

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET2 May 2019Report by Director of EnvironmentRAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To seek approval from the Cabinet for the proposed Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 – 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 – 2024 and its submission to the Scottish Government.

BACKGROUND

3. The Scottish Government set up the Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Action Group (HARSAG) in October 2017 to produce short and long term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. A key recommendation made by this group is that all local authorities transition to a rapid rehousing approach.

4. The HARSAG group was set up in response to concerns regarding the increase of rough sleeping in Scottish cities. The group found that homeless households in many areas were not being provided offers of permanent housing in a suitable time period. This resulted in extended periods of time in temporary accommodation. As a result many authorities had huge pressures on their supply of temporary accommodation and were unable to meet their duty to provide accommodation to roofless households, resulting in rough sleeping.

5. The report found that many social landlords were delaying an offer of permanent accommodation until the household was deemed “tenancy ready”.

6. In East Renfrewshire there are low levels of rough sleeping and it has been shown that it occurs before the household contacts the Council for assistance. In addition, the Council’s allocation policy ensures homeless households are the top priority and any delay is caused by our desire to offer households choice, where possible.

7. “Rapid rehousing” is about taking a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.

8. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:
- A permanent, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
 - Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;
 - When temporary accommodation is needed the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.
9. For people with complex support needs who require additional support to maintain a tenancy, HARSAG recommends “Housing First” as the first response. Housing First is a policy whereby households with complex needs are immediately provided with secure accommodation but are provided with the appropriate support to ensure their tenancy is sustained.

HARSAG 2018

10. The RRTP is a new planning framework aimed at assisting local authorities and their partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. Each local authority in Scotland is required by the Scottish Government to develop, in collaboration with partners, a plan setting out how they will transition to a rapid housing approach over the period from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

11. A draft RRTP was submitted to the Scottish Government by the 31st December 2018, as required. The timeframe to develop this plan did not permit approval to be sought by the Cabinet before submission. However the plan states that any proposals are subject to Cabinet approval before implementation. A copy of the RRTP is attached.

REPORT

12. East Renfrewshire does not face the same issues that many other local authorities are facing nationally (and that have led to the requirement for the RRTP) and is well on the way towards rapid rehousing.

- 56% of council homes are currently being allocated to homeless applicants and it is not believed that this figure can be increased whilst continuing to offer the same level of choice.
- The council's allocation policy gives 1st priority to homeless households. However the low levels of council housing in the area, in particular in the former Eastwood area, means the council is at times unable to meet the aspirations of some homeless households. Families at times will refuse an offer of accommodation and find other accommodation in the private sector.
- On average, families are in temporary accommodation for longer than single people. This appears to be due to choice and availability of suitable accommodation, for instance if they are waiting for a property in a particular location close to support networks or schools.
- Timescales for assessing and closing cases are below the national average and our average length of stay in temporary accommodation is 109 days.

13. Therefore, the focus for the next 5 years in East Renfrewshire will be on addressing local issues: leading the way towards a shift in culture where the starting position is that everyone is ‘tenancy ready’ with the right support; building on existing relationships with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and other partners; and, reviewing services to ensure they continue to be as efficient and effective as they can be.

14. To do this 4 areas of priority have been identified:

- Priority 1 places an increased focus on early intervention and prevention work and aims to reduce the number of households who are forced to present as homeless.
- Priority 2 focuses on temporary accommodation, which will be reviewed to ensure that households are able to move through the temporary accommodation system as quickly as possible. This will verify if the current supply continues to be appropriate and provides a range of options, of good quality, of a size/type and in a location which can match demand and minimise disruption to the daily lives of those experiencing homelessness.
- Priority 3 recognises that a review of how support is funded, assessed and provided, undertaken in conjunction with East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and our other partners is required. This review could benefit households with higher level support needs who present as homeless.
- Priority 4 aims to explore the option of introducing a Housing First pilot aimed at the small number of households with complex needs and a history of repeat homelessness. The HARSAG are strongly recommending the Housing First model for homeless individuals or families who have more complex needs. Currently, there is no Housing First provision in East Renfrewshire but it is recognised that this type of personalised, open-ended, flexible support could help end the cycle of repeat presentations and address a wider range of needs.

15. The levels of rough sleeping and homelessness are low in East Renfrewshire in comparison to other authorities. However there are a small number of households with complex needs such as mental health or drug and alcohol abuse, who have a significant history of repeat homelessness.

16. The aim of the RRTP in East Renfrewshire is to ensure resources are designed and managed to address issues that lead to repeat homelessness. Furthermore, the issues around households with complex needs and repeat homelessness have an impact on local communities through an increase in anti-social or criminal behaviour.

17. An action plan forms part of the RRTP, and sets out what actions are required to be undertaken to progress the transition towards rapid rehousing.

18. It is important to note that the RRTP is a working document which will continue to evolve and develop over the transition period, subject to further consultation and also to approval from East Renfrewshire Council and the HSCP's Integration Joint Board.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

19. The financial implications of this work is yet unknown. Additional funding may be available from the Scottish Government to support this work.

20. A key area of work is to review the way in which housing support is funded and provided in East Renfrewshire with the ultimate aim to reduce homelessness and the cost to provide homelessness services.

CONSULTATION

21. Initial consultation with partners, including East Renfrewshire's HSCP and RSLs, has informed the drafting of this plan. Further consultation with stakeholders will continue between now and during the implementation of the plan.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

22. The RRTP is intended to demonstrate a corporate approach to resolving homelessness issues and, to this end involves partnership working across the Council, with the HSCP and also with other partners within the community, such as RSLs. A letter dated 29th March 2019 from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport and the Minister for Local Government, housing and planning is attached. This reflects the need for a joint/partnership approach to be taken.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

23. There are no immediate implications associated with this report in terms of staffing, finance, property, legal, IT, equalities and sustainability. However as the RRTP progresses further information will be provided to members.

