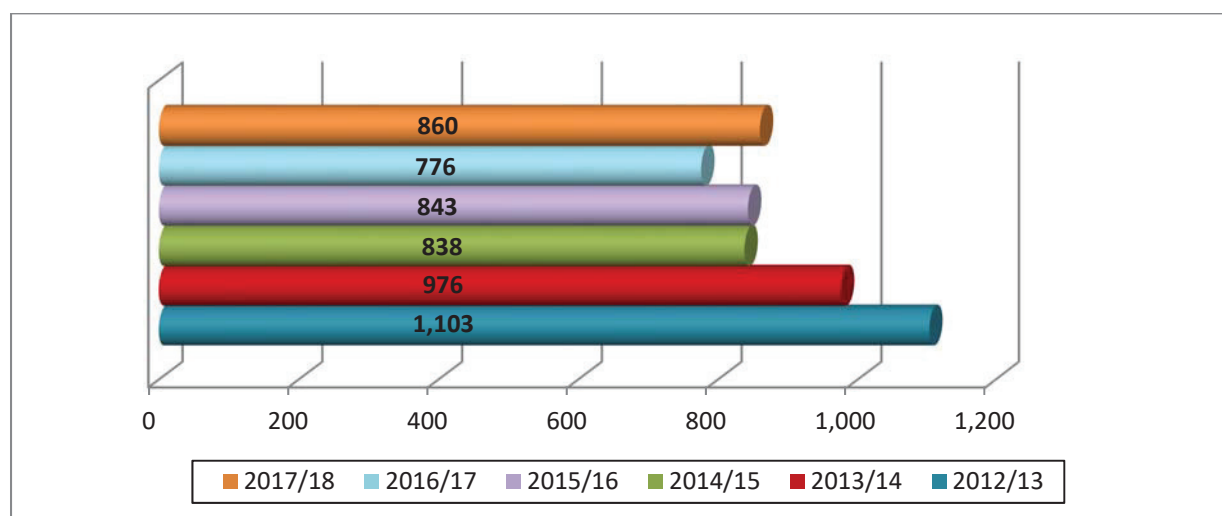
4. Homelessness in Renfrewshire

Homelessness Context

4.1 Over the last five years there has been a decrease in the number of households making a homeless application in Renfrewshire. **Table 1** below shows the predominantly downward trend in applications received, from the 1,103 applications received in 2012/13 to the 860 applications received in 2017/18. This may be attributable, to a degree, to the impact of “Housing Options” and homeless prevention related activity.

Whilst the number of homeless applications received in 2017/18 increased to 860 from 776 applications the previous year, the number of applications from April - December 2018 is such that it is anticipated that the level of applications in future years is unlikely to vary greatly from the 2017/18 figure of 860 – and may reduce if the range of proposals detailed later in this RRTTP are able to be implemented.

Table 1: Number of Applications made under Homeless Persons legislation in Renfrewshire



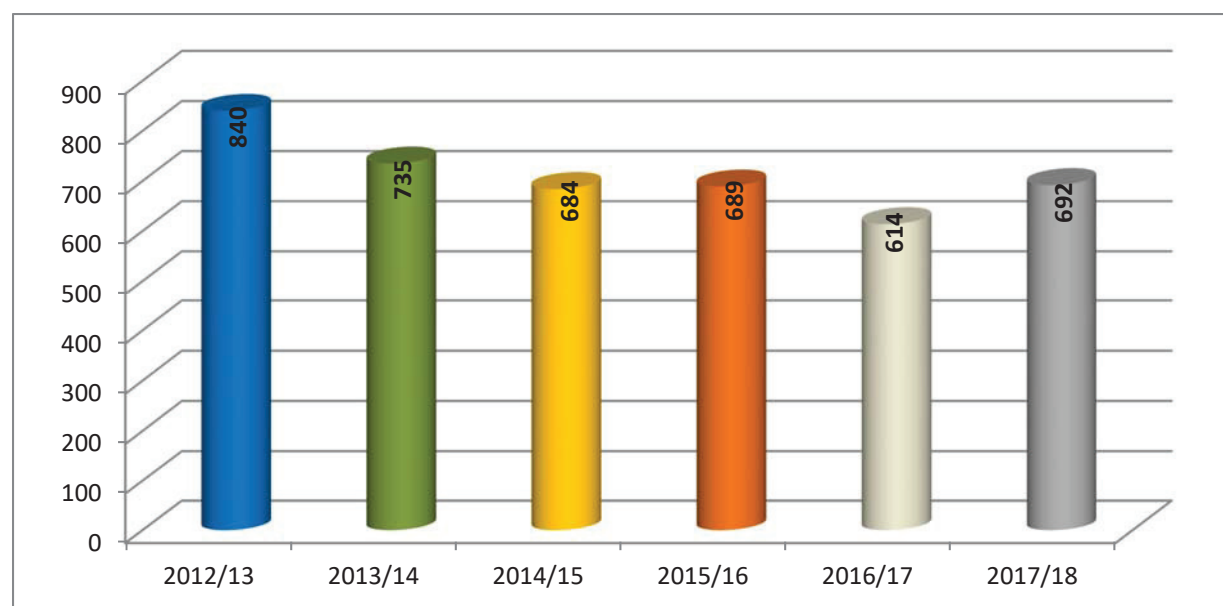
Source: Scottish Government Homelessness in Scotland 2017/18 Table 1

4.2 **Table 2** below shows the number of applications which are subsequently assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness, and reflects a similar downward trend to the number of homeless applications received, with a year on year reduction in applications between 2012/13 to 2016/17, with the exception of 2015/16, when there was a very small increase.

In 2017/18, the number of assessments increased to 692.

On average, around 80% of households who make a homeless application in Renfrewshire are assessed as statutorily homeless.

Table 2: Number of Applications Assessed as Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness (figures includes those assessed as intentionally homeless)



Source: Scottish Government Homelessness in Scotland 2017/18 Table 13

- 4.3** The Scottish Government Annual Report for Renfrewshire, shows there were 349 “live” homeless cases recorded as at 31 March 2018 – a slight increase from the 340 “live” cases recorded at the end of March 2017. It is anticipated that this figure will decrease in the next few years if the proposed measures contained within this RRTP are implemented.
- 4.4** In 2017/18, the Council assessed 96% of homeless applications within four weeks, which is higher than the national average of 87%.
- 4.5** The average length of time for the Council to discharge duty in 2017/18 was 24 weeks, which is considerably below the Scottish average. See section 7 for details on the range of actions identified in this RRTP which aim to reduce this figure further.
- 4.6** There is no evidence to suggest that the issue with known rough-sleeping in Renfrewshire is significant, nor is it increasing. We do wish however to further develop the support offered to those in crisis, and the range of assistance we already provide (see 7.5).
- 4.7** The proportion of homeless applicants who gave the reason for their application as discharge from prison was 10%² of all homeless applications made in Renfrewshire in 2017/18. This figure is higher than the national average of 5.3% and has been consistently higher over the last 5 years. Again actions to address this issue have been identified in the Action Plan.

² Scottish Government Report on Homeless Applications where reason for application was discharge from prison:2018

4.8 In 2017/18, around 4%³ of homeless applications were made by people who identified that they had previously been looked after as a child by the local authority – 27 people advised they had been looked after within the last 5 years while 16 said they had been looked after more than 5 years ago.

Actions to ensure support and prevent homelessness for people living in Throughcare are covered in 7.12, and have similarly been included later in the Action Plan.

