

# Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan

**Annual Report to Parliament**



© Crown copyright 2020



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-83960-387-7

Published by The Scottish Government, January 2020

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS670102 (01/20)

# Contents

---

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Progress against actions set out in the High Level Action Plan</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Taking a truly person-centred approach</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Understanding the context</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Progress towards meeting Action Plan commitments</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Concluding comments</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Annex 1: Homelessness statistics</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Annex 2: Women and homelessness</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Annex 3: Homelessness vision</b>	<b>55</b>



# Foreword

---

## “Everyone needs a safe, warm place they can call home.”

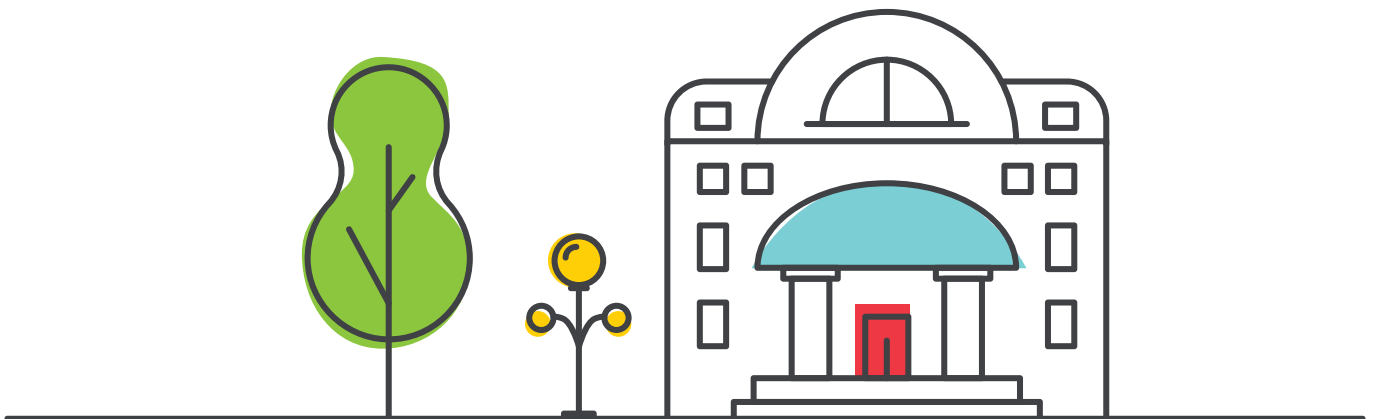
This first sentence in the *Ending Homelessness Together: High Level Action Plan* we published last year remains the focus of everyone working to end homelessness in Scotland.

Since devolution Scottish homelessness policy has diverged from the rest of the UK. Changes brought about – particularly in the run up to 2012 when the concept of priority need was abolished – were transformative for people facing homelessness in Scotland. The rights of people experiencing homelessness in Scotland are among the strongest in the world.

Our 2018 *Action Plan* set out how the Scottish Government, local authorities and partners will implement the recommendations of the *Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group* to drive real and lasting change towards ending homelessness.

During 2019 we have seen everyone turn the actions of our 2018 *Action Plan* into a reality. That has meant changing the way we provide help by making sure all parts of the public and third sector are able to act and work together to prevent, tackle and end homelessness. Our progress is clear, and I am delighted that, in the first year of the *Action Plan*, 39 of the 49 have been progressed with 10 completed. We have plans in place to progress the remaining 10 longer term from 2020-21.

Our focus is on safe, settled homes for all and our actions are backed by our £50 million *Ending Homelessness Fund*. This year, we increased funding from £23.5 million to £32.5 million for rapid rehousing and Housing First over three years. The money will be used so local authorities and partners can find ways to avoid or minimise the need to spend time in any form of temporary accommodation. It will also support people into settled accommodation first – before helping them with any longer term needs whilst sustaining their place in a home.



When someone is facing homelessness, temporary accommodation is an important safety net; but it should be high quality, provide excellent support, and must be short-term. I recognise this is a significant transformation challenge so must remain an important focus for us. In 2019 we introduced advisory standards for temporary accommodation and announced our plans to ensure that no-one spends more than seven days in unsuitable accommodation, with new legislation implemented in 2021.

Every local authority has developed a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. This is the local route map setting out how policy, practice and partnerships locally will transform to prioritise settled homes for all and transform the temporary accommodation offer in the coming years. Change takes time, but the work underway in every local area demonstrates the strength of joint commitment to bringing about the transformation across Scotland.

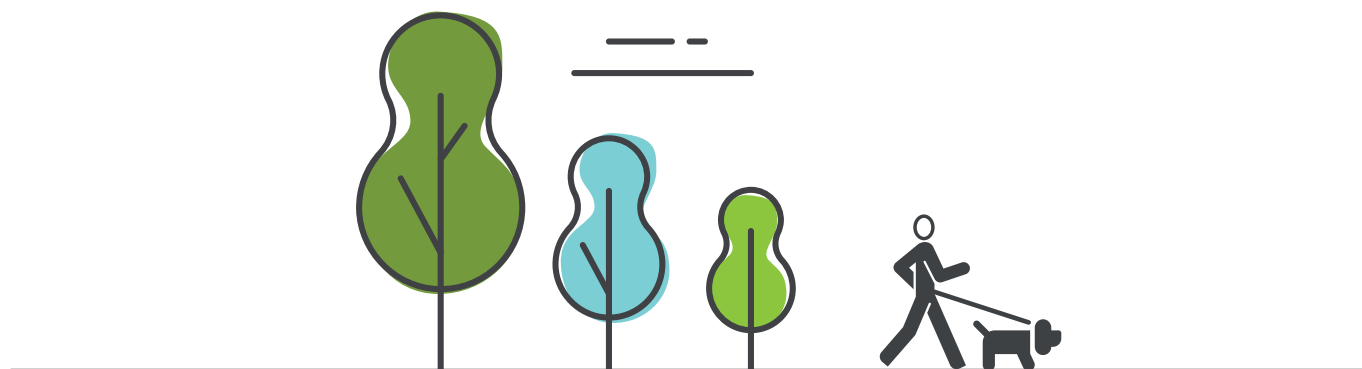
We have supported the delivery of Housing First Pathfinders to support people with multiple and complex needs to access and sustain settled housing. This has resulted in over 150 people in tenancies so far, with no evictions or abandonments. We are also supporting the development of an anti-destitution strategy, to mitigate the worst impacts of the UK Government's immigration policies. While our partnership approach to local winter planning, building on the