CONCLUSIONS

24. The RRTP establishes how East Renfrewshire Council, in conjunction with partners, will transition towards taking a rapid rehousing approach to its homelessness services. It sets out an action plan for the next five years with four key priorities: increasing emphasis on prevention work; reviewing current temporary accommodation to ensure processes and stock remain appropriate; reviewing housing support; and exploring options for making use of the Housing First model of supported accommodation within East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATION

25. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 – 2024 and its submission to the Scottish Government.

Director of Environment

Further details can be obtained from Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services), 0141 577 3186.

Convener contact details

Councillor Danny Devlin
(Convener for Housing and Maintenance Services)

Home: 0141 580 0288
Office: 0141 577 3107/8

April 2019

East Renfrewshire Council

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

DECEMBER 2018

1. Background

The Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. Four sets of recommendations were made in December 2017 and in February, May and June 2018. Led by best evidence, the cornerstone of the recommendations is a transition to a rapid rehousing approach.

Rapid Rehousing Approach

Rapid rehousing is about taking a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long. It recognises that a safe and secure home is the best base to build and live lives and that reducing the time people spend homeless and in temporary accommodation also reduces the damage to people's health and wellbeing that being homeless causes.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
- Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;
- When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.

For people with complex support needs beyond housing, HARSAG recommends Housing First as the first response.

Transition to Rapid Rehousing

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is a new planning framework aimed at assisting local authorities and their partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. Each local authority in Scotland is required to develop, in collaboration with partners, a plan setting out how they will transition to a rapid rehousing approach over the period from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

The RRTP has been developed in the context of the wider strategic planning framework and the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and going forwards will be reviewed annually as part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) process.

Initial consultation with partners, including East Renfrewshire's Health and Social Care Partnership (ERHSCP) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), has informed the drafting of this plan. Timescales have not permitted as much consultation as would have been liked to be carried out but further consultation with stakeholders will continue between now and the initiation of the plan in April 2019.

Timescales have not permitted this plan to be formally approved by either East Renfrewshire Council or East Renfrewshire Joint Integration Board and thus it is subject to change pending the outcome of these hearings. The RRTP is intended to be a working tool which:

- Sets out the local housing market and homelessness context in East Renfrewshire;
- Provides the baseline position of temporary accommodation supply;
- Sets out East Renfrewshire's 5 year vision for the supply of temporary accommodation;
- Identifies support needs to enable rapid rehousing;
- Details the actions required to achieve East Renfrewshire's vision for temporary accommodation supply and settled housing options for homeless households; and
- Provides a rapid rehousing resource plan required to deliver the plan and evidence the co-ownership and resourcing of the plan with wider partners, particularly the HSCP and RSLs.

2. The Housing Market Context

This section focuses specifically on the local housing market in East Renfrewshire. In doing so it will make particular reference to the pressures put on the local housing market as evidenced by Glasgow and Clyde Valley Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2015 and the East Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022.

Housing Stock Pressure

East Renfrewshire has low levels of social rented housing stock and high levels of owner occupation. Social rented stock has increased in recent years and will continue to do so with the recent recommencing of council house building and an increased programme of RSL house building, however, compared to the national average levels remains low. According to the Glasgow and Clyde Valley HNDA only 12% of housing stock in East Renfrewshire is for social rent¹.

Due to the small numbers of social rented stock in East Renfrewshire housing pressure is high. In 2017-18, East Renfrewshire let 233 of its 2939 properties, a rate of turnover equivalent to 7.9%.

Housing Supply Targets

In order to alleviate pressures on housing stock, housing supply targets for 2012-2029 have been prepared (which are included in the East Renfrewshire's Local Development Plan and Local Housing Strategy and outlined in Table 1 below). Crucially, however, availability and cost of land in East Renfrewshire continue to constrain opportunities for development.

¹ Glasgow and Clyde Valley Housing Need and Demand Assessment: <https://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/docman/current-plan-july-2017-background-reports/73-background-report-2-glasgow-and-the-clyde-valley-housing-need-and-demand-assessment-may-2015/file>.

Table 1: Housing Supply Targets

Homes	Housing Supply Targets 2012-2029	
	Total	Per Annum
All Tenure	3786	223
Private/Market	3021	178
Social/Below Market Rent	765	45

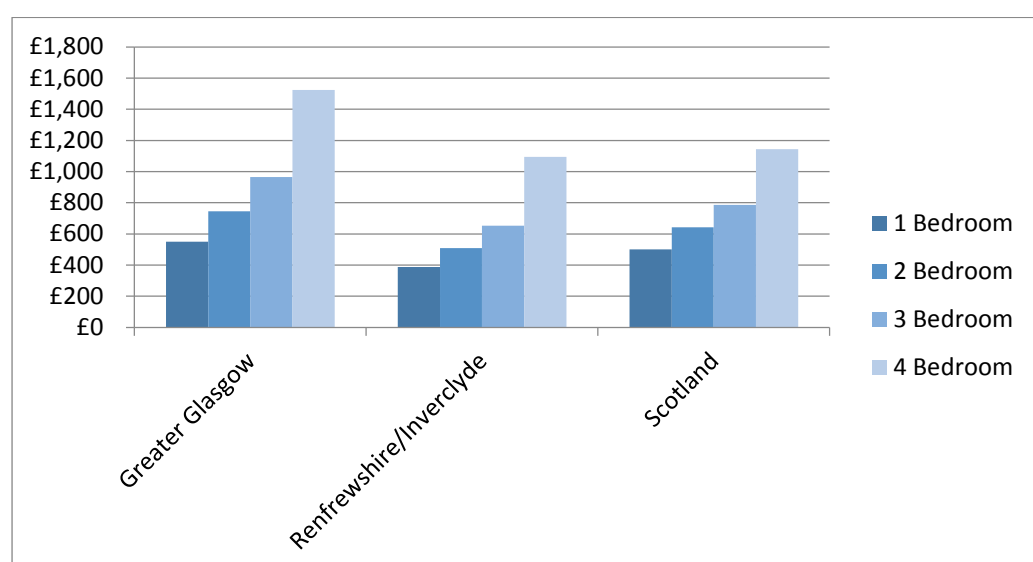
Private Rented Sector and Local Housing Allowance

The vast majority of privately owned residential properties in East Renfrewshire are owner occupied (81%). Privately rented properties make up 7% of the housing stock in East Renfrewshire, which makes up around 2700 dwellings in the local authority area.