4.9 In 2006, 17% of the 214 Renfrewshire data zones were in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland. This has increased to 21% in 2016.⁴ Research from Heriot Watt University indicates that the prevalence rate for severe and multiple disadvantage in Renfrewshire is 1.4 per 1000 of population, while the proportion for homeless people is higher at 4.7 per 1000 of population.⁵

4.10 As at 31 March 2018,⁶ 200 households were recorded as living in temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation in Renfrewshire can be categorised as follows:

- Local authority owned furnished flats;
- RSL owned furnished flats;
- Local authority owned supported;
- RSL owned supported;
- Local authority staffed,
- private sector leased, and
- bed and breakfast.

Detailed analysis of our use of temporary accommodation is covered in section 5.

Table 3, below, shows that over the last 10 years, the number of households living in temporary accommodation peaked in 2009 when 230 households were accommodated in temporary accommodation, the lowest number was recorded in March 2016 with 173 households in temporary accommodation.

It is not anticipated that demand for temporary accommodation will increase further in the coming years, with a potential for demand to decrease if the proposals detailed in Section 8 are able to be implemented and deliver the anticipated outputs.

³ Scottish Government Annual Report for Renfrewshire 2017/18

⁴ Following a review of data zone boundaries prior to 2016, the number of data zones in Renfrewshire increased to 225 from 214.

⁵ Developing a Profile of Severe & Multiple Disadvantage in Scotland Draft V2, 2018: Heriot Watt University

⁶ Scottish Government HL3 Quarterly Report for Renfrewshire 31 March 2018

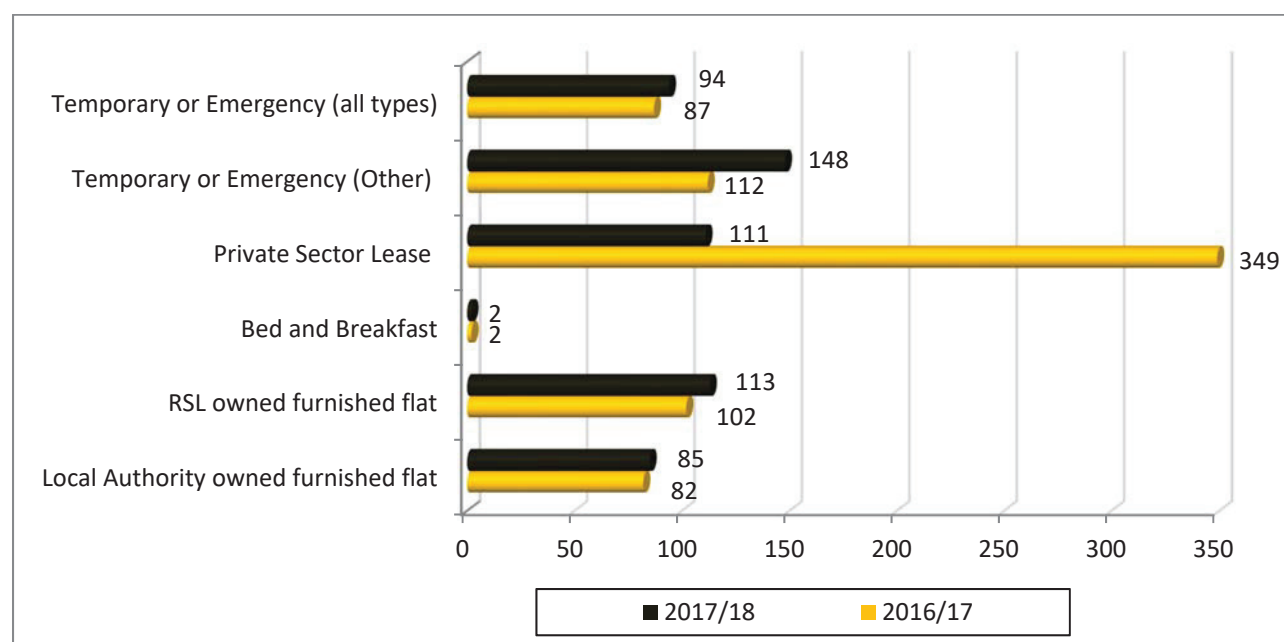
Table 3: Number of Households by Temporary Accommodation Type at year end from 31st March 2008 to 31st March 2018

Total Households Living in Temporary Accommodation at 31 st March in each Year											
Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
LA and RSL furnished flats	85	151	154	155	154	151	137	132	126	146	145
LA (Other)	68	54	51	40	46	47	42	44	47	51	55
Bed & Breakfast	33	25	3	5	7	7	-	-	-	-	-
Total	186	230	208	208	207	205	179	176	173	197	200

Source: Scottish Government HL3 Report 2018; * Furnished Flats

4.11 Table 4, below, sets out the average length of stay (in days) for differing types of temporary accommodation in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Table 4: Average Length of Stay in Different Types of Temporary Accommodation



Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) 2016/17 and 2017/18

Between 2016/17 and 2017/18, the average length of stay in temporary accommodation for households who occupied Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord owned furnished flats, increased slightly from 82 days to 85 days, and from 102 days to 113 days respectively.

There was a significant increase in the length of time people stayed in the category “Temporary or Emergency (Other)” accommodation from 112 days in 2016/17 to 148 days in 2017/18. This category includes supported

accommodation for young people with complex needs; supported accommodation for adults and staffed emergency accommodation units.

The main reason for the increase in length of stay for households in furnished flats and Temporary or Emergency accommodation (other), was lack of availability of suitable permanent properties that matched applicants' size requirements and area preferences.

Lets to homeless applicants

4.12 In 2017/18, a total of 425 lets were made to statutory homeless households in the social rented sector, with 20 lets made to homeless households in the private rented sector. In 2017/18, the proportion of Council lets to statutory homeless households was 32%, the comparative figure for the RSL sector was 19%. This is below the Scottish average, as was the case in 2016/17.

4.13 The toolkit provided along with the RRTP Guidance has been completed in accordance with the directions given, and this suggests that there should be an increase of 201 lets to homeless applicants each year for the duration of the 5 year RRTP.

4.14 Given that there were 425 social rented lets to homeless applicants in 2017/18, we cannot envisage that the Council and RSL partners will be in a position to make such a significant increase, particularly in year 1. There needs to be an appreciation of the difficulties in matching homeless applicants, who are predominantly single person households, to the properties which become vacant, the majority of which are larger than 1 bedroom.

4.15 The consultation with partners on rapid re-housing made it clear that there was an appreciation that there could / should be an increase in the number / proportion of lets from the Council and RSL's which is balanced, and can be complemented by an associated up-scaling in support, resettlement assistance, and related initiatives.

4.16 Sections 7 and 8 set out how we propose to address both the backlog and new demand, through the provision of settled accommodation with appropriate support and assistance to meet the different housing needs of homeless people in Renfrewshire.

4.17 Bed and breakfast is only ever used as temporary accommodation for homeless people in exceptional circumstances. However, on occasions, due to shortages of available permanent accommodation, "bottlenecks" can occur when trying to secure settled housing for people staying in temporary

accommodation.

Issues in terms of the availability of suitable sized housing stock has the impact of people remaining in temporary accommodation for longer periods.

Where this happens, Bed and Breakfast accommodation has had to be used in emergencies to accommodate new homeless applicants. In 2017/18, the average length of stay where this occurred was only 2 days.

- 4.18** There have however been no Breaches of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014, recorded in Renfrewshire.

Homeless Services in Renfrewshire

- 4.19** The Housing Options and Homeless Service based at Abercorn Street, Paisley provides high quality housing advice, assistance and support to anyone in housing need, particularly those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The service is also provided from our George Street Service, and both offices are accessible, near the town centre and within easy access by public transport. The services can be accessed in person, by phone or email, with arrangements being made to meet service users at other Council offices or at their current address if required.

A team of Housing Options Advisers deal with service users on a daily basis, with no appointments necessary.

