What is Home First?

Key Points;

▶ Model conceived in 2014 with some components dating back to 2009

▶ Fully implemented from April 2017

▶ High level objectives;

   ▶ **To deliver a service which is focussed on preventing homelessness and minimising the impact of homelessness where it cannot be avoided. We will do this by continuing to;**

   ▶ **Intervene early and prevent homelessness through enhanced advice, assistance and support**

   ▶ **Offer and provide a route for homeless people to move directly to settled accommodation**

   ▶ **Reduce the need for temporary accommodation and minimise the length of time people spend in temporary accommodation where it cannot be avoided**

How was Home First Achieved?

▶ Home First was achieved through:

▶ Full review of housing allocation and homeless operational polces and procedures

▶ Merging homeless, allocation and support teams – a more seamless journey

▶ No appointment system – customers seen on the day

▶ Involving all parts of the Housing Service – Locality Housing Teams, Repairs & Improvements Service, staff and people that use our service

▶ Increasing focus on early intervention and prevention

▶ Detailed plan for the reduction in temporary accommodation units

▶ Close oversight into the New Build and Buy-Back programmes to create vacancy chains - using housing availability more effectively

▶ Increased resources in our Private Sector Housing Team – RBGS, Empty Homes

What is 'Rapid Rehousing'?

Rapid

adjective, sometimes rap·id·er, rap·id·est.

▶ occurring within a short time; happening speedily: eg. rapid growth.

▶ moving or acting with great speed; swift: eg. a rapid worker.

▶ characterized by speed: eg. rapid motion.

RRTP Guidance does not define the level of rapidity required – this is for local authorities and will vary according to local circumstances.

However, there are numerous barriers that are likely to be faced by all local authorities trying to become 'rapider' at rehousing homeless people.

Barriers to Rapid Rehousing

If you started a new rapid rehousing business next week with no pre-existing customers, it would be easy?

The reality is that there are many factors which work against a rapid rehousing model;

- The Queue (homeless backlog)
- Level of newly emerging demand
- Organisational structure
- Existing policies and procedures (especially Allocations Policy)
- RSL's or even Locality Housing Teams - 'cherry-picking'
- Lack of stock turnover or new supply
- 'Status' of homelessness within the organisation
- Attitude of staff (unwilling to change)
- Political support (local)

The Queue

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

The Queue is the number of homeless accepted applicants that are waiting on an offer of housing (a.k.a homeless backlog, legacy cases etc).

► You can't deliver a rapid rehousing model with a big queue

► Every element of your RRTP activity should relate directly or indirectly to the management of the queue

  ► Prevention activity avoids people having to join the queue

  ► Rehousing activity (rapid or otherwise) reduces the size of the queue

  ► Tenancy sustainment work stops people re-joining the queue

► To reduce the size of the queue, the number of people rehoused needs to exceed the number of new people who join the queue (this takes time and several of the barriers apply)