The Scottish Government analyses private rented sector costs based on Broad Rental Market Areas (BRMAs). East Renfrewshire does not have a sole BRMA and instead its housing market areas come under two separate BRMAs: Greater Glasgow (which the Eastwood housing market area is located within) and Renfrewshire/Inverclyde (which the Lavern Valley housing market area is located within).

The most recent data on BRMAs was published by the Scottish Government in November 2017 showing that between 2016 and 2017 there was an increase in the mean rents for all property sizes in Greater Glasgow and an increase in all property sizes in Renfrewshire/Inverclyde, excluding one bedroom sized properties which saw a decrease.² As at November 2017 mean rent costs in Greater Glasgow are significantly higher than in Renfrewshire/Inverclyde across all bedroom sizes. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

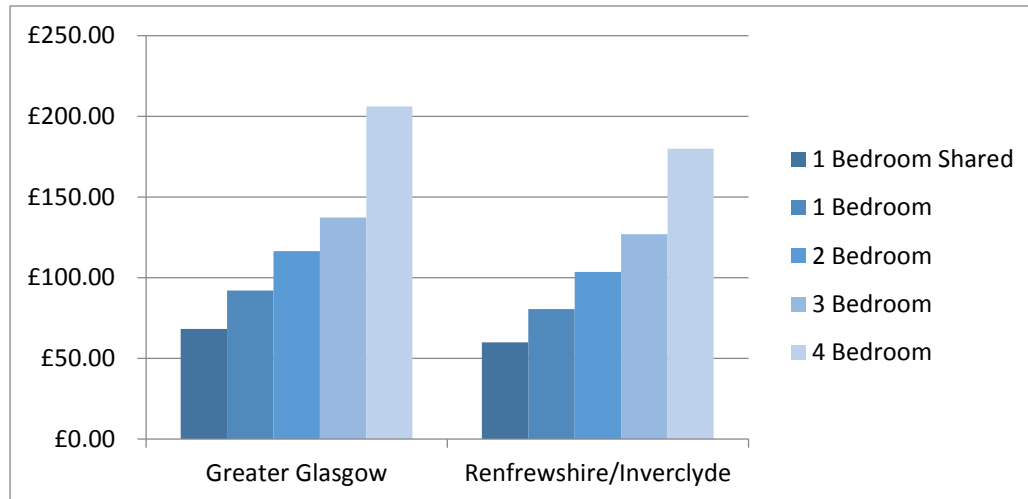
Figure 1: Private Sector Rent Costs per BRMA in £ (Mean)



² Broad Rental Market Area Profiles. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/private-sector-rent-statistics-scotland-2010-2017/pages/9/>.

In relation to average private sector rent costs, across the two housing market areas local housing allowance (LHA) rates fall short of the mean total costs of renting a property in all bedroom sizes³ as illustrated in figure 1 below. Essentially, this means that average private rents across East Renfrewshire are high.

Figure 2: Local Housing Allowance Rates per BRMA in £



In addition, it is important to note that the private rented housing stock in East Renfrewshire is not one homogenous market but varies significantly in size, type and location and caters for very different audiences. A good proportion of the private rented housing stock in East Renfrewshire, particularly in Eastwood, is at the luxury end of the market and thus inaccessible to many households.

Affordable Housing Projections

The East Renfrewshire SHIP 2019/20-2023/24 identifies 642 affordable housing units over the 5 year period from 2019/20 – 2023/24. These will be delivered by both the Council and its Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners as agreed through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. However, it should be noted that the Scottish Government expects local authorities to over programme their SHIP by around 25% - allowing for slippage in the programme.

3. Homelessness Position

In 2017-18 there were 328 homeless applications, for 251 of which the local authority had a duty to find settled accommodation. As of the 31st of March 2018, there were 126 open cases. 96.9% of these cases were assessed within 4 weeks, with the average length of case open being 22 weeks, considerably below the local authority average of 34 weeks, according to Scotland's Housing Network's analysis of HL1 data.

³ Local Housing Allowance Rates 2017-2018. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/local-housing-allowance-rates-2017/>.

The proportion of all social lets to statutory homeless by the local authority in 2017-18 was 58% compared to the RSLs which was 12%. It is recognised that it will be necessary for the local authority to work with RSL partners over the course of this plan to increase this figure, where possible. As a significant proportion of this stock is specialist provision for certain groups, it should be noted that this will restrict the number of lets available to homeless households.

Of the 251 homelessness applications where the local authority had a duty to find settled accommodation in 2017-18, 180, or 72%, were housed in the social sector and 10, or 4%, in the private rented sector. Gap analysis, using the Scottish Governments' transition tool is shown in the table below.

Table 2: Gap analysis of permanent accommodation using transition tool

Gap analysis - Backlog demand + projected new demand compared to rehousing history	No.
Total lets to statutory homelessness in the social rented sector	180
Total lets to statutory homelessness in the private rented sector	10
Current back-log (current caseload where there is a duty to house) as at 31st March	126
Projected new demand - based on average annual caseload (unintentionally homeless) in previous 3 years	251
Not known outcomes plus lost contacts in most recent financial year	5
Refusals of permanent accommodation offers made to homeless households in most recent financial year	55
Demand (Based on current caseload and annual average)	216
Supply (Based on current year's lets)	190
Gap between demand and supply	26

This table takes the caseload as it was at the end of the year plus the average annual demand for settled accommodation and compares it to the most recent year's supply of lets to statutory homeless to identify the gap between supply and demand and to give an indication of the annual increase in permanent accommodation lets required to meet annual homeless demand over the next 5 years – 26 in East Renfrewshire.