experiences last winter, has been backed with additional funding.

Our vision is to support everyone – including those who find it difficult to access support and services. That's why in 2019 we commenced legislation to remove barriers people experiencing homelessness can face and to change the way homelessness applications are assessed. This was done in recognition that there are usually good reasons for people wishing to live in a certain area and people found intentionally homeless often face complex health and wellbeing issues they need help to address.

We are also continuing with our commitment to prevent homelessness among those groups at highest predictable risk of homelessness. This includes young people, particularly those who have been in care, women experiencing domestic abuse, veterans of the armed forces and people deemed to have no route to accessing public funds due to their immigration status.

I am particularly conscious that causes and experiences of homelessness are complex and diverse. As a result, and following engagement with a range of stakeholders, we have developed work specifically to explore how gender affects causes and consequences of homelessness and will ensure our actions and commitments are informed by a gendered analysis of homelessness.



We've learned a lot from the first year and identified gaps in our original plans. Importantly we've taken steps to address those gaps and reflect on our learning.

Ending homelessness is a significant task and a significant priority. The groundwork has been laid and we will continue to implement our plans in the coming years - supporting local areas to further rapid rehousing and Housing First and progressing legislation and guidance to give greater advice, protection and rights meaning that homelessness will only ever be rare, brief and non-recurrent.

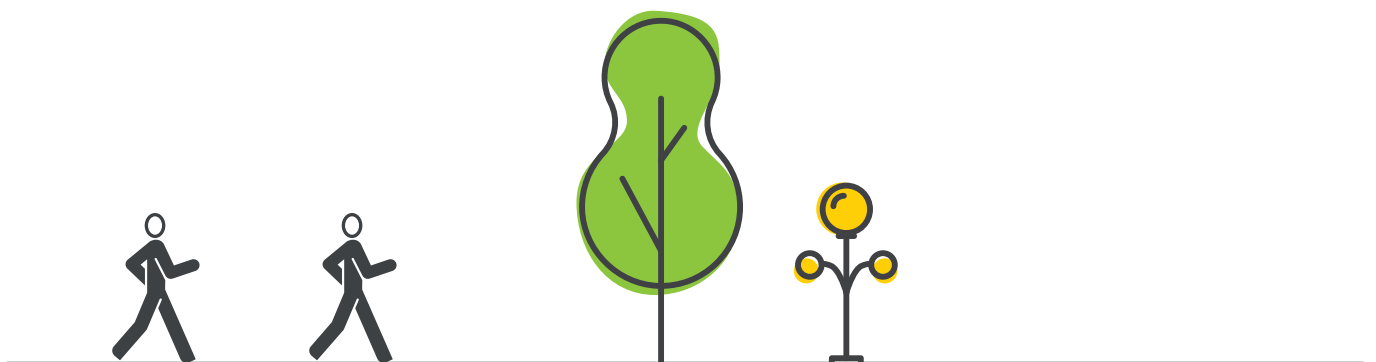
Getting this right will mean that everyone has a safe, warm place they can call home.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aileen Campbell".

**Aileen Campbell MSP**

Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government



# Introduction

---

Over the past decade, national government in partnership with local authorities, the third sector and others have delivered radical changes in homelessness and affordable housing. This has contributed to a significant reduction in homelessness applications.

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy Group, which we jointly chair, has been leading the delivery of the 2018 *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan* and overseeing its progress. It has also been encouraging and supporting services from across the public and third sector to work together to recognise and act when people are at risk of homelessness.

We made a commitment to report annually to Parliament on progress towards delivering the 2018 *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan*. The progress made in the first year demonstrates the commitment and ambition of all partners involved with 39 of the 49 actions having been progressed. We intend to publish the next annual report in February 2021 so that it can report on the most up to date statistics which will be published in January 2021.

This is not just about ticking off actions from a checklist: key shifts are clearly starting to take place across the system, including the move to rapid rehousing by default, including

Housing First for those who need high levels of support to maintain a tenancy.

We have begun the process of reshaping the legal framework to extend access while protecting legal rights. We are transforming access to affordable housing to help reduce local authority dependence on temporary accommodation. We are also seeking to support a culture change whereby the whole public sector takes responsibility for preventing homelessness, especially for those at higher risk of homelessness, recognising the significant impact losing your home can have on your wider life and wellbeing. The Statutory Code of Guidance on Homelessness has been updated and now reflects new requirements and changes in practice that will help navigate the significant changes we're making.

And we are doing all this in partnership between local and national government – alongside people with lived experience of homelessness and frontline services.



Doing more on prevention is vital to bring about an end to homelessness. So in the last year we have launched the prevention pathway for care experienced people, announced a new prevention fund for registered social landlords to help improve tenancy sustainment, and also announced a working group to consider options for a new law ensuring everyone works together to prevent homelessness.