Allocations to Homeless Applicants

One of the key strategies to reduce the size of the Queue is to increase the proportion of allocations to homeless applicants.
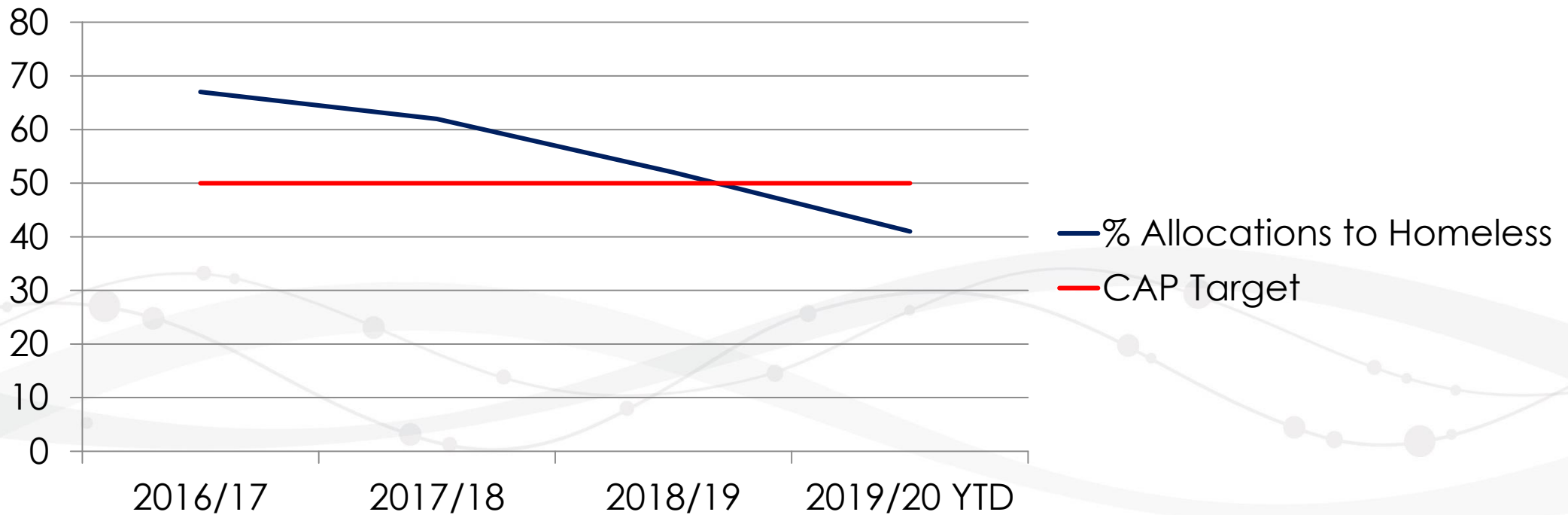
We have achieved this through;

➢ Long-standing Common Housing Register which provides access to >90% of social-rented housing
➢ Underpinned by a Common Allocations Policy that all partners are signed-up to. Indicative target of 50% allocations to homeless applicants.
➢ All vacancies for all partners are allocated/matched by the Council on behalf of the partners
    ➢ Housing Options Team manage register
    ➢ All partners' properties are on Council IT system
    ➢ Vacancies are matched by Housing Options Team and applicants proposed to partners
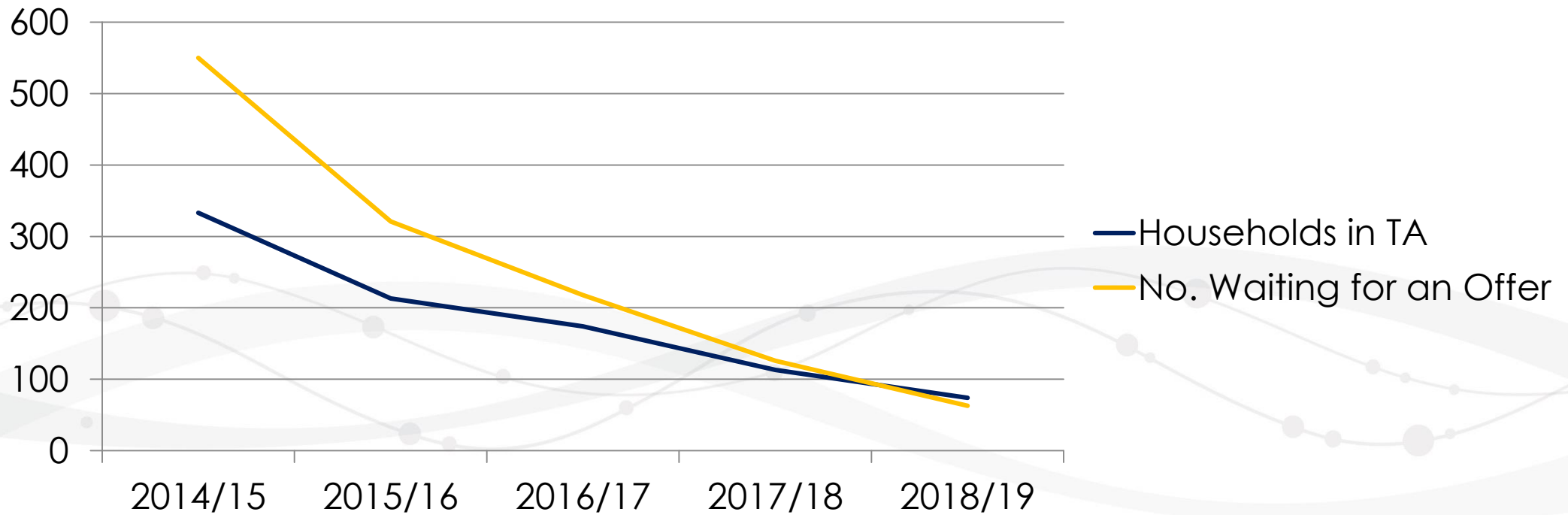
Key Indicators