This should be treated with caution however, particularly in East Renfrewshire where low numbers of stock and the location of available stock make the situation more complex. Size, type and location of stock all play a role, as demonstrated by the 55 refusals of permanent accommodation offers in the last year.

Reasons for Homelessness

Household dispute is the most common reason cited in homeless applications, being the key factor for 33% of applicants. Of these applicants, 50% cited violence or abuse. The RRTP recognises the role that mediation services can play in cases involving non-violent relationship breakdown where this is appropriate, as well as the necessity of continuing to improve our partnership working with specialist agencies such as Women's Aid.

22% of applicants were asked to leave and 19% cited other action by their landlord resulted in the termination of their tenancy. Actions to increase the focus on early intervention activities have been identified in the RRTP.

Table 3: Reasons cited for homeless application

Applications by technical reason for application	2017/2018
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on payments	17
Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy	61
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	9
Loss of service / tied accommodation	1
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	13
Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order from Environmental Health etc.)	0
Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	2
Other reason for loss of accommodation	8
Dispute within household: violent or abusive	54
Dispute within household / relationship breakdown: non-violent	53
Fleeing non-domestic violence	7
Harassment	7
Overcrowding	3
Asked to leave	72
Other reason for leaving accommodation / household	21
All	328

Whilst rough sleeping in East Renfrewshire is not as visible as it is in other parts of the country, 38 applicants advised at the time of making their homelessness presentation that they had slept rough at least once in the 3 months previous. Investigation into this figure indicates that in the majority of instances applicants slept rough prior to approaching the local authority for assistance, for example, sleeping in their car for 1 night at a volatile point in a relationship but before they believed it to have irretrievably broken down. The RRTP action plan places an emphasis on early intervention work and on making clear to the public what help is available through the housing options process, as well as on assistance available at point of crisis.

Temporary Accommodation

The number of households living in temporary accommodation has risen since 2003, with a few fluctuations between years. As of 2017, 55 households in East Renfrewshire were living in temporary accommodation at year end compared to 18 at the end of 2003. The biggest rise has been in 'Local Authority furnished temporary accommodation' with a rise from 14 in 2003 year end to 40 in 2017 year end. 'RSL dwelling' has risen from 0 to 3. Bed and Breakfast use fluctuated in between years with a starting point of 4 in 2003 year end, and decreased to 1 use in 2017 (with the highest rate of 9 in 2005 year-end). 'Other' temporary accommodation types have seen an increase from 0 in 2003 to 11 in 2017 year end. In 2016 this reached its highest point of 14. (In East Renfrewshire 'other' temporary accommodation types equates to private sector leased properties.)

Overall, temporary occupation has risen across all housing types since 2006/07 (the most historical data the Council holds). However, there has been a drop in temporary accommodation usage since its peak in 2014/15, when there were 343 instances where it was used. It is worth noting that the RSL and privately leased properties are all leased directly by the local authority and then managed and let to the household by them.

Table 4: Temporary accommodation use

	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15	13/14	12/13	11/12	10/11	09/10	08/09
LA Total	195	189	191	172	161	168	156	131	135	138
RSL Total	17	11	3							
B&B Total	31	33	38	142	122	101	82	113	120	118
PSL Total	33	46	35	29	12	1				
Total	276	279	267	343	295	270	238	244	255	256

The average length of stay in temporary accommodation across all types is 109 days, as can be seen in table 5. Length of stay in private sector leased accommodation is highest at 149 days on average, whilst length of stay in B&B accommodation remains low at less than 8 days on average. The current target is to eliminate the use of B&B all together and in 2017-18 no families with children were placed in B&B.

Table 5: Average length of stay in temporary accommodation

Average length of stay in TA (Categories from indicator 25 in the ARC data)	2017-18
Ordinary local authority dwelling	116.34
RSL dwelling	103.42
Bed and breakfast	7.71
Private sector lease	148.7
All	108.85

4. Rapid Rehousing Baseline Position

As of the 31st of March 2018 there were 52 households living in temporary accommodation in East Renfrewshire. The majority of this accommodation in East Renfrewshire is provided by the local

authority in mainstream, furnished properties based within the community. There are currently 38 dispersed temporary furnished flats provided by the local authority, 10 furnished flats at East Renfrewshire Council's Overlee House, 4 RSL furnished flats and 11 flats provided through East Renfrewshire's private sector leasing scheme. To date, there is no housing first provision in East Renfrewshire.

Table 6: Temporary accommodation baseline

	Capacity	No. of households living in the accommodation at 31 st March 2017	Total over year	Net flow in and out	Average length of stay in the last year	Average weekly charge including all rent and service charge
Temporary Furnished Flats	48 Local Authority Units	40	195	156 in 150 out	116.34	£184.97
	4 RSL	3	17	14 in 13 out	103.42	£183.19
Other	B&B	1	31	30 in 30 out	7.71	£367.73
	11 PRS	11	33	22 in 25 out	PRS let - 148.70	£183.19

The net flow in and out of temporary accommodation has not changed significantly over the last 3 years. The net flow for RSL temporary accommodation has increased slightly, whereas the net flow for B&B usage and private rented sector usage has decreased, as can be seen in table 7.

Table 7: Temporary accommodation net flow over last 3 years

	LA TFF		RSL TFF		B&B		Other PRS	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
17/18	156	150	14	13	30	30	22	25
16/17	150	152	10	11	33	30	34	37
15/16	146	163	3	1	38	38	31	24
Average	151	155	9	8	34	33	29	29

The majority of temporary accommodation in East Renfrewshire is based in the Levern Valley side of the local authority, which is unsurprising as two thirds of social rented stock is based in the Levern Valley. This can, however, be problematic as it limits options for those homelessness applicants wishing to remain in the Eastwood side of the authority. It has proven difficult to attract private landlords with properties in Eastwood onto the private leasing scheme, despite an offer of 100% local housing allowance.