Our ambition to end homelessness has been informed by reflecting on what people with lived experience have told us. They have said we need a system which provides flexible support that builds on people's strengths, where people receive support to avoid becoming homeless and can exercise their right to maintain a safe and secure home. They have said it is vital that people receive urgent assistance to deal with housing

crises and that services work together, in partnership with each other and, crucially, with individuals. Ending homelessness rests on ensuring that people are able to build and maintain positive relationships so that they are part of the community, alongside ensuring sufficient supply of affordable housing that meets people's needs.

With a determined effort we believe we have put in place the foundations to realise this vision and shift to a person-centred approach that focuses on prevention, joined-up planning, quick and effective responses, and rapid rehousing.

When we reach that point we will be able to say with confidence that we brought about an end to homelessness.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Stewart".

**Kevin Stewart MSP**

Minister for Local Government,  
Housing and Planning



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elena Whitham".

**Cllr Elena Whitham**

COSLA spokesperson for Community  
Wellbeing



# Progress against actions set out in the High Level Action Plan

The following table provides an at a glance update on the status of all the actions in the *Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan*, grouped by the five overarching outcomes set out in the *Action Plan*.

We are delivering strong progress against the actions committed, with 39 of 49 actions (including the commitment to publish this Annual Report) in progress or being delivered, as well as 9 additional actions being taken forward since the *Action Plan* was launched (in *blue italics* below).

## Key

▲ Planned for 2020-21

● In progress

√ Completed or nearly completed

Outcome	Action	Status
Person-centred approach	We will develop a lived experience programme	√
	We will explore options for taking forward Personal Housing Plans	●
	Ensure a child wellbeing assessment is undertaken, where children are homeless	●
	Organise event for local authorities and housing providers to share best practice	√
	Support frontline staff in their work with people experiencing homelessness	●
	Housing Options training toolkit – publication of first modules	●
	Public awareness-raising and challenging stigma	●
	<i>Apply gendered analysis to actions, ensuring the homelessness system meets the needs of diverse groups of women</i>	●
Outcome	Action	Status
Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place	Preventative pathways for at-risk groups	●
	Preventing and responding effectively to youth homelessness	●
	Increase focus on tenancy sustainment	●
	Making homeless assessments more flexible	▲
	We will embed a no-wrong-door approach	●
	Homelessness prevention to be embedded in Housing Beyond 2021	√
	Understand the impact of UK welfare reforms	●
	Set out plans for new public sector homelessness prevention duty	●
	<i>Improve outcomes for women experiencing domestic abuse</i>	●
	<i>SHORE standards implementation review</i>	●
<i>Homelessness Prevention Fund for social landlords</i>	●	

## Key

▲ Planned for 2020-21 ● In progress ✓ Completed or nearly completed

Outcome	Action	Status
Prioritise settled housing for all	Rapid Rehousing Transitions Plans (RRTPs) submitted – including EQIA	✓
	All RRTPs evaluated and feedback provided	✓
	Each RRTP will contain plans for Housing First	✓
	Support 5 Housing First Pathfinder cities	●
	Partnerships with health and justice bodies as embed Housing First	●
	Develop best practice examples of choice in settled housing	●
	Assess impacts of providing wide range of options in local areas	●
	Temporary accommodation funding framework	●
	<i>Third Sector bid fund to support transformational change</i>	●
Respond quickly and effectively when homelessness happens	Support development of model of frontline outreach	●
	Training and support for wider frontline staff	▲
	Support local winter planning	●
	Effective support to people engaged in street begging	●
	Press UK Government re migrant homelessness	●
	Prevent homelessness for those without recourse to public funds	●
	Clarify protection afforded to those without recourse to public funds	✓
	Broader range of accommodation options in crisis situations	▲
	Share information about short-term community hosting as crisis response	●
	Publish options appraisal for new rough sleeping data collection	✓
	Revise legislative arrangements for intentionality and local connection	●
	Amend intentionality definition to focus more closely on “deliberate manipulation”	▲
	Consult on extending Unsuitable Accommodation Order to all	✓
	Introduce temporary accommodation standards	●
<i>Glasgow City Council voluntary review</i>	●	
We will join up planning and resources	Local authorities, housing providers and public bodies join up to prevent homelessness	●
	Update Code of Guidance	●
	Consider adding Code of Practice to Code of Guidance	▲
	Embed homelessness as a public health priority	▲
	Improve join up between health, social care, housing and homelessness planning	●
	Join up housing, employment and employability support	▲
	<i>Cohesive cross-government response to Hard Edges report findings</i>	●
	<i>Work with local authorities and delivery partners on effective implementation</i>	●
<i>Support the homelessness system to respond more appropriately to the shared needs of mothers and children</i>	▲	

**Key**

▲ Planned for 2020/2021 ● In progress ✓ Completed or nearly completed

Outcome	Action	Status
Other actions	Publish equality breakdowns of existing homelessness data	✓
	We will conduct impact assessments	●
	We will improve our homelessness data on protected characteristics	▲
	We will develop the evidence base	●
	We will undertake analysis of economic impacts	▲
	We will ensure Scottish Government data collections reflect the increased priority of tackling homelessness	▲

**Spending to date**

A year on from the publication of our *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan* is also a good time to reflect on the investment we’ve made so far. Although the *Action Plan* is spread over five years, in our first year, we committed to how a significant amount would be invested to ensure we got solutions and programmes up and running.

Scotland was one of the first countries in the world to recognise the importance of making permanent accommodation the first response for people facing housing crisis. That’s why we are leading the way in our investment of £32.5 million to support settled accommodation for all.