Renfrewshire was the first Scottish local authority to fund a Housing First service, which is delivered in partnership with Turning Point Scotland – see 7.2.

Starter-packs are provided for all our homeless applicants when moving into settled accommodation, and have proved to be an effective measure in helping new tenancies start well.

An in-house stand-by service is provided which ensures that anyone becoming homeless in Renfrewshire out with office hours can speak to a member of staff, and be directly admitted to temporary accommodation, if required.

Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership



4.20 A Homelessness Partnership has been in place in Renfrewshire since 2009. It meets quarterly and aims to better understand the causes of homelessness, identify the role and contribution of all agencies in tackling homelessness, review the impact of initiatives and services, and to agree actions which can be taken forward to strengthen the multi-agency approach to tackling and preventing homelessness.

The core membership of the Partnership includes representatives from services such as:

- local housing associations
- national housing associations
- Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- Housing support providers / voluntary sector
- Shelter Scotland and Homeless Action Scotland
- Renfrewshire Women's Aid
- Recovery Across Mental Health

4.21 Links with Health & Social Care Partnership

There is close working with the local HSCP, with a joint Strategic Officer Group meeting bi-monthly to review high level issues, and a joint operational officers meeting to review protocols and procedures, review cases, and ensure early intervention.

Key points on Homelessness in Renfrewshire

- There is a strong record of partnership working to tackle and prevent homelessness

- The proportion on homeless applications processed within 28 days is better than the national average
- The average length of time to complete duty towards those who are homeless continues to be better than the Scottish average
- There have been no breaches of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014
- There is a Housing First Renfrewshire programme already established
- There is a collective agreement to increase the number and proportion of lets on a phased basis over the next 5 years, with an associated up-scaling of support via this RRTP

5 Temporary Accommodation

Baseline position

The fluctuating nature of demand for temporary accommodation in Renfrewshire can present challenges and requires significant effort, planning and resourcing to meet the high standards we place on delivering on the duty to provide temporary accommodation for those who are homeless, in terms of the location, type, and quality of the properties, and how they are managed.

We do not use any hostels, and all of our temporary accommodation properties already meet the vision set out within the RRTP Guidance, which is:

‘the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.’

We currently have a total of 233 properties available for use as temporary accommodation, and in 2017-18 the total occupancy for all of our temporary accommodation was 1015 households.

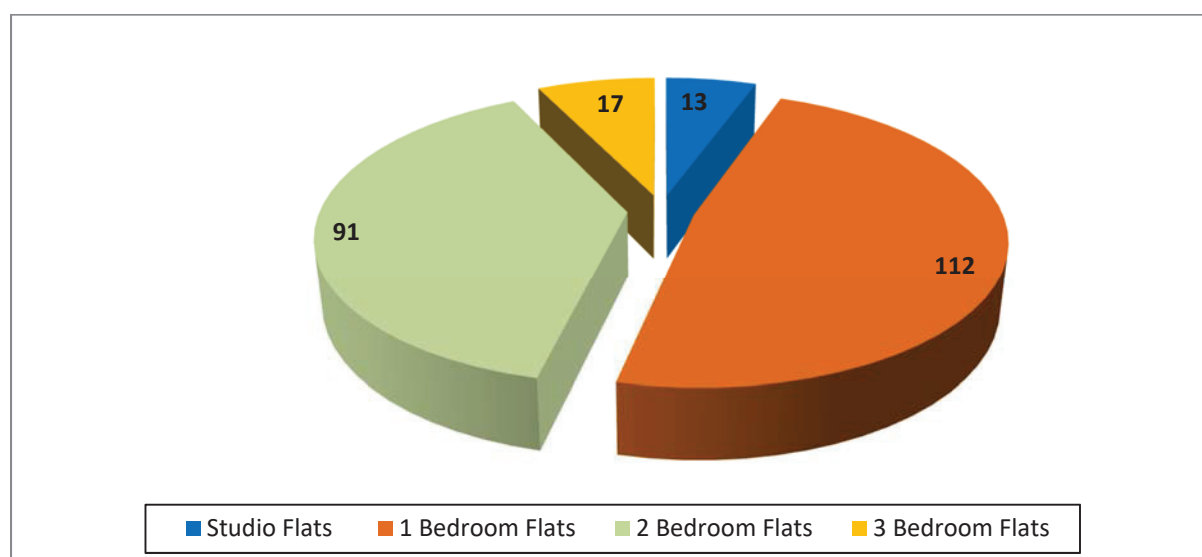
Our stock of temporary accommodation consists of the following property types :

- Local authority owned furnished flats
- RSL owned furnished flats
- Local authority owned supported accommodation
- RSL owned supported accommodation
- Local authority owned staffed accommodation
- Private sector leased - furnished

Accommodation Type	Location	Accommodation provider	No. of properties
Local authority owned furnished flats	across Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire Council	116
RSL owned furnished flats	across Renfrewshire	Linstone HA Williamsburgh HA Link HA Bridgewater HA Paisley HA	24
Local authority owned supported accommodation	1 location in Paisley	Renfrewshire Council	16

Accommodation Type	Location	Accommodation provider	No. of properties
(see 5.2, below)			
RSL owned supported accommodation (see 5.2, below)	Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew	Williamsburgh HA Sanctuary HA Loretto HA Paisley HA	42
Local authority owned staffed accommodation (see 5.3, below)	2 locations in Paisley	Renfrewshire Council	33
Private sector leased – furnished	Paisley	Private landlords	2

The bedroom size of our temporary accommodation is:



5.1 Local authority and RSL owned furnished flats

In 2017-18 there were 492 households benefitting from the provision of this type of temporary accommodation across Renfrewshire communities.

5.2 Supported Accommodation

This type of accommodation has been commissioned to meet the needs of our more vulnerable individuals and / or those with complex needs.

We currently have 4 supported accommodation projects managed by two voluntary sector agencies : Blue Triangle Housing Association (BTHA) and Loretto Care, with a combined capacity of 58 self contained fully furnished units, as follows:

- 23 self-contained fully furnished flats based on a cluster model but split over two locations in Paisley, managed by Blue Triangle HA.
- a cluster model for vulnerable service users aged over 24 years, which consists of 17 self contained fully furnished flats based in Renfrew, also operated by Blue Triangle HA.
- service users with more complex needs are supported by Loretto Care in our Abercorn Street project in Paisley. This is also a cluster model, which consists of 13 fully furnished self contained units and provides up to 14 hours of support per service user per week.
- Loretto Care also manage a project based in Johnstone which provides a specialist mental health supported accommodation service. It is a 'scatter' model which incorporates 5 fully furnished self-contained units based within an established mainstream community.

In 2017-18 there were 191 households benefitting from the service provided by our supported accommodation partners.

5.3 Staffed Accommodation

This type of accommodation provides emergency standby furnished properties which helps to prevent a reliance on B&B or hostel type accommodation. The accommodation is provided at two separate blocks of flats which are staffed on a 24/7 basis and contain 16 and 17 fully furnished self contained properties.

In 2017-18 there were 286 households benefitting from the service provided at our staffed accommodation.

This 'staffed' service also operates our emergency standby service out with office hours, ensuring quick and easy access to advice and emergency homeless assistance/accommodation when our offices are closed.

5.4 Provision of temporary accommodation for those with a disability

We have 3 fully adapted flats for persons with a disability – one at our staffed accommodation, and 2 furnished 'scatter' properties.

5.5 Use of B&B

We have no contractual arrangements with any B&B provider and through careful planning we did not use B&B between 2013 and 2017, with very limited reliance on this type of provision during 2017 and 2018 in emergency situations.

The average length of stay for any households placed in B&B in 2017 and 2018 was 1.8 days, and as mentioned in para 4.18, there have been no breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order.