Key Indicators

Legend:
- Households in TA
- No. Waiting for an Offer

Target-Setting - TA Reduction

▶ Consider this as a starting point and not an end product

▶ *If you are reconfiguring rather than reducing TA stock, you are just keeping people more comfortable in the queue*

   ▶ What level of reduction are you aiming for and why?

   ▶ What is the timescale for achieving the reduction?

   ▶ Focus on what it would take to achieve this – what else will need to change to support the reduction?

   ▶ Use modelling tools to look at variables
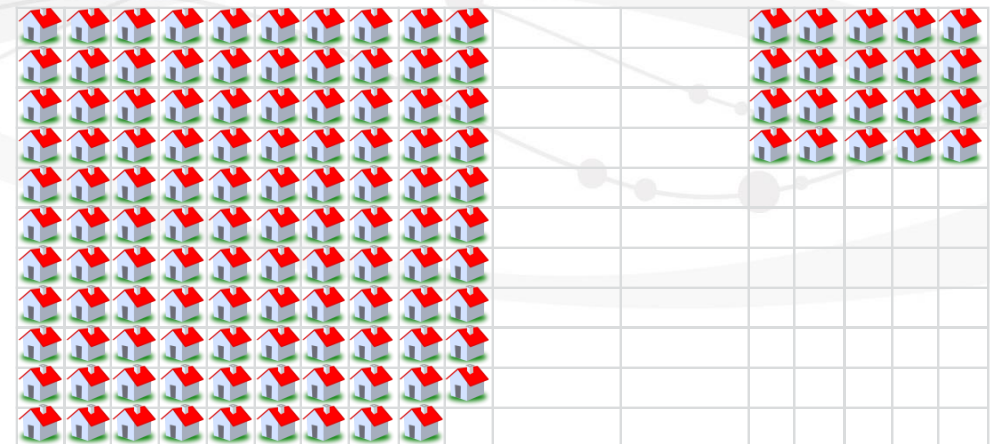
TA Reduction – How?

We have a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless people who require it. To operate with a significantly reduced portfolio, you need to therefore;

1. Reduce Demand	• By preventing homelessness • By rehousing more people directly into secure tenancies through a revised allocations process • By assisting more people to access alternative options such as the PRS
2. Maximise usable capacity	• Through an efficient void management process • By reducing the average length of stay to enable more placements in a property • By developing initiatives to assist people to move on quickly from TA

'Flipping' is Free

'Flipping' or the conversion of temporary tenancies to Scottish Secure Tenancies is a key part of a temporary accommodation reduction model.

▶ Identify TA tenancies that would constitute a 'reasonable' offer for the occupant