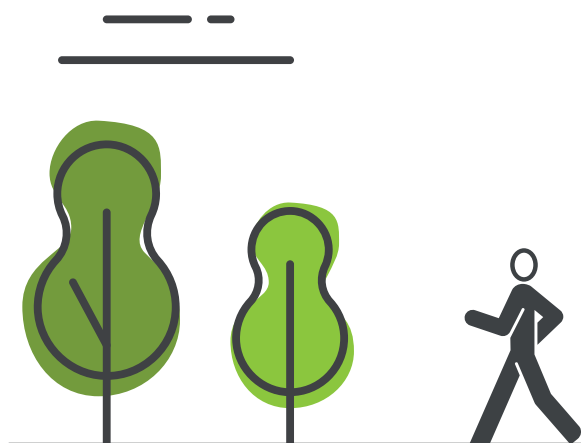
Local authorities and our third sector partners are best placed to provide the help needed on the ground. We invested an initial

£2 million early on to help local authorities develop their transition plans. The delivery of homes for all includes £24 million for Rapid Rehousing and £6.5 million for the Housing First pathfinders work, both over three years.

Using expert third sector partners to deliver actions in the *Action Plan* has been vital as we seek the change we want to see. Therefore we have also committed £4.5 million in supporting the transformational frontline services the third sector provides – maintaining our commitment to have a person-centred approach to delivering the *Action Plan*.

Alongside this, the Scottish Government committed within the *Programme for Government* to introduce a Homelessness Prevention Fund. It will provide £1.5 million over the next three years to increase and spread the work of social landlords in supporting low income families in social housing to prevent crisis points and avoid homelessness.

As you will see from other areas of this report, we are already seeing positive results thanks to our commitment. As the *Action Plan* progresses, spending should start to even out but this initial burst was vital to the programme.



# Taking a truly person-centred approach

---

Housing is of central importance to preventing, tackling and ending homelessness – but we know that housing alone is not enough to avoid homelessness. That is why it is of central importance to any plan to end homelessness that all partners are taking a wide range of actions to tackle poverty, address exclusion and inequality and meet wider support needs. A cohesive, whole system response is vital if we are to prevent homelessness – and respond well when it happens. Many of the actions needed are described in the *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan* but links to child poverty, employability, the Scottish Government’s Fairer Scotland work as well as the new social security service are vital too.

The Hard Edges Scotland report, commissioned by Lankelly Chase and The Robertson Trust and authored by Heriot-Watt University was published in 2019<sup>1</sup>. It revealed the extent of severe and multiple disadvantage in Scotland and we have already started working across Government and with stakeholders to identify how we can be better joined-up in responding to these findings. We will continue to work in partnership across housing, health, justice and other areas to help improve outcomes for those with more complex needs, for whom homelessness may be only one of the challenges they face.

It is clear that effective joint working at all levels will be necessary to develop a co-ordinated web of support with the individual’s needs at the centre, as illustrated on page 12. Taken together and by working in real partnership across traditional silos the work we are taking forward will move towards a Fairer Scotland and transform the experience of homelessness and help us achieve our vision (Annex 3).

Together the actions deliver a concerted approach towards ending homelessness through a person-centred approach that focuses on prevention. Alongside joined-up planning, quick and effective response and a strong focus on settled housing for all as the basis on which we would all wish to build our life.



1 <https://lankellychase.org.uk/resources/publications/hard-edges-scotland/>

## The Importance of Lived Experience

People with lived experience of homelessness and rough sleeping had a central voice in the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group recommendations<sup>2</sup> and their views and input followed through into our *Action Plan*.

In moving to deliver our *Action Plan* it was vital to ensure that our work continue to be informed effectively and meaningfully by people who have experience of homelessness. The insights and expertise of those who work in homelessness services are also crucial to us getting delivery right.

We are committed to ensuring that people with lived experience and those working on the frontline are able to shape the implementation of the *Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan* and support its delivery locally. As a result, we have provided funding to Homeless Network Scotland and Cyrenians to develop a Participation Programme, where frontline workers and people with lived experience of homelessness will assist the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group in steering the programme of transformational change at a national and local level.

As a first and important step, a Change Team<sup>3</sup> has been recruited that will form a new sub-group of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group. It will provide the vehicle for 'planning and policy' to plug into 'practice, place and lived experience' in a connected, informed but informal way. Membership of the Change Team is comprised of members with lived experience and those working on the frontline as well as colleagues from academia.

“

It's a relief that Scotland is now charting this new course to confront and end homelessness. The action plan is a demanding one, but also the right one with all the makings to deliver on its objective - if we stay the course.

So it has been inspiring with this first annual report to reflect on the range of actions delivered on so many fronts. And encouraging to review what's next, keeping the momentum building until everyone has a safe, warm place to call home.

**Maggie Brünjes**  
**Homeless Network Scotland**

”

2 <https://homelessnetwork.scot/our-resources/>

3 <http://www.homelessnetwork.scot/eht/all-in-for-change-2.pdf>

# Ending Homelessness

**At every opportunity we are taking a range of actions to support people to have a safe warm place they can call home**

## RESPOND QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY

- High standard temporary accommodation
- Empowered Frontline outreach
- Private residential tenancy
- Registered social landlords
- Local authorities
- Community hosting
- New national data collection / case management system
- Distress intervention
- Trauma informed workforce



## PREVENTION

- Housing Options
- Prevention Duty
- SHORE standards
- Preventing homelessness as a result of domestic abuse
- Trauma informed workforce
- Financial inclusion
- GIRFEC
- Welfare Fund
- Registered social landlords
- Private rented sector
- Affordable housing supply



## EMBED A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

- Housing Options Training Toolkit
- Personal Housing Plans
- Change Team
- Mental health
- Corporate Parenting
- Addictions support
- Understanding domestic abuse
- Ensuring equality