5.6 Satisfaction with Temporary Accommodation

We consistently seek the views of service users when they leave our temporary accommodation to gauge their satisfaction with the standard and quality of our temporary furnished flats, supported accommodation projects and staffed blocks.

In 2016/17, 84% of the 280 people surveyed said that they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the standard and quality of temporary accommodation.

The level of satisfaction improved in 2017/18 to 89%.

We will continue to seek the views of our service users to ensure that these standards are maintained.

5.7 Rent charges for temporary accommodation

When setting the rent level for temporary accommodation, the Council charges a fixed weekly rent based on the size of the property in accordance with the Local Housing Allowance and the associated Housing Benefit entitlement, plus a £60 management fee.

The management fee seeks to recover the cost of staff, furniture, voids, repairs, (including decoration and electric/gas checks) and other direct costs.

The rent levels currently charged by property size are:

Beds	90% of Jan 2011 LHA rates	Weekly Management Fee	Total Rent Charged
0	£62.31	£60	£122.31
1	£77.89	£60	£137.89
2	£93.47	£60	£153.47
3	£124.61	£60	£184.62

As temporary accommodation has been excluded from the roll out of Universal Credit, the rent for the Council's temporary accommodation can be fully funded via housing benefit, where the tenant is entitled to receive this.

Where the Council utilises properties from RSLs or other providers, the management fee will not be covered by housing benefit and has to be funded by the Council or by additional funding made available by the Scottish Government - as it was in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

The Council reviews rents annually as part of the budget process. Annual increases in rent will be influenced by the property size and the Housing Benefit capping levels imposed through Local Housing Allowance and welfare reform.

The Council is however currently reviewing the rents charged and levels of support available to service users, particularly where they are in employment and / or do not qualify for housing benefit.

Temporary Accommodation - 5 Year Vision / Projections

5.8 Our projections

With the implementation of this RRTP, the Council and its partners will:

- reduce the length of time people spend in temporary accommodation
- support people into settled accommodation more quickly
- provide practical resettlement assistance to all service users
- provide additional assistance to homeless people for the first year of their settled tenancy to help ensure their tenancy starts well, and
- respond quickly to the challenge many homeless people can face when moving in / out of temporary accommodation.

We anticipate that the **overall capacity for temporary accommodation could reduce from the current stock of 233 units in 2018 to 177 units in year 5** - and this can be achieved by a combination of:

- A phased increase in the number of lets to homeless applicants
- The introduction / enhancement of the range of support improvements and innovations detailed in sections 7 and 8.

Reduction in units

5.9 Local authority and RSL owned furnished Flats

We propose a **reduction in the number of properties from 142 to 121 units**. All of these properties will remain at our existing high standard, continue to be fully furnished and spread throughout communities amongst mainstream social rented housing.

This reduction is likely to be more evident in years 2 – 5

We estimate the throughput for this type of accommodation will be 425 homeless households in year 5.

5.10 Supported accommodation

Could reduce **from 58 units to 40 units**, and we estimate that the ‘flow’ of applicants requiring this accommodation by year 5 could drop from 191 in 2017/18 to 133 applicants.

This is based on a proposed upscaling in the capacity of Housing First Renfrewshire from 20 to 65 - 80 individuals, an increase in the number of lets to homeless applicants and the cumulative benefit of providing services that will prevent future homelessness and so decrease the number of people entering the service, see sections 7 and 8.

5.11 Staffed Accommodation

Will **reduce from 33 units to 24 units**. This will be delivered by a planned closure of one of our existing staffed accommodation units, which we hope to replace with a smaller 8-10 person project for service users with the most complex needs. This is included within the Action Plan, and is currently being developed and costed.

An increase in the number/proportion of lets to homeless applicants, and increase in the capacity of Housing First Renfrewshire, as well as the enhancement of our existing resettlement service (see sections 7.1 - 7.4) will reduce the number of repeat homeless cases that often rely on our direct access staffed accommodation.

5.12 Bed & Breakfast (B&B)

Between 2014 and 2017, we ceased using B&B as a form of temporary accommodation. Whilst we have had to regrettably use this option on a few occasions in 2018, we remain committed to the position that B&B is not acceptable and with the anticipated increase in lets from housing providers and a joint effort to enhance services that prevent homelessness via this RRTP, we believe that we can return to the position that B&B is no longer used from Year 1 of this Plan onwards.

5.13 Flipping

We currently ‘flip’ furnished properties on occasion from temporary accommodation to secure tenancies, when the property has already been used for up to 7 years as furnished temporary accommodation for homeless applicants and, in partnership with housing providers, we will look to maximise the opportunities to flip tenancies.

Key points on Temporary Accommodation

- There is a range of temporary accommodation types provided, and all are mainstream, furnished self-contained properties within communities.
- There is no reliance on hostels or B&B
- Service user satisfaction with our temporary accommodation is high
- There is a vision to reduce the number of properties being used as furnished temporary accommodation

6 Support Needs

The transition to rapid re-housing will involve a crucial shift in focus away from **tenancy readiness**, to the **provision of settled housing with support**.

We have estimated the support needs of our homeless population based upon :

- HL1 data from April 2017 to March 2018,
- current support provision arrangements,
- Health and Homelessness Research in Scotland and
- Housing Support assessments for our homeless applicants.

There are a variety of options for homeless people in terms of accommodation and support.

6.1 Residential Support

- Current Residential Support - 20%
- Future Residential Support – 15%

Homeless accommodation and support is provided within a residential support setting through partnership arrangements with supported accommodation projects managed by Blue Triangle Housing Association and Loretto Care.

Approximately 20% of people who presented as homeless were provided with self-contained flats within a supported residential setting. These homeless applicants had support needs identified and tailored support plans put in place to prepare them for independent living.

With the aim of the majority of homeless applicants moving quickly into self-contained settled accommodation with support in the future via this RRTP, it is anticipated that the proportion of people needing residential support may reduce to 15% over the next 5 years.

6.2 SMD / Complex Needs

- Current SMD / Complex Needs – 10%
- Future SMD / Complex Needs – 15%

It is estimated that 10% of our current homeless population would be suitable for and benefit from the Housing First model being provided for them.

Housing First Renfrewshire has now been operating for the last 5 years and has successfully assisted people with severe and multiple disadvantages – see section 7.2 for more details.

It is expected that the proportion of people who will be supported via the housing first model will increase to 15%.

6.3 Medium Support Needs

Current Medium Support Needs – 35%

Future Medium Support Needs – 35%

Temporary furnished flats within the community are generally provided to people who are identified as having medium support needs. Floating support is provided by Renfrewshire Council's Housing Support Team who will provide or commission support within the community on a person centred basis.

Based on the support needs assessment and the resulting referrals to the Housing Support Team, it is estimated that 35% of people who are homeless have medium support needs.

6.4 No /Low Level Support Needs

Current 'No / Low Level' Support Needs – 35%

Future 'No / Low Level' Support Needs – 35%

Many people who are homeless are currently provided with good quality temporary furnished flats within the community as they are assessed as having no or low level support needs. They will remain in this accommodation until a permanent offer of housing is made.

We do not envisage that this proportion will vary from the existing 35% over the next 5 years.

6.5 Health & homelessness in Scotland research

Scotland wide research shows over half (51%) of the homeless population had no evidence of health conditions relating to drugs, alcohol or mental health.⁷ This would fit with the premise of 35% of people with low level support needs. In Renfrewshire, the support on offer covers a wider spectrum than just health and includes employability, financial and benefits advice etc.