The majority of properties are 3 apartment flats, followed by 2 apartments. There are no 5 apartment properties and only 1 1 apartment. The RRTP action plan will include work to determine

on an annual basis, whether the number, type and location of temporary accommodation remains appropriate.

Table 8: Temporary accommodation by area and size

Area	1apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt	Total
Barrhead	0	13	16	4	0	33
Neilston	0	1	3	1	0	5
Newton Mearns	1	3	2	0	0	6
Thornliebank	0	1	6	0	0	7
Eglesham	0	1	0	0	0	1
Busby	0	1	0	0	0	1
Clarkston (Overlee)	3	3	4	0	0	10
Total	4	23	31	5	0	63

5. Identifying Support Needs

A key element of the transition towards rapid rehousing is the separation of the provision of housing from the provision of support, which involves a cultural shift away from the practice and language associated with 'tenancy readiness'. Although it is not believed that tenancy readiness is a major concern for East Renfrewshire, it is recognised in this plan that a review of how support is funded, assessed and provided, undertaken in conjunction with East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and our other partners, could benefit the small numbers of households who present with higher level support needs.

As can be seen from the table below, the majority of households experiencing homelessness in East Renfrewshire (77%) have no or low support needs and will easily move into mainstream housing with minimal day to day housing management advice and assistance.

A further 14%, or 18 households, require a moderate level of housing support. This is projected to increase by 3%, or less than 1 household.

Table 9: Estimated support needs

Estimated current and future support needs	Estimated % of current homeless cases	Estimated number	Projected % increase / decrease next financial year	Projected number
No or low support needs	77%	97	-5%	92
Medium support needs	14%	18	3%	18
SMD / Complex support needs	6%	8	1%	8
Residential / Supported Accommodation	4%	5	0%	5

The % of homeless households with complex support needs is around 6% of current homeless cases, which equates to 8 households, with a further 4%, or 5 households, requiring a level of supported accommodation. These figures are not projected to increase over the next financial year.

Currently, there is no Housing First provision in East Renfrewshire but it is recognised that this type of personalised, open-ended, flexible support could help end the cycle of repeat presentations and address a wider range of needs. Through this plan, it is intended that the option of introducing a Housing First pilot aimed at the small number of households with complex needs and a history of repeat homelessness is explored.

Supported accommodation aimed at helping prevent homelessness among young people is available at East Renfrewshire's Connor Road complex. This complex consists of 11 flats and also provides outreach support to young people. The RRTTP will link in with existing protocols relating to young people and wider Corporate parenting duties.

The RRTTP will similarly link into and build on existing protocols for other groups with particular support needs, such as people with dementia, hospital leavers, veterans and care leavers.

6. East Renfrewshire's Rapid Rehousing Vision

As can be seen above, East Renfrewshire does not face the same issues that many other local authorities are facing nationally and is well on the way towards rapid rehousing. In East Renfrewshire, 56% of lets are currently being allocated to homeless applicants and it is not believed that this figure can be increased whilst continuing to offer the same level of choice. 96.9% of homeless cases are being assessed within 4 weeks and cases are closed in an average of 22 weeks. The average length of stay in temporary accommodation is 109 days. On average, families are in temporary accommodation for longer than single people but, again, this appears to be due to choice and availability of suitable accommodation, for instance if they are waiting for a property in a particular location close to support networks or schools.

The focus for the next 5 years in East Renfrewshire will be on addressing local issues: leading the way towards a shift in culture where the starting position is that everyone is 'tenancy ready' with the right support; building on existing relationships with the HSCP and RSLs and other partners; and, reviewing services to ensure they continue to be as efficient and effective as they can be.

East Renfrewshire's vision for 2024 is that early intervention and prevention work is successful in reducing the number of households who are forced to present as homeless, and that housing options advice is readily available for those who require it. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, settled housing will always be the first and preferred outcome for every household and time spent in temporary accommodation will be limited and, wherever possible, will continue to be in mainstream, fully furnished accommodation within the community.

A review of temporary accommodation will be carried out to ensure that households are able to move through the temporary accommodation system as quickly as possible and also to assess that the current supply continues to be appropriate and provides a range of options, of good quality, of a size/type and in a location which can match demand and minimise disruption to the daily lives of those experiencing homelessness.

East Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership will work together to review housing support to ensure appropriate housing support is available to households when they require it.

Lastly, the feasibility of introducing a Housing First pilot will be explored, aimed predominantly at the small number of households with complex support needs.

It is important to note that the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is a working document which will continue to evolve and develop over the transition period and that it remains subject to further consultation and approval from East Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board.

7. Rapid Rehousing Action Plan

Priority 1 – Increase focus on prevention

National / Community Plan / LHS Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing & Regeneration</u> Outcome 1: 'A well-functioning housing system'.</p> <p>Outcome 2: 'High Quality Sustainable Homes'.</p> <p>Outcome 3: 'Homes that meet people's needs'.</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u> East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Strategy</u> Priority 3: Facilitate Independent Living</p>	<p>An increased focus on prevention to stop households from becoming homeless in the first place, wherever possible.</p> <p><u>Critical Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No. of homeless applications ▪ % of tenancies sustained for 12 months ▪ % of homeless assessments where reason given is relationship breakdown ▪ % of homeless assessments where reason for homelessness is action by landlord / lender ▪ % of prevent cases where outcome is made homeless application 	<p>Review prevention and early intervention work with a view to enhancing service to tenants.</p> <p>Introduce a mediation service to stop homelessness occurring, where it is reasonable to do so.</p> <p>Carry out an evaluation of the range of advice and advocacy that is available cross tenure.</p> <p>Expand the provision of housing options advice throughout the customer journey using the Prevent 1 guidance.</p> <p>Review our responsiveness to the needs of particular client groups facing homelessness.</p> <p>Continue to develop a preventative approach to monitor the impact of UC and to target priority households at risk of rent areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine the roles and responsibilities of housing staff to define roles across the service and to ensure a focus on both finding and sustaining a home. ▪ Develop a training plan to underpin the work carried out by staff. ▪ Ensure housing options staff can offer a general mediation service to anyone threatened with homelessness due to the breakdown of a relationship. ▪ Investigate the potential use of mediation services to support vulnerable young people in achieving positive housing outcomes. ▪ Consider the potential use of peer-to-peer mentoring services. ▪ Make use of the housing options toolkit for core training as it is rolled out. ▪ Work with criminal justice colleagues to review our