## PRIORITISE SETTLED HOUSING FOR ALL

- Rapid rehousing transition plans
- Housing First
- Private residential tenancy
- Social Housing Allocations
- Guidance
- Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Scottish Housing Regulator



## JOIN UP PLANNING AND RESOURCES

- Local Housing Strategies
- Strategic Housing Investment Plans
- Local authorities
- Scottish Prison Service
- Health - health and wellbeing outcomes
- Care system
- Social Care
- Justice
- Police
- Fire Service
- Community Planning Partnerships
- Integration Authorities



## PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Are also supported through:  
 DWP - Job Centre Plus  
 Health and Social Care Partnerships  
 Social Security Scotland  
 Fairer Scotland  
 Child Poverty Delivery Plan  
 Hard Edges

- Everyone has a home that meets their needs
- Homelessness is ended

*Underpinned by legislative changes - driving transformation of services and removing barriers*

## Structure of report

The next chapter in this report provides a summary of key homelessness statistics, building on the data presented in the *Action Plan* and highlighting findings from the recently published equalities breakdowns (November 2019).

This is followed by an overview of our progress towards delivering the commitments we made in the *Action Plan* under each of the Outcomes:

- 
- Embed a person-centred approach

---

  - Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

---

  - Prioritise settled homes for all

---

  - Respond quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens

---

  - Join up planning and resources to tackle homelessness

---

We also highlight throughout the report (in text boxes) additional work we have taken forward which we had not previously set out in the *Action Plan*. This covers:

- 
- Women in homelessness

---

  - Improving outcomes for women experiencing domestic abuse

---

  - Working with local authorities and others on effective implementation

---

  - Glasgow voluntary review

---

  - Hard Edges

---

  - SHORE implementation review

---

  - Third Sector Bid Fund

---

  - Homelessness Prevention Fund

---



# Understanding the context

It is important that we monitor impact and understand progress towards our aims. This report (below and Annex 1) presents changes in homelessness statistics since the *Action Plan* was published in November 2018. It is worth noting that these data cover the first four months of activity from the *Action Plan*, as we started our transformational journey<sup>4</sup>. In the future we plan to align the publication of the Annual Progress Report to coincide with the most recent statistics being published, and the next annual report will be published after the January 2021 homelessness statistics are released (collected up until the end of September 2020).

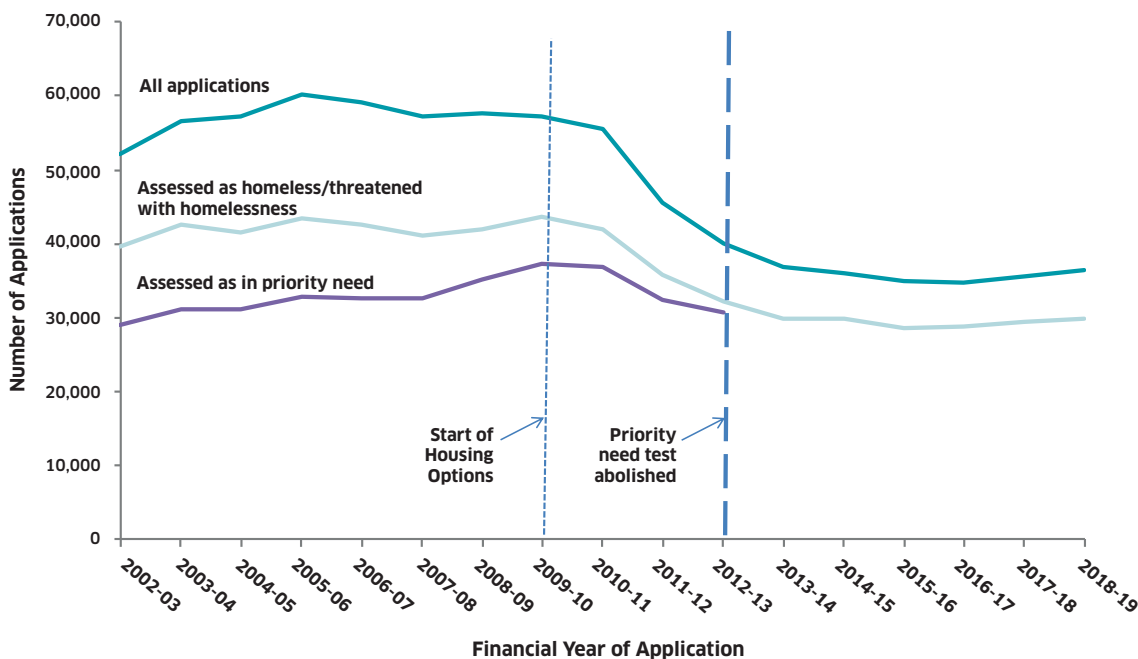
To respond well to homelessness we need to know how many people are experiencing homelessness, as well as understanding their individual experiences, including their reasons for making homelessness applications and where they were living before they applied. We also need to know how many people are staying in temporary accommodation, what type and for how long. In order to prevent rough sleeping, avoid repeat homelessness applications and support people to achieve settled housing we need to understand the causes and

impacts. Annex 1 sets out what we know from homelessness statistics across all these important areas and how we expect the data to improve over time as our transformative work is taken forward.

## Homelessness applications

In the long-term, applications have fallen 40% from a peak of over 60,000 in 2005/06. However, the number of applications has increased recently and in 2018/19 36,465 applications were received (an increase of 3% or 892 applications from the previous year).

**Chart 1: Scotland: Number of applications and assessments under the homelessness legislation**



<sup>4</sup> Homelessness statistics are published bi-annually, with the most recent publication in June 2019 based on data collected up until March 2019 <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>



Whilst we do not know for sure what is causing this increase, we are aware that UK Government's welfare cuts continue to have a significant impact in Scotland and increase the risk of homelessness. The benefit freeze, benefit cap, and the local housing allowance rate, has negatively affected increasingly large numbers of people across Scotland<sup>5</sup>.