Key points on Support Needs

- An analysis has been carried out in line with the RRTP Guidance
- This has assisted the development of our RRTP Action Plan – section 8

⁷ Health and Homelessness in Scotland 2 Authors Dr. Andrew Waugh, National Records of Scotland and formerly of Scottish Government Communities Analysis Division Auren Clarke, National Records of Scotland Dr. Josie Knowles, Scottish Government Communities Analysis Division Dr. David Rowley, National Records of Scotland

7 Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan – Proposals

Within this section we have provided details of proposals under 13 headings, which all:

- build on the issues / priorities discussed during the consultation with partners and service users – listed in section 2,
- address the issues identified in sections 3 - 6 of this RRTP, and
- align with the vision outlined within the RRTP Guidance

The 13 headings are:

- Number / proportion of lets to homeless applicants
- Housing First
- Temporary accommodation
- Tenancy Resettlement Service
- Rough-sleepers
- Shared living initiative
- People with convictions
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Homelessness and those leaving the armed forces
- Homeless prevention / tenancy sustainment initiatives
- Access to private rented sector
- Homelessness and 'throughcare'
- Acquisition of 1 bedroom properties

7.1 Number/proportion of lets to homeless applicants

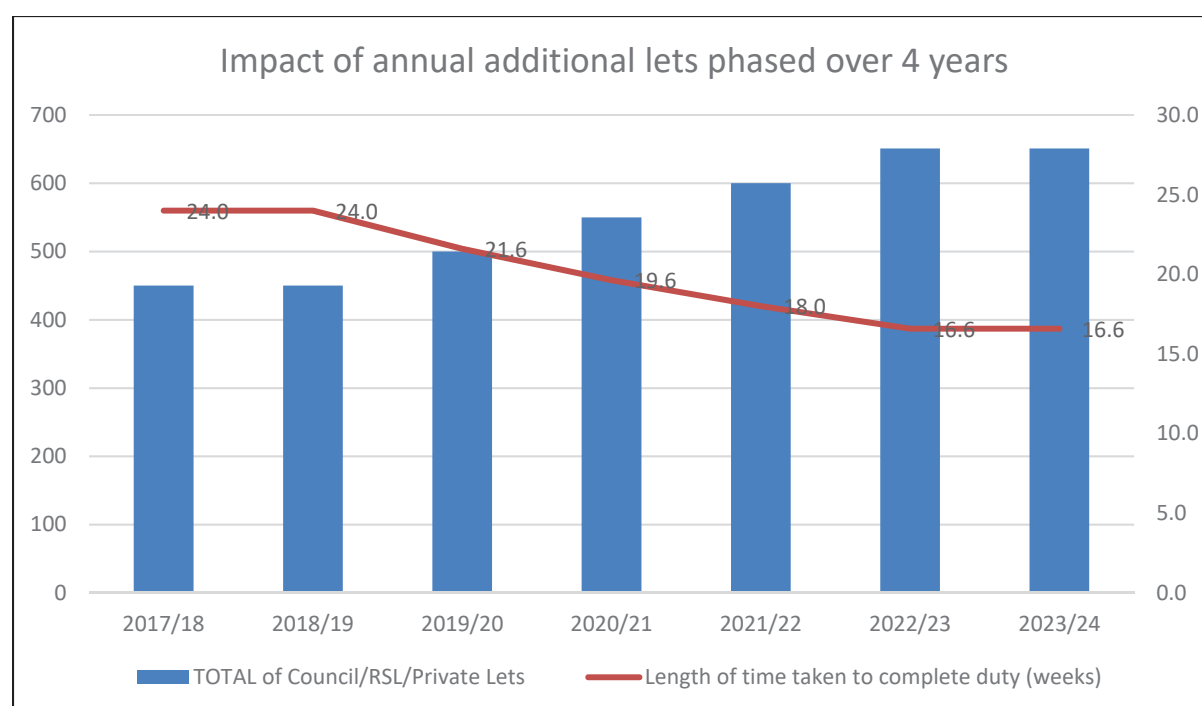
This key proposal has been covered in paras 4.12 – 4.16, with actions detailed in the Action Plan which follows this section.

As well as using the toolkit provided with the RRTP Guidance, we have also modelled how the relationship between **an increase in the number of lets would impact on the length of time to conclude duty**.

Impact on length of time to complete duty

In the graph below, we show the impact of a gradual increase in the number of lets (approx 10% each year) spread over the next 5 years.

The impact on the length of time to conclude duty is that it reduces gradually from **24 weeks** (which is already considerably below the Scottish average) to **16.6 weeks** by 2023/24.



We will establish agreements with all housing providers on the number / proportion of lets, and regularly jointly review the impact on homelessness.

7.2 Housing First Renfrewshire

Housing First Renfrewshire was established by the Council in partnership with Turning Point Scotland (TPS) in 2013, then increased and extended via Big Lottery funding to TPS for a further 5 years. The current Big Lottery Funding expires in February 2020.

The service is provided on a 24/7 basis. People are able to access an out-of-hours on-call telephone line where they can speak to a manager/supervisor for advice. Staffing ratios for the service are based on a Housing First Renfrewshire worker holding a caseload of 7 people, in line with recommended practice. The staffing structure and flexible approach enables the service to respond quickly to changing demand, including the deployment of peer support workers.

The service currently can support up to 20 service users at any one time, and the tenancy sustainment rate is 90%, which is higher than the sustainment level for lets to all homeless applicants in Renfrewshire in 2017/18.

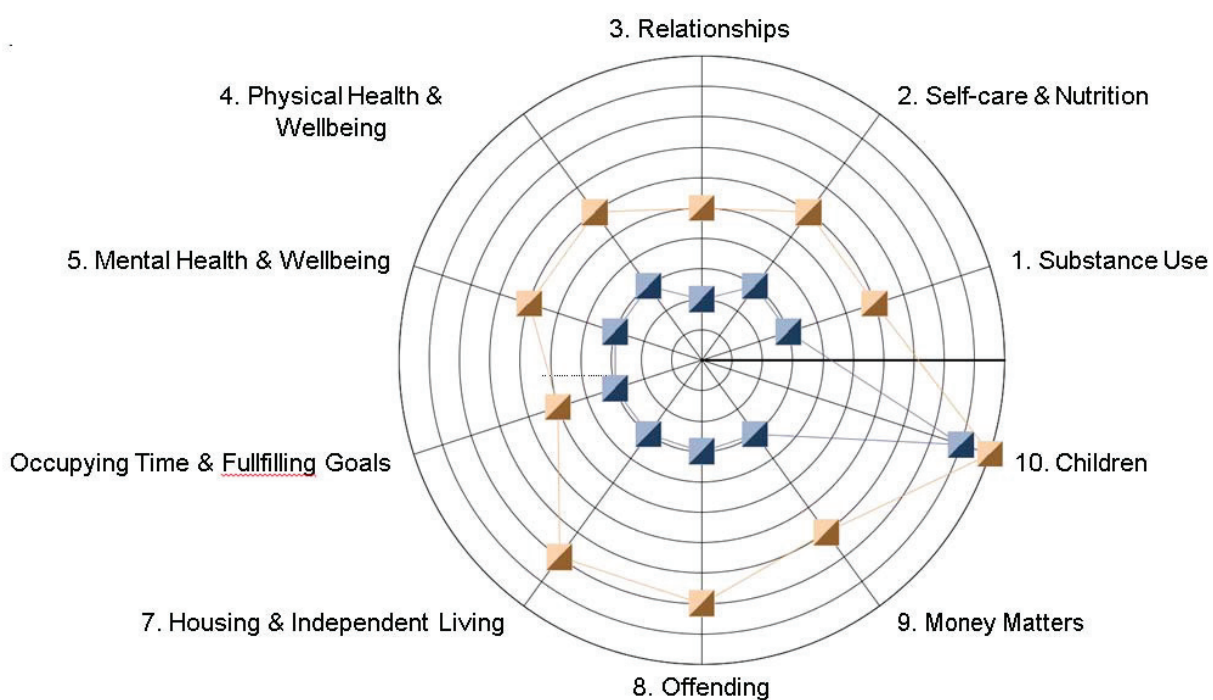
There have been no incidences of repeat homeless presentations by people receiving support from the service.