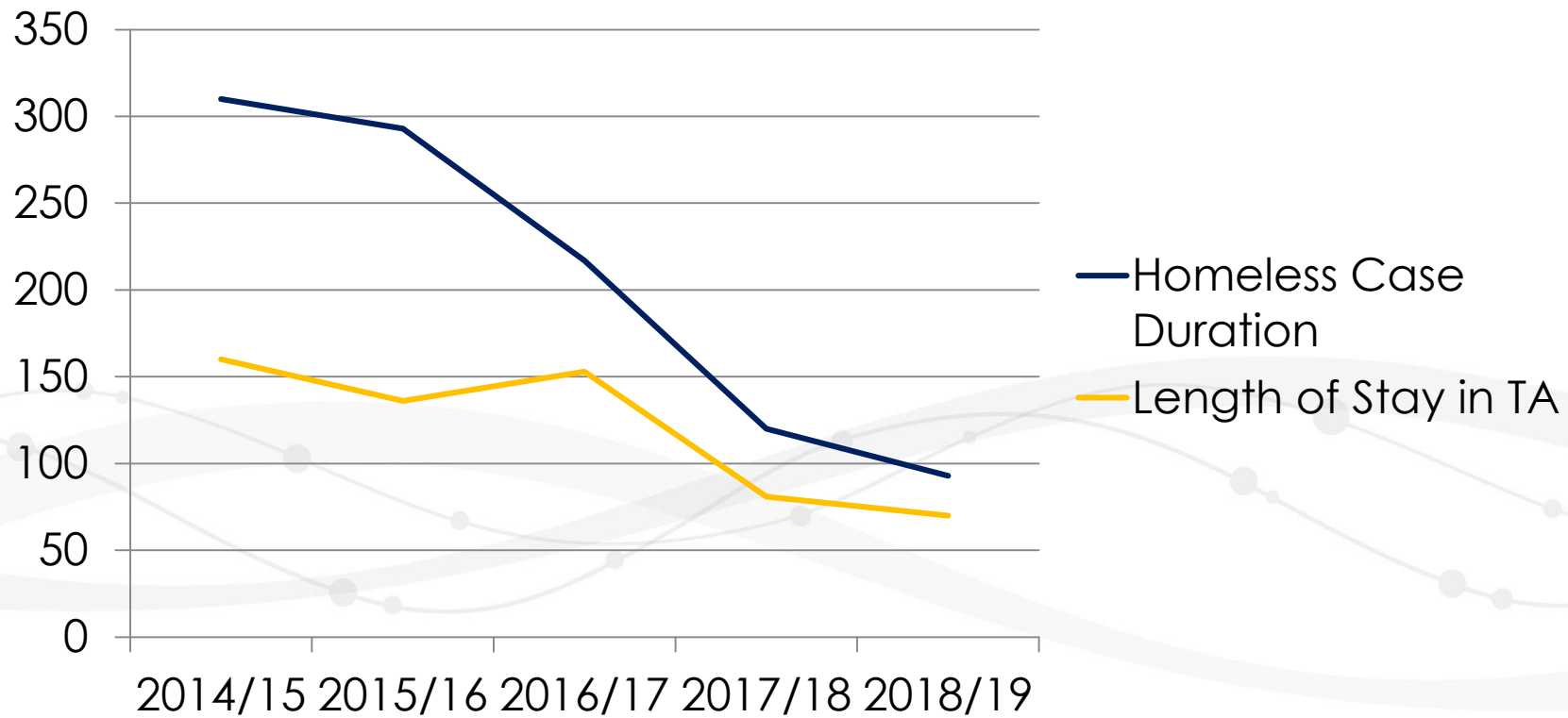▶ Make the secure offer in the normal way and deal with any appeals

If the conversion goes ahead;

▶ Carry out the sign-up in the normal way

▶ Let the tenant keep the goods in the property – the re-use value is negligible

▶ Don't replace the TA unit with something else (if you replace the unit it's not free and it's not TA reduction)

Key Indicators

Critical Success Factors

In June 2016, we held a workshop with key staff focussing on five key areas.

Key Area	Improvement Objective
Allocations	Increase flexibility to enable response to real-time demand
Voids	Improve performance to maximise usable capacity
Length of Stay in TA	Reduce to maximise usable capacity in smaller portfolio
Direct throughput to secure accommodation	Reduce demand for TA and wider impact of homelessness
Increase throughput to PRS	Reduce demand for TA and social-rented housing

Takeaway Points

▶ Everything in your RRTP should be directly or indirectly related to reducing the size of the queue

▶ If you are reconfiguring rather than reducing TA stock, you are just keeping people more comfortable in the queue

▶ Flipping is free

▶ Take risks – don't be frightened to fail (small tests of change)

▶ If the 'rules' in your organisation inhibit rapid rehousing, change the rules

▶ If you have appointed someone to co-ordinate the implementation of your RRTP and you are confident they know what is required, give them the authority to tell other people what they need to do