The Ending Homelessness Together plan, when fully implemented will have a significant impact. It is a joined-up and cross-government plan, and needs to be implemented as such. The big root-cause questions need to be addressed including some that require action by the UK Government as well as action in Scotland from the Scottish Government, local authorities, housing associations and many, many other organisations.

The social security system needs to be invested in and made to work to prevent homelessness as the level of housing benefits set by the UK Government is increasingly inadequate, and the needs of people who have migrated to the UK and found themselves forced to experience homelessness need to be addressed.

**Jon Sparkes**  
**Crisis**



There is also a wide array of evidence for Universal Credit having a direct impact on increases in rent arrears, which have been rising steadily year on year since March 2013.

The benefit freeze will be continuing to the end of 2019/20 - four years of operation - reducing the real-terms value of most working-age benefit rates by a further 2.4%, making it harder for people to pay their rent and make ends meet<sup>6</sup>.

The cap on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) means that overall, there are only a few areas where low income families are not expected to experience any shortfall in rent. Instead, a large number of areas, particularly areas of high housing demand, continue to experience shortfalls between actual rent and available LHA support across all property types, making private rents unaffordable for many people. The highest absolute shortfalls are typically experienced by large families.

Recently published Scottish Government statistics on the private rented sector<sup>7</sup> show that rents in Scotland have increased 24.6% on average between 2010 and 2019 (compared to a Consumer Price Index rise of 20.8%)<sup>8</sup>. The increases in Lothian and Greater Glasgow have been more substantial over this time (46% and 38% respectively), and are continuing to rise.

The recently published *Housing and Social Security: second follow-up paper on Welfare Reform*<sup>9</sup> lays out the impact the UK Government's approach to welfare is having:

Official Benefit Cap statistics from the Department for Work and Pensions show:

- 
- 3,320 Scottish households were capped in May 2019.
- 

5 More detail is available in the Scottish Government publication: Housing and Social Security: second follow-up paper on Welfare Reform <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-social-security-second-follow-up-paper-welfare-reform/>

6 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/2019-annual-report-welfare-reform/pages/1/>

7 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/private-sector-rent-statistics-2010-2019/>

8 ONS CPI Reference, published on 16 October 2019

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/d7bt/mm23>

9 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-social-security-second-follow-up-paper-welfare-reform/>

- 
- 94% of these households are only capped because the cap was lowered in November 2016.
- 

- The number of households capped has decreased around 15% since 2017.
- 

Among households with capped Housing Benefit:

---

- Two thirds were lone parents.
  - 91% contain children. 87% of this 91% contain three or more children.
  - 70% lived in the social rented sector.
  - Capped households lost £64 per week on average.
- 

The UK Government has announced that the benefits freeze is to come to an end from 2020. However no equivalent announcement has been made in relation to the cap, reducing or eliminating the potential benefits to some families from the reversal of the freeze.

Updated analysis on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) suggests as a result of the 4 year freeze to LHA rates, only 11 out of 90 LHA rates in Scotland are now set at the level allowing families to rent a home in the 30th percentile (i.e. the bottom third) of the rental market.

Since the previous report (published in May 2018):

---

- Whilst the situation has improved for 11 of the 90 Scottish LHA rates, 36 of the rates have seen a reduction in the proportion of the market that is available.
- 

- 4 LHA rates give access to less than 5% of the market.
- 

- The share of rental market that under 35s can access within the LHA rate has decreased in all areas or Scotland.
- 

While recent announcements about ending the freeze on the LHA rate have been welcome, this does not go far enough in helping ensure people can meet their housing costs. Fundamental concerns remain about the Benefit Cap and the roll out of UC with its inherent challenges including the in-built minimum 5 week delay in receiving the first UC payment.

### Additional evidence

Whilst the national homelessness statistics are a vital part of how we monitor progress towards meeting the aims set out in the *Action Plan*, we are aware that there are gaps in our knowledge, particularly in respect of people who have not approached their local authority for support.

We need a range of evidence and information to help us fully understand the impact of our actions and the best ways forward. We are therefore working across the sector to build on current local data and case management systems to develop a new rough sleeping data collection to provide a more in-depth source of shared information about people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

# Progress towards meeting *Action Plan* commitments

## Person-centred approach

---

To end homelessness, evidence and experts tell us that a truly person-centred approach is crucial. This is about understanding people's experiences so we can improve our systems and responses. It is also about understanding a person's journey so services can respond well in the moment to bring about an end to that person's homelessness and find effective ways of supporting them in a settled home. Our commitment to listening and responding to people with lived experience and tackling stigma contribute directly to the Values set out in the National Performance Framework of treating all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion – and will be crucial to our aim of ending homelessness.

Key to embedding a person-centred approach will be our work to developing better understanding of women's experiences of homelessness. We have already begun exploring the available evidence and we will work through 2020 with partners with expertise in gender as well as partners in the homelessness sector to deepen our understanding of the issues facing women in homelessness.



### **1 Action – We will develop an Ending Homelessness Together lived experience programme.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government has worked with Homeless Network Scotland and Cyrenians to develop a Participation Programme to ensure that lived experience – and the voice of the frontline – have a central role in supporting the delivery of our *Action Plan*. A Change Team has been recruited and was officially launched on 10 December 2019 bringing together people with a background of lived experience of homelessness with those working on the frontline. To ensure they are at the heart of driving this programme of work it has been agreed this team will become a sub-group of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy

Group (HPSG), and will act as a live reference group for HPSG and others to reality-check delivery and test ideas and priorities. The other key role the Change Team has is to support the transition envisaged through the *Action Plan* at a local level using their own wider networks and working alongside the Housing Options Hubs.