Support plan indicators

The information below is drawn from the Recovery Outcome Web (ROW) developed by the Scottish Government for measuring outcomes for people who use the service.

The chart over page provides an overview of the combined progress made by all of the service users currently being supported, under a range of headings.

A full description of each of these headings is provided in Appendix 3.



The inner shape – blue squares – illustrates where service users were at the point of initial assessment (combined scores), and the outer shape – orange squares - shows where they collectively are now.

The optimum result is for the outer shape to reach the outside edge of the large circle.

It is proposed that, given our experience of delivering an efficient and effective Housing First model in Renfrewshire, the number of individuals receiving this form of support will increase at an agreed rate to allow for incremental growth from the current 20 service users up to around 65 – 80 people being supported.

The worker/client ratio will continue to be based on the existing model of 1:7.

This figure of 65-80 represents approximately 5% - 8% of people who present as homeless.

Further innovation

The service can also be further developed over the next five years in terms of adding to the peer-support role, developing digital inclusion opportunities, targeting younger homeless applicants for the first time, and piloting Housing First in a shared living tenancy environment.

7.3 Temporary Accommodation

Section 5 of this RRTP discusses our proposals to reduce the use of the various forms of temporary accommodation over the next 5 years, and this is reflected in our Action Plan.

7.4 Tenancy Resettlement Service

In 2014/15, the tenancy sustainment figure for the fifty-four 16 to 25 year olds permanently housed via a homeless application in Renfrewshire was 54%; **almost 1 in every 2 new tenancies to homeless 16 to 25 year olds broke down within 12 months.**

In response to this relatively poor sustainment rate we established a Tenancy Resettlement Service during 2015/16 funded from within existing resources.

In the first full year of operation (2016/17), the tenancy sustainment figure for the seventy-two 16–25 year olds **showed an improvement from 54% to 74%** - 3 in every 4 young persons, were now sustaining their tenancy beyond 12 months.

As highlighted in section 2, consultation with our partners and stakeholders confirmed their support to see an expanded Resettlement Service available to all homeless applicants in Renfrewshire, regardless of their age.

Our Tenancy Resettlement Service is a practical and proactive service that gives people the help they need to successfully move into and manage the first year of their tenancy.

The assistance provided is specifically tailored to address an individual's needs in relation to their circumstances, tenancy experience and so on.

Whilst there can be high demands from service users at the point of getting ready to move and settle in their new tenancy, the Tenancy Resettlement Service continues to work flexibly with new young tenants throughout the first year of their tenancy

assisting them to deal with the range of housing and housing related issues, and ensure a fast response if/when it becomes clear that they would benefit from tailored intervention and / or referral to the broader spectrum of community based supports such as mental health, addiction, welfare rights and so on.

Our Tenancy Resettlement Service is completely separate from the Housing First Renfrewshire Services and is there to assist those homeless applicants for whom Housing First is not the required or appropriate option.

The Case Study below highlights the type of assistance this new service provides and how it can have such a positive impact for young new tenants.

Resources

There was no new additional staffing or funding resources to establish this new service. The provision of our homeless prevention work was re-engineered with 4 officers giving part of their time to providing our Tenancy Resettlement Service for young homeless applicants.

The FTE input is 1.5 officers, and the value of the current staffing hours input is approximately £40,000 pa

Case study

The following is an anonymised summary of one service user's experience, and illustrates the impact our resettlement service can have:

Case study - 'S'

*S is a 25 year old male who has had **7 previous homeless applications** and one previous offer of permanent housing which he abandoned after 3 months.*

After being allocated his current tenancy he received a short jail sentence.

The resettlement worker helped ensure engagement with S whilst in prison. Through perseverance, S eventually engaged with the resettlement service and he returned to his tenancy on release, resolved issues with utility companies, moved into his home, and now fully engages with Housing Support.

The resettlement worker kept a check on S throughout the first 12 months of his tenancy, which ensured early intervention if there were any warning signs regarding the tenancy.

If it had not been for the proactive partnership between S, his resettlement worker and other support services, S would have most likely been homeless on release

from prison and would have continued through the revolving door of homelessness, addictions and prison.

S has now been in his tenancy for nearly 2 years.

Moving forward

We believe that the success to date has been remarkable, and reflects the point made in the RRTP Guidance that many households experiencing homelessness have no or low support needs, but may need assistance if/when moving into a settled tenancy more quickly in the future.

An expansion of our Tenancy Resettlement Assistance service will allow all homeless applicants, regardless of age, to benefit from the low level support and assistance that can be offered via this initiative.

7.5 Rough-sleepers

There is no evidence to suggest that the issue with known rough-sleeping in Renfrewshire is significant, nor is it increasing.

We do wish however to further increase and develop the support offered to those in crisis, and the range of assistance we already provide.

Many of the proposals within this action plan will benefit those who may have been at risk of having to sleep rough, and we are also keen to build upon the advice, information and assistance we can provide to those who are classed as having 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF).

At present, our George Street Service maintains close links with agencies, businesses and others to ensure engagement with anyone who appears to have possibly been sleeping rough and / or begging, and will respond as soon they become aware of the issue, providing advice, information, and sign-posting onto relevant agencies. We record a 'by name' list of any individuals we have contacted, and the locations where there is an appearance of street-begging / rough-sleeping possibly taking place.

7.6 Shared living initiative

We have been piloting a flat sharing programme since October 2017.

This in-house pilot project has been limited to 16 to 24 year olds to date, and six pairs (12 service users) have moved on to social housing flat sharing in the first year of this initiative. The pilot project has been resourced from within existing staffing levels.

As we have already made significant progress during the pilot phase of this scheme, we believe there is the potential to deliver positive outcomes for many more young homeless people if we expand the scheme in partnership with an experienced third sector agency.

What are the benefits of this approach?

- Gives young people better choices
- Spreads the living costs for service users, which makes renting more affordable
- Alleviates feelings of isolation
- Due to the lack of available 1 bedroom flats, this can provide much quicker access into settled accommodation
- Ongoing access to guidance, support and advice

We are also in the process of developing an online web based resource which will allow service users who want to access the scheme but do not have anyone within their own social network to search via a bespoke 'App' and self select a flat-mate.

Proposal

Shared Living features within the Scottish Government's HARSAG recommendations as a positive accommodation option.

We are working with a partner who has delivered a 9 month demonstration project offering Shared Living to those aged 18 years and over across Glasgow through, facilitating and enabling joint tenancy arrangements with local social landlords.

Following the selection process, each applicant will be required to commit to the terms of the programme; that they agree to meet with the Shared Living Support Worker at agreed intervals and that they understand the requirements of the tenancy and their respective responsibilities as set out in the Tenant's Charter.

Importantly, the application and matching process will ensure that positive relationships are developed with named personnel responsible for the programme delivery and that tenants know where to turn for support at the first sign of crisis.

A Shared Living initiative in Renfrewshire has real potential to match homeless applicants to 2 bedroom properties which they currently cannot access, improved tenancy sustainment levels and enhance the potential for the homeless applicants concerned to transition into employment.

Mediation

Our existing family mediation service is delivered in-house by our Mediator. Although this only consists of 0.5 of a FTE post, the officer makes a significant contribution in supporting and assisting young homeless people, or those threatened with homelessness. This has prevented young people from facing homelessness or helped them to improve relationships with their family, so they have a natural support network when they move on to their own settled accommodation.