		<p>Work with RSL partners to ensure our processes / procedures are in line with the rapid rehousing plan.</p> <p>Review our approach to prevention and assisting households presenting as homeless from the PRS.</p>	<p>implementation of the SHORE standards and to review our responsiveness to prison leavers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to work jointly with Women’s Aid and other partners. ▪ Improve awareness among staff of the new PRS regime, including changes to the tenancy regime and use of the First-tier Tribunal. ▪ Review range of information and guidance materials available for private tenants. ▪ Review how we work with people in arrears/ in danger of falling into arrears to ensure they can access relevant services at the right time. ▪ Work jointly with employability services to improve the pathway for individuals facing homelessness. ▪ Increase joint working across services to ensure evictions are last resort. ▪ Review nominations agreements and Section 5 referrals with RSL partners.
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Priority 2 – Review current system of temporary accommodation

National / Community Plan / LHS Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing & Regeneration</u> Outcome 1: ‘A well-functioning housing system’.</p> <p>Outcome 3: ‘Homes that meet people’s needs’.</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u> East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Strategy</u> Priority 3: Facilitate independent living</p> <p>Priority 4: Improve Access and Participation</p>	<p>Homeless households are able to progress through the temporary accommodation system quicker.</p> <p><u>Critical Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case duration ▪ Length of stay in temporary accommodation ▪ No. of households in temporary accommodation ▪ No. of transitions between temporary accommodation and mainstream settled accommodation 	<p>Improve our temporary accommodation approach with a focus on speeding up the process.</p> <p>Implement a new housing IT system, aimed at improving processes and the customer journey.</p> <p>Review and improve our efficiency in letting council homes.</p> <p>Working with other social housing providers, review housing processes to ensure homeless households or those in greatest housing need are being housed as quickly as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review timescales for what accommodation is offered and at what stage. ▪ Review pathways for particular client groups. ▪ Work with Revenues & Benefits to ensure DHP and SWF processes align with rapid rehousing processes. ▪ Continue to develop a preventative approach to monitor the impact of UC and to target priority households at risk of rent arrears. ▪ Undertake a review of void processes to reduce relet times. ▪ Ensure staff training is up-to-date to enable consistency in decisions taken about homelessness. ▪ Review the existing processes for the provision of furniture and goods to homeless households.

<p><u>Community Plan</u> East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Strategy</u> Priority 1: Increase Access to Housing</p> <p>Priority 3: Facilitate independent living</p> <p>Priority 4: Improve Access and Participation</p>	<p>We have an appropriate supply of temporary and move on accommodation available</p> <p><u>Critical Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total capacity of temporary accommodation units ▪ Number of households in temporary accommodation ▪ % lets to homeless households ▪ No. of transitions between temporary accommodation and mainstream settled accommodation ▪ No. of affordable homes delivered 	<p>Implement the new HomeSeeker choice based letting service.</p> <p>Explore options for provision of temporary accommodation from the PRS.</p> <p>Develop alternative housing solutions for vulnerable young people which are effective, affordable and sustainable.</p> <p>Deliver 225 new affordable homes over the course through the affordable housing supply programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set supply targets to identify homeless need through our Homeseeker service. ▪ Work with specialist housing providers to advertise their homes through CBL to maximise access to suitable housing for particular groups, where appropriate. ▪ Review the rent deposit scheme to ensure the service meets the needs of needs of local households. ▪ Review the privates sector leasing scheme. ▪ Explore the need / demand for a flat sharing project. ▪ Review our settlement profiles, ensuring we have a better understanding of the impact of homelessness on individual localities.
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3 – Review current system of housing support

National / Community Plan / LHS Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing & Regeneration</u> Outcome 1: ‘A well-functioning housing system’.</p> <p>Outcome 2: ‘High Quality Sustainable Homes’.</p> <p>Outcome 3: ‘Homes that meet people’s needs’.</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u> East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Strategy</u> Priority 3: Facilitate independent living</p> <p>Priority 4: Improve Access and Participation</p>	<p>Appropriate housing support is available to homeless households when they require it</p> <p><u>Critical Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % tenancies sustained for 12 months ▪ Capacity of supported temporary accommodation ▪ Number of households allocated specialist supported accommodation 	<p>Work with the HSCP to review how we assess, fund and provide housing support to those facing homelessness.</p> <p>Review supported accommodation supply across East Renfrewshire, working towards homes that offer a psychologically informed environment.</p> <p>Redesign services to provide support that enables people to move to settled housing as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Work towards a shift in culture, separating access to housing from housing support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate existing support provision with the aim of improving outcomes for those supported ▪ Review outcomes from support provision and where appropriate make recommendations to address the findings ▪ Ensure staff are upskilled / trained as necessary. ▪ Improve use of language, removing use of phrases such as ‘tenancy readiness’ ▪ Continue to improve partnership working to ensure support is targeted to those most in need. ▪ Continue to support generic staff training in areas such as dementia awareness.