**Next steps** – The Change Team will work with and advise HPSG on the programme, ensuring people with lived experience are contributing directly, shaping policy development and overseeing the delivery of the *Action Plan*.



## **Action – In 2019 we will explore policy options on how personal housing plans will work alongside the Housing Options approach.**

**Progress** – Drawing on their experience in this area, Shelter is exploring options and will produce a report in early 2020. This work will collate and consolidate evidence from across the UK to be used to develop a Personal Housing Plan model. This will build on the existing Housing Options approach as a key element of preventing and responding to homelessness.

**Next steps** – Following consideration of and consultation on options, the Scottish Government will incorporate a Personal Housing Plan model into the updated Code of Guidance, including practical advice. Partners will consider how to facilitate widespread implementation as a means of further embedding person-centred approaches to support people facing homelessness and ensuring a continued focus on getting people back to settled accommodation as quickly as possible.



## **Action – Where children are homeless, we will ensure a wellbeing assessment is undertaken in relation to each child in the household to make certain that any additional learning or social support is put in place.**

**Progress** – Learning from parts of the country where a similar approach is being taken is informing early thinking on how this will be taken forwards alongside the above work on personal housing plans.

**Next steps** – We will work with children's services, local authorities and partners, as well as people with lived experience, to establish how to best deliver these assessments and report on progress.



## **Action – In 2019 we will organise an event for local authorities and housing providers to share best practise and consider development of choice-based letting systems or other approaches across Scotland.**

**Progress** – An event took place on 3 December 2019, bringing together local authorities, third sector partners and housing associations. The event supported partners to share ideas that have emerged via Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans, including how to ensure people are fully involved in planning their accommodation. The interactive breakout sessions allowed attendees to discuss common themes, arising

issues and share good examples of projects and initiatives that aim to give homeless households greater choice and control.

**Next steps** – Through 2020-2023 the Scottish Government will continue to encourage the adoption and rollout of support, including for choice-based letting systems, formalising implementation advice into an updated Code of Guidance.



**Action – Through 2019 we will work with expert practitioners, housing providers, local authorities and other public bodies to determine the actions needed to support frontline staff in their work with people experiencing homelessness.**

**Progress** – The Participation Programme will be a key vehicle for this action. The Change Team, comprised of members with lived experience and those working on the frontline, will act as a key catalyst for local engagement and support across the homelessness sector. The Housing Options Toolkit is being developed in partnership across all 32 local authorities to provide consistent training to frontline staff on

areas of housing, employability, health and wellbeing, and income and affordability.

**Next steps** – We will take the emerging learning from the work of the Change Team to inform proposals for a programme of further support, to be developed and supported by HPSG in partnership with the Change Team.



**Action - Evaluate impact of initial public awareness activity on public perceptions during 2019.**

**Progress** – In 2019 a public perceptions collaborative was formed to coordinate efforts in challenging stigma and shifting public perceptions – both by helping homelessness organisations communicate effectively and by supporting media to understand its role in challenging stigma. Homelessness organisations are beginning to change their approach in communicating about homelessness and the Scottish

Government is using its platform to highlight positive stories to help break the stigma.

**Next steps** – A style guidelines document is nearing completion and will be shared in early 2020. An event with leaders from the sector and members of the press will also take place to discuss the guidelines to help address stigma.

**Additional Action – We will ensure the actions we take to end homelessness are informed by a gendered analysis and will meet the specific needs of women experiencing homelessness.**

**Progress** – Following engagement with a range of stakeholders the Scottish Government has developed a programme of work to integrate a gendered approach to the delivery of homelessness policy and practice. Details are set out through this Annual Report and in Annex 2.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will continue to work with key stakeholders including Scottish Women’s Aid (SWA), Engender and SAY Women to build understanding of what is needed, implement the programme of work and monitor its impact.

# Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

---

We know homelessness is caused by a range of different challenges in people's lives such as poverty, relationship breakdown, job loss, death or as a result of experiencing the crime of domestic abuse. We also know systemic issues like poverty, including child poverty, rising housing costs, UK Government welfare cuts and availability of health and social care support have a crucial role to play in whether or not a household reaches crisis point. There is much that the housing, homelessness and wider public services, can do to pick up issues early and act before a household reaches crisis point.

It is vital we build on progress over recent years to focus on the prevention of homelessness before it occurs and, when it does occur, prevent repeat homelessness. Our focus on prevention through delivery of the actions we have set out below demonstrates our commitment to addressing the links between housing and poverty and supporting children to grow up free from abuse, poverty and hunger (supporting delivery of the National Outcome: we grow up loved, safe and respected so we can realise our full potential).



## **Action - We will review the evidence whilst identifying the timetable and process for the design and implementation of preventative pathways for each high-risk group.**

**Progress** - Evidence has been reviewed, timetables for this work have been agreed and the first pathway (for care experienced people) was published on 12 November 2019. Chairs for the working group developing the second (improving housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse) have been appointed, the scope of the work agreed and the remit is being drawn up.

**Next steps** - A review of the implementation of the SHORE standards will commence in early 2020<sup>10</sup>. These reviews will be locally based around the five Housing Options Hubs, and will include

representation from local authorities, Scottish prisons, criminal justice, the police and the third sector. The review will examine current good practice, areas for further improvement and embedding national consistency throughout Scotland. The work on improving housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse will begin in February 2020 and we expect it to conclude by summer 2020. This will include how to put *Domestic abuse: a good practice guide for social landlord* on a statutory footing<sup>11</sup>. Through 2020-2023 the remaining prevention pathways will be scoped, developed and implemented.