Mediation has been an important element in the successful work with 6 pairs of homeless applicants who now flat-share in Renfrewshire, and in each of these cases the Mediator has worked proactively with each pair to produce a flat sharing agreement.

An additional mediation resource will be required to support the delivery of our enhanced, innovative shared living partnership.

7.7 People with convictions

Over the last five years, Renfrewshire Council has consistently had a higher proportion of people than other local authorities entering into homelessness where the main reason for applying was due to having been discharged from prison.

Table 1 - Percentage of homeless applications where reason for applying was discharge from prison

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Renfrewshire Council	12.3%	14.4%	11.2%	13.5%	9.8%
National Average	5.8%	5.8%	5.7%	5.6%	5.3%
Local Authority Ranking (Highest % of homeless applications/discharge from prison)	2	1	2	1	3

Source: Scottish Government Report on Homeless Applications where reason for applying was discharge from prison, 2018

Between 2013/14 and 2017/18⁸ the number of homeless applications made annually in Scotland decreased by 5%, while the number of homeless applications from prison leavers nationally decreased by 14% over the same period ⁹.

While Renfrewshire has seen a similar trend with homeless applications decreasing by 12% in the last 5 years, the proportion of people presenting as homeless from prison has remained static at around double the national figure.

⁸ Source: Homelessness Annual Reference Table 2017/18, Scottish Government publication

⁹ Source: Homelessness Annual Reference Table 2017/18, Scottish Government publication

A high proportion of homeless applicants lose contact with homeless services before discharge of our statutory duty. This can result in repeat homeless applications and a “revolving door” situation where the same applicant can make several homeless applications within a relatively short period. In 2017/18, more than 12% of homeless applications made by prison leavers were unresolved due to lost contact, compared to 5.4% for all homeless applications.¹⁰

Prison leavers can be less likely than other homeless applicants to engage with homelessness services and other statutory services. Sustaining meaningful engagement with homeless people who have complex needs, is a fundamental requirement to assist them to achieve positive outcomes.

Over the past 4 years, we have successfully worked in partnership with Turning Point Scotland to deliver the “Housing First” service in Renfrewshire, providing an intensive “wraparound” support service to individuals with highly complex needs. A key element of Housing First’s success is its use of “peer mentors”, i.e. people with “lived experience” who support homeless clients with complex needs and who identify with the issues homeless people are facing because they themselves have had direct experience of similar situations. Some homeless clients are more likely to engage with the support offered by peer mentors than that provided by statutory services.

We propose to build on this successful model through the introduction of a **Peer Mentoring and Engagement Project** targeted at people who have presented as homeless and have convictions.

Peer Mentoring proposal

We wish to recruit two specialist Peer Mentoring and Engagement Workers, potentially in partnership with a third party offering specialist support, who will deliver “wrap around support”, for as long as is required, to multiple excluded, repeat homeless clients with an addiction and offending background.

The personal lived experience of the Peer Mentoring and Engagement Workers will assist in building trust and greater engagement with this “hard to reach” homeless client group, many of whom have multiple complex needs.

This initiative will be aligned with the principles set out in the Scottish Quality Standards, Housing Advice, Information and Support for people on Remand or Serving a Short Term Sentence (SHORE Standards), particularly the principles of

¹⁰ Source: Annual report for Renfrewshire 2017/18

“adopting a person centred approach” and “stickability” i.e. persevering when the individual chooses to disengage.

We are also proposing to establish close links between this peer mentoring project and our existing homeless prevention initiatives we are looking to expand, which are detailed in 7.10, below.

7.8 Victims of domestic abuse

Renfrewshire Women’s Aid currently provides:

- Furnished, supported accommodation to ensure there is a safe place to stay
- Support for victims who need / want to speak to someone confidentially
- Information about rights
- Dedicated support workers for children and young people

Our George Street Service currently provide housing advice and assistance to the clients and support workers within the RWA service. This can be general housing advice, completing housing application forms or completing a homeless application if needed.

Renfrewshire Women’s Aid are active members of the Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership.

We will continue to work closely with RWA, Women and Children First and organisations such as Say Women who help young women aged 16 – 25 years who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse, rape or sexual assault, to scope out whether the need exists for further specialist support or accommodation in Renfrewshire, and work in partnership on any potential funding bids.

7.9 Homelessness and those leaving the armed forces/veterans

Renfrewshire Council signed the Armed Forces Covenant, in partnership with East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils.

This tri-council approach was the first of its kind in the United Kingdom, and utilises specialist services within each local authority to achieve the best possible outcome for veterans.

A Veterans Support Advisor was appointed as a focal point to work on behalf of all three Councils, strengthening the partnership and becoming responsible for coordinating the delivery of this project’s outcomes, sharing resources, expertise and minimising duplication of effort.

Renfrewshire Council will continue to work with the Veterans Support Advisor ensuring that all front line workers are aware of the role and how linking with the VSA could assist in delivering positive outcomes for veterans.

7.10 Homeless prevention / tenancy sustainment initiatives

There are 2 initiatives which we have tried and tested within Renfrewshire, and believe justify being expanded via this RRTP.

The initiatives are:

- **Keys to Learn, and**
- **'Make it Your Own'**

Details are provided below on each of these initiatives.

As mentioned in para 7.7, we intend to establish close links between any expansion of these initiatives, and the proposed new peer-mentoring project for people with convictions.

Keys to Learn

Keys to Learn is a tenancy sustainment project coordinated by the Glasgow Homeless Network (GHN) and delivered in partnership with local authorities, colleges, housing associations and support providers.

So far we have funded 7 courses of the Keys to Learn programme in Renfrewshire. These courses have already brought about material changes in the lives of homeless people, and we have seen how this type of work provides every individual with greater self esteem which allows them to connect with wider community based supports and become better citizens.

Each course is 8 weeks long, delivered three days per week for a total of 15 hours.

While regularly reviewed based on participant feedback, the course generally delivers modules on:

IT/Digital Skills	Personal & Social Capacity Building	Advice & Information
Computing & digital media	Self-confidence building	Money management
Digital photography	Learning to work with others	Energy advice
Getting the most out of technology	Teambuilding	Housing advice

	Thinking and learning skills	Welfare rights and benefits advice
	Presentation skills	CV building
	Getting to know your community	Interview skills

Peer support from previous course participants is incorporated into the course delivery.

Seven courses have been successfully delivered in Renfrewshire in partnership with Invest in Renfrewshire, local RSLs, Connect4Renfrewshire, University of the West of Scotland, West College Scotland and the DWP, and to date there have been 67 participants from Renfrewshire completing this course.

Qualitative feedback from course participants in Renfrewshire show high satisfaction levels with the course:

“The course has opened my eyes to everything I wouldn’t have even thought about. It has given me a desire to learn more and try to improve myself for the future and for the tasks ahead, and the will-power to find employment and meeting new people [who] also help you with other groups.” (Bobby T)

“The course gave me a lot of self-belief, I can achieve things that I can see them through if I put my mind to it. Lecturers and tutors very understanding, easy going, easy to talk to and listened - which made the course a whole lot easier.” (Ritchie G)

“Keys to Learn helped me in several different ways...the college visit opened my eyes and showed me that college wasn't a place to be afraid of hence now that I'm now in full time learning doing level 4 Health Care, a thing that I don't think I would have done on my own initiative.

Impact Arts ‘Make it Your Own’

Make it Your Own (MIYO) is delivered by Impact Arts – a community arts charity – providing a creative approach to tenancy sustainment aimed at helping the most vulnerable tenants in Renfrewshire and is currently funded via Renfrewshire Council’s Housing Support Service. 32 homeless applicants and new tenants have completed the programme between April 2017 and March 2018, working alongside a tutor to up-cycle and create furniture, canvases, curtains, blinds and so on.