Priority 4 – Investigate the feasibility of a Housing First Pilot

National / Community Plan / LHS Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing & Regeneration</u> Outcome 1: ‘A well-functioning housing system’.</p> <p>Outcome 2: ‘High Quality Sustainable Homes’.</p> <p>Outcome 3: ‘Homes that meet people’s needs’.</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u> East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Strategy</u> Priority 1: Increase Access to Housing</p> <p>Priority 3: Facilitate Independent Living</p> <p>Priority 4: Improve Access and Participation</p>	<p>Services are available that meet the needs of homeless households with the most complex needs</p> <p><u>Critical Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No. of current housing first provision ▪ % of tenancies sustained for 12 months ▪ Case duration ▪ Number of households in temporary accommodation 	<p>Work with partners to explore the viability of developing a housing first pilot aimed at supporting homeless households in East Renfrewshire with the most complex needs.</p> <p>Explore options for a suitable site for the housing first pilot to be located.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake further analysis to develop a better understanding of the sustainability of a housing first pilot. ▪ Further develop costings and identify future sources of funding. ▪ Continue work with the HSCP to pinpoint particular needs / client group to be targeted by pilot. ▪ Determine the viability of re-designating Overlee House as a housing first project. ▪ Work with RSLs / other partners to find an alternative site if Overlee is ruled out.

8. Resource Plan

The success of this plan will be subject to adequate resourcing, both budgetary and staffing. Implementation funding, if available from the Scottish Government, will be utilised to:

- Appoint a dedicated Rapid Rehousing Officer who will lead on implementing this plan. Costs for this post are expected to be around £45,000 per annum, based on current pay scales.
- Development of a Housing 1st Model – future costs will not be available until a full review of current provision is undertaken.

As this is a first iteration of East Renfrewshire Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan full costings have not been included. A fully costed Plan will be in place prior to implementation beginning on the 1st of April 2019.

Progress and targets will be reassessed in 2019/20 along with the SHIP 2019.

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
Jeane Freeman MSP

Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning
Kevin Stewart MSP



Scottish Government
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Health Board Chief Executives
Local Authority Chief Executives
Integrated Joint Board Chief Officers
Local Authority Housing Convenors
Local Authority Heads of Housing

29 March 2019

RE: SEEKING COLLABORATION BETWEEN HOUSING AND HEALTH ON RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLANS (RRTPs)

As you may be aware, the Scottish Government is committed to eradicating rough sleeping, transforming the use of temporary accommodation and ending homelessness. This work was initiated by the First Minister in her Programme for Government in 2017¹. She set up the short life Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group and committed £50 million over five years to generate a step change in our approach to homelessness in Scotland.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group² (HARSAG) made 70 recommendations, which were accepted by the Scottish Government in June 2018. Together with the recommendations made by the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee³, these formed the basis for the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan⁴, published by the Scottish Government and COSLA in November 2018.

The Action Plan provides a detailed and coherent programme which will see us make material progress towards ensuring everyone in Scotland has a home that meets their needs and homelessness is ended.

Evidence tells us that homelessness is the result of inequality, poverty and systems rather than of individual fault. It also tells us that experience of homelessness, and particularly rough sleeping, has significant impacts on people's life chances. We know it is difficult for people to engage effectively with health services in a way which leads to recovery if they do not have a stable home – and they often cannot maintain that home without help with their health. This is even more true for those with multiple complex needs, who are arguably among the most vulnerable members of our society.

We know that people who have ever been homeless – at least 8% of the Scottish population – are more likely than the general population to be significant users of key health services.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/nation-ambition-governments-programme-scotland-2017-18/>

² <https://www.gov.scot/groups/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group/>

³ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/LGC/2018/2/12/Report-on-Homelessness>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-high-level-action-plan/>

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Findings from the recent Scottish Government 'Health and Homelessness in Scotland' report⁵ show that people who had ever been homeless were:

- Twice as likely as people in the most deprived population quintile to have used A&E or had acute hospital admissions, and over 3 times as likely to have used those services than the least deprived quintile.
- 5 times as likely to be admitted for mental health conditions than the most deprived quintile and more than 20 times as likely than the least deprived quintile.
- 10 times more likely to have had initial assessments at drug treatment services than the most deprived quintile and 132 times more likely than the least deprived quintile.

49% of people who had ever experienced homelessness had also experienced mental ill health or had interactions with health services in relation to drug or alcohol conditions, much higher than the general population, and the study shows how interactions with health services increase in frequency in the run up to the first homelessness assessment.

This report shows that people who experience homelessness are also significant users of health services. The data indicate a number of opportunities for change which could have a strong and positive impact on key health outcomes, including the recently published public health priorities⁶, as well as contributing to the national ambition to end homelessness and rough sleeping. For example, the increase in number of presentations at health services in advance of a homelessness application suggests there is a window for interventions which could prevent homelessness, which in turn would reduce the risk that a person's health condition will deteriorate. The proportion of the Scottish population which has been homeless (8%), of whom around half have substance misuse issues and/or mental health related conditions, suggests a significant opportunity to target services in ways that aim to be effective in treating health conditions at the same time as supporting people to maintain their homes.

Adequate supply of quality, affordable, accessible homes is crucial. We remain committed to delivering at least 50,000 affordable homes over the current Parliamentary term, a target backed by more than £3 billion. £826 million will be available during 2019-20 for the affordable housing supply programme, a £70 million increase on the current financial year.

To set out longer term commitments, the Scottish Government is currently working to develop a vision for homes and communities in Scotland in 2040 under the title 'Housing Beyond 2021'⁷. The work is linked with delivery of the public health priorities. If you are not already actively engaged in conversations about the role of place and housing in delivering your own objectives we would encourage you to discuss this issue with your partners locally. The Scottish Government is preparing for further engagement on a draft vision, some specific themes, and outline options later in 2019.

While housing supply has a significant part to play in solving homelessness, HARSAG made clear that it will take more than this. Many people need coordinated support from all parts of the public sector to maintain their settled accommodation, particularly where their route to housing crisis has its origin in traumatic adverse life experience. It is crucial that local partners in health services and in housing work together to ensure that services work for the

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-homelessness-scotland/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-beyond-2021/>

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people in need, who may have difficulty engaging with services as they are traditionally managed.