96% of referrals who engaged in the programme have sustained their tenancy since accessing MIYO.

Given the popularity and success to date, it is proposed to extend the service.



Service users attending 'Make it Your Own'

7.11 Access to the Private Rented Sector

As mentioned in 3.9 - 3.14 of this RRTP, the private rented sector serves an important role in the housing system Renfrewshire wide and has doubled from 5% of the entire housing stock in 2008 – 2010 to 10% in 2014 -2016.

Recent legislative changes have improved stability and security for tenants with the sector providing a tenure option that can offer flexibility and choice which can suit the needs and preferences of many, however as pointed out in section 3, there continues to be barriers experienced by homeless households accessing the sector.

The Deposit Guarantee Scheme can be a preventative measure to help alleviate homelessness within Renfrewshire. Of all the clients assisted through the scheme in 17/18, 96% were very satisfied and 4% satisfied with the quality of service that they received from the scheme. We will look at the feasibility of a lettings partnership with private landlords and voluntary sector partners.

7.12 Homelessness and those leaving Throughcare

Renfrewshire Council has a duty as Corporate Parent to young people who have been looked after and accommodated by the local authority, and as such measures are in place to ensure that all young people are then provided with the support they need to access housing.

A protocol exists between the Council's Housing Services and Children's Services to ensure that young people are supported to fully consider their housing options, complete a housing application if they wish, and are given a degree of priority for social housing in the areas of their choice.

A total of 10 furnished 'satellite' flats are also provided by the Council and local RSLs for the Children's Services Throughcare team to allow young people leaving care to be accommodated and supported by the Throughcare and Housing Teams as an interim measure.

The protocol and satellite flat arrangements are currently under review, and this may inform new services that may be required.

During this review, we will look at whether a 'respite flat' may be required. The aim of this flat would be to enhance the opportunities for young people to have 'time out' and to give an opportunity for Throughcare staff to mediate between the care giver and the young person. This would also help reduce the potential for permanent breakdown of relationships for young people in Children's Homes/foster care, and the need for temporary / settled accommodation for young people leaving care.

7.13 Acquisition of 1 bedroom properties

Renfrewshire's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 notes that the Council and housing association partners will consider the possible acquisition of existing private housing where this would increase the supply of suitable affordable housing and address the priorities set out in the Local Housing Strategy.

This could, in certain circumstances, include the acquisition of 1 bedroom properties to assist with homelessness prevention.

Given the pressures on the SHIP programme from new build housing developments, no specific allocation has been made for grant funding for this purpose over the next five years.

Key points on RRTP proposals

- These proposals all link to the issues and priorities which emerged from an analysis of homelessness in Renfrewshire, and consultation carried out with a range of partners, including service users.
- They are all in line with the RRTP Guidance, and if introduced will help reduce the length of time those who are homeless have to stay in

temporary accommodation, and provide the support required to ensure tenancies are sustained.

- The Action Plan which follows summarises the outcomes and costs associated with each proposal.

8 Rapid Rehousing Action Plan 2019 – 2024 - August 2019 update

We believe that the delivery of all of these proposals over the next 5 years will help us meet the expectations of the rapid rehousing programme and result in positive outcomes for those who are homeless, in line with the published Guidance.

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
1	Number / proportion of lets to homeless applicants <i>(though additional forms of support need to be provided via the other proposals contained in this action plan throughout the 5 years)</i>	4.12-4.16, 7.1, 7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreements in place with range of housing providers to increase number / proportion of lets Number / proportion of lets to homeless applicants increases Annual review of number / proportion of lets per provider Reduction in length of time that people are homeless Provide enhanced starter packs, and decoration vouchers – linked to the other proposals within this action plan. 	<p>2019/20</p> <p>Annually from 2019/20</p> <p>From April 2020 onwards</p> <p>From April 2020 onwards</p> <p>2019/20</p>

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
2	Up-scaling of Housing First	7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enlarged service established ▪ Number homeless applicants supported increased from 20 to 30 ▪ Further improvement in overall tenancy sustainment rate for homeless applicants ▪ Reduction in abandoned tenancies ▪ Less repeat homelessness ▪ Potential for savings for other services e.g. Criminal Justice, A&E admissions etc. 	<p>Oct 2019</p> <p>by end of 2019/20</p> <p>from 2019/20 onwards</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>
3	Use of temporary accommodation	<p>Section 5</p> <p>5.7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in number of properties used as temporary accommodation ▪ Properties being returned to the mainstream letting pool ▪ Review rent / support charging policy for those in employment 	<p>2019/20 – 2024/25 (though most changes will be in year 3 -5)</p> <p>2020/21</p>

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
		5.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to 'flip' properties from temp accommodation to the settled tenancy for the occupant – linked to Housing First 	2019/20
		5.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in length of the homeless applicants stay in temp accommodation Scope out proposal for a planned closure of one of our existing staffed accommodation projects, and replacement with a smaller 8-10 person project for those service users with most complex needs. Set up costs for new project – furniture, decoration etc 	2019/20 onwards 2020/21 – 2021/22 2021/22
4	Tenancy resettlement service	7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarged service established Number of homeless applicants assisted increased by a further 120 Further improvement in tenancy sustainment rate Reduction in abandoned tenancies 	Oct 2019 onwards

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less repeat homelessness 	
5	Rough-sleepers	7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue and expand outreach work to meet the needs of those who sleep (or have slept) rough, including the piloting of 'personal budgets' 	2020/21
6	Shared living initiative	7.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch an initiative with 3rd sector partner building on success to date with in-house pilot and experience that 3rd sector partner has had in Glasgow. ▪ Utilise 'App', developed by Renfrewshire Council ▪ More 2 bedroom properties being let to homeless applicants via this initiative ▪ Reduction in time spent in temporary accommodation for those who use this scheme ▪ Annual review of initiative 	2019/20 Onwards 2019/20 onwards 2019/20 onwards 2019/20 onwards Oct 2020

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
7	Peer mentoring	7.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appoint 3rd sector organisation to deliver this initiative ▪ Increased levels of engagement ▪ Improved tenancy sustainment/decrease in repeat homeless applications ▪ Improvements to service users' physical and mental health and well-being ▪ Link in with Keys to Learn and Impact Arts – Make it Your Own, projects 	2020/21 “ “ “ “
8	Victims of domestic abuse	7.8	Work in partnership with specialist services to further develop accommodation and support options.	on-going
9	Homelessness and those leaving armed forces/veterans	7.9	Continue to review and improve the provision of advice and assistance to those leaving the armed forces. Create stand-alone Veterans Support Advisor for Renfrewshire. (existing)	on-going 2020/21

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
			resource is currently shared with 2 other local authorities).	
10	Homeless prevention / tenancy sustainment initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keys to Learn • Impact Arts 'Make it Your Own' 	7.10 7.10 7.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to an additional 15 service users supported each year ▪ Additional 20 - 40 service users benefitting from this service ▪ Maximise potential to link in with new Peer Mentoring initiative for people with convictions 	2020/21 onwards 2020/21 onwards 2020/21 onwards
11	Access to private rented sector	3.12 and 7.11	Continue to maximise access to the private rented sector, including the use of deposit guaranties, for those who wish this housing option. Scope out the feasibility of a letting agency model with private landlords and a voluntary sector organisation	on-going 2020/21
12	Homelessness and Throughcare	7.12	Scope out feasibility of the provision of a respite flat – either within existing resources, or with RRTP funding	April 2020

No.	Rapid re-housing proposal	RRTP ref.	Outcomes	Target date
13	Acquisition of 1 bedroom properties	7.13	Keep this proposal under consideration, in line with Renfrewshire's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24.	on-going

9 Contact us

The contact person in relation to our RRTP is:

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