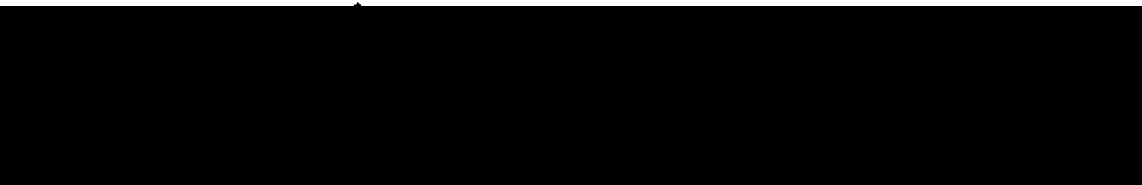
We are writing to you, jointly, to ask for your support and leadership as we work to bring services together in a seamless way which centres around people as individuals.

A key location for that collaborative working is in the development and implementation of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans as recommended by HARSAG. First drafts of these documents were prepared by every local authority in Scotland and submitted to the Government in December. They set out how local authorities will transition to a 'rapid rehousing by default' approach which will see everyone accepted as homeless provided with settled accommodation as a first step rather than being housed in temporary accommodation while they wait a settled home. In order to be successful, local areas will need to re-wire the way their systems work across housing services but also how those services dovetail with other public services – in particular with health and social care.

An initial review is being undertaken by SG officials, with feedback to be provided to councils by the end of March. Officials are already able to pinpoint a number of strong examples of good practice with regard to collaboration between Health and Social Care Partnerships and local authorities housing and homelessness teams. We are providing these with this letter (Annex) to demonstrate how partnership working can produce innovative shared approaches. We hope to see this flexible thinking replicated nationally as teams across public services and the third sector look for ways to step outside their siloes and deliver as effectively as possible for their communities – making the very best use of limited public resource while delivering effectively for our interlinked ambitions.

We are copying this letter to Chief Officers of Integration Joint Boards, Chief Executives of Health Boards, local authority Housing Convenors, Chief Executives and heads of housing, and to the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group. This Group, chaired jointly by the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning and Cllr Elena Whitham, COSLA's Community Wellbeing spokesperson, is overseeing the implementation of the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan and includes the co-chair of ALACHO (Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers); we are currently seeking sufficiently senior representation from health integration to join this leadership group. We intend that sharing this letter widely will support all partners to engage on an equal footing with this important and necessary work.

Making sure the people whom we are helping with their housing needs are also being helped with their health needs and vice versa will help ensure our services can be as effective as possible as early as possible, and there is less chance that people will suffer multiple cycles of homelessness and come to suffer more severe health problems. It is in all our interests – and the interests of our citizens – to ensure we come together effectively around this work.



KEVIN STEWART

JEANE FREEMAN

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
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Dundee City Council

Homelessness and Housing Options services in Dundee are currently funded by Dundee City Council and Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The HSCP are partners in the development of the RRTP and the Homelessness and Housing Options strategy. The RRTP envisages that its activity will partly be funded through reallocation of existing resources with the council and the HSCP. Specific projects currently underway are a mapping of support services, in partnership with the University of Dundee, and implementation of Dundee's first Housing First project.

Fife Council

The development of the RRTP has been supported by an extensive consultation process involving delivery partners within the Local Housing Strategy framework, Short Term Housing Support and Homelessness PSP, Fife Housing Register Partners as well as the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Objectives in the RRTP include:

- Developing Personal Housing Planning approaches for those most at risk of becoming homeless in partnership with Health and Social Care and other partners
- Establishing early warning trigger systems through Health and Social Care Partnership activity building on developing Projects and other managed housing pathways
- Developing specialist, tolerant and flexible approaches to housing, support and care provision in partnership with Health and Social Care Services for those with complex needs

Glasgow City Council

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan has been developed and published by Glasgow HSCP. The plan has been developed through consultation with strategic leaders from housing, health, social care services, third sector agencies and people affected by homelessness.

The HSCP operates a Community Homelessness Service in each of the three strategic planning areas of the city. The Community Homelessness Service is now fully integrated into the HSCP management framework and as a result has much closer alignment and access to operational health and social care services. The HSCP has developed locality-based Addiction Recovery Hubs within each of the 3 localities in Glasgow. Recovery Hubs work in tandem with the statutory Glasgow Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service (GADRS) and other services to support service users recover from alcohol and/or drug addiction issues.

The HSCP, with support from The Salvation Army, Wheatley Group and Social Bite, has rapidly scaled up Housing First in the city to meet the needs of individuals with complex needs who have experienced repeat homelessness. Housing First will be a critical element of the rapid rehousing model as the default response to reducing homelessness for those with multiple and complex needs.

Highland Council

The Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (HADP) has agreed to invest £128,000 over 2019/20 & 2020/21 in a Housing First project in Highland. The partnership is currently working through shared governance structures and operating processes.

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The key partners are NHS Highland Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service, Highland Council Housing Service, Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and the Third Sector.

An integrated service model underpinned by Housing First principles is being developed that will target hard to reach people with complex needs (drug, alcohol, mental health and homelessness problems). Priority will be accorded to people at higher risk of drug and alcohol related death. The service will facilitate access to health and social care services, conduct needs assessments and devise and support recovery plans.

North Lanarkshire Council

The RRTP was co-developed with a range of partners, including representation from the Health and Social Care Partnership. In 2015, the HSCP carried out a Health Needs Assessment of homeless applicants who had presented to North Lanarkshire Council over the year. This led to the development of a multi-agency Health and Homelessness Action Plan and Steering Group and it is taking forward a range of actions both to prevent homelessness and mitigate the impact of homelessness on health and wellbeing. This group works across North and South Lanarkshire and is supported by Health Improvement.

NHS Lanarkshire provides a health and homelessness specialist nurse led health service, for those who are not registered with mainstream services, and will develop linked mental health staff from each area Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) with the Health and Homelessness Service.

The multi-agency Health and Homelessness Action Plan and Steering Group is planning:

- An assertive outreach Sexual Health and Cancer Screening Service
- A partnership initiative with the third sector to embed a psychologically informed environment (PIE) within key health and homelessness services
- Provision of Primary Care to vulnerable groups including those experiencing homelessness
- A review of the pathway between homelessness services and mental health services.

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