<sup>10</sup> Sustainable housing on release for everyone

<sup>11</sup> <https://womensaid.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Domestic-abuse-guidance-for-social-landlords-FINAL.pdf>





## **Action - We will ensure a clear, effective focus on preventing and responding effectively to youth homelessness.**

**Progress** - Recognising that younger people are more likely to make a homeless application than other groups of the population and are much more likely to have support needs relating to basic housing management and independent living, the 'A Way Home Scotland' coalition is leading development of the Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway.

**Next steps** - More detail on prevention of and effective response to youth homelessness, particularly for those who are care experienced, will come from the work of the 'A Way Home Scotland' coalition. We will actively respond to findings as they emerge and seek to implement the Pathway recommendations as soon as possible. A particular focus will be on supporting local partners to develop plans for response to youth homelessness through the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans.



Eradicating homelessness in Scotland is happening right now, and it has been a privilege to both see and be part of the progress made so far.

As part of the Action Plan, A Way Home Scotland has launched its first Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway for care leavers, a crucial piece of work that sets out practical and achievable steps toward ending homelessness for one of our most vulnerable groups.

Working in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities and young people has been pivotal in progressing our work and only by continuing to do so we can drive forward our commitment to end youth homelessness in Scotland.

**Sabrina Galella**  
**Policy and Influencing Coordinator**  
**'A Way Home Scotland'**



## **Action - We will increase the focus on sustaining tenancies ensuring that support is available for those who need it.**

**Progress** - Building on the learning already gained in local areas about what works for tenancy sustainment and supporting people at risk of homelessness, the Scottish Government announced in the Programme for Government, a Homelessness Prevention Fund which will provide up to £1.5m over three years. The Scottish Federation Of Housing Associations (SFHA) and Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF) are supporting the development of this fund which will increase and spread the work of social landlords in supporting low income families in social housing in ways that help to prevent crisis points and avoid homelessness. Prevention

and tenancy sustainment were key themes running through the day at the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) event on 3 December, with examples of different approaches being shared amongst attendees, including the innovative approaches to prevention and tenancy sustainment that have been adopted in Newcastle.

**Next steps** - This fund will be available from financial year 2020/21 and learning about the impact of innovative approaches will be a central consideration. We will also ensure that good practice is shared amongst Scottish local authorities and further afield.



## **Action – We will work with local authorities to identify how to make homelessness assessments more flexible.**

**Progress** – This work is being progressed by the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO) and Scottish Federation Of Housing Associations (SFHA).

**Next steps** – Further consideration of options will be taken forwards in 2020, recognising the important links to developing Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans; supporting partnerships between local authorities and registered social landlords and the early prevention of homelessness.



## **Action – We will embed a ‘no-wrong-door’ approach.**

**Progress** – We have been working at local level and through our frontline practitioners network to understand how to best support local partnerships across local authorities, housing providers, prisons, care services, health services and the police to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping. At national level we undertook a cross-government response to the ‘Hard Edges’ report, which looked at the complexity of the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage in Scotland. We have brought together health, justice, housing and other policy areas to inform a government wide response and, as part of our aim to improve outcomes for those facing severe and multiple disadvantage, the Inclusive Scotland Fund was announced in Programme for Government in September 2019. It will be

made available in 2020-21 and 2021-22 to support local areas in finding new ways to respond to the needs of those with severe and multiple disadvantage and experiences across homelessness, substance use, mental ill health and contact with the criminal justice system.

**Next steps** – We will continue to lead the cultural and systemic changes required to ensure local authorities, housing providers, delivery partners and public bodies work together to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping at every opportunity. This includes supporting the Inclusive Scotland Fund and the development of new legislation for the prevention of homelessness (see Action 14).



## **Action – We will ensure that homelessness prevention and existing homelessness are treated as key drivers in the development of the Beyond 2021 Housing Strategy.**

**Progress** – Key principles set out in the *Housing to 2040 Vision* include ensuring there are affordable housing options across Scotland for households at all income levels and that everyone should have a right to an adequate home.

**Next steps** – In 2020-2021 the Scottish Government will continue to invest in housing supply as we work towards our target to provide 50,000 affordable homes during the lifetime of this Parliament.





### **Action – We will undertake a full analysis of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) recommendations on changes to the UK welfare system policy and delivery.**

**Progress** – This analysis has been progressed by the Scottish Government with newly available data alongside the refresh of Housing & Social Security analysis (see page 15). This analysis includes Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) monthly survey of its members on the impact of Universal Credit (UC). SFHA reports that this has revealed a consistent pattern that the average level of arrears for tenants on UC is higher than for those tenants not on UC<sup>12</sup>. Though not a representative sample of all its members, the results of the January 2019 survey revealed that the total arrears for tenancies claiming UC was 37% of the total rent due for those tenancies in January 2019, compared to 21% for tenancies not claiming UC<sup>13</sup>.

**Next steps** – The updated analysis is expected to be published in early 2020. We know issues around access to resources, including social security entitlements, particularly impact on women. We will work with colleagues working on housing, homelessness, child poverty, social security, employability and the gender pay gap action plan to progress a Scottish Government wide approach to this issue, including around splitting UC payments for couples and ensuring direct rent payment to landlords remain an option. These plans remain a priority for the Scottish Government and we will continue to press the UK Government to reverse the changes to the welfare system they have introduced that put people at risk of homelessness.



### **Action – We will set out a timetable for our plans for a new duty on public bodies for the prevention of homelessness.**

**Progress** – In October 2019 a review group was established to consider options for a new prevention duty. The group is supported by Crisis Scotland who have developed a substantial programme of engagement and consultation to take this work forward and this is available on the Crisis website<sup>14</sup> along with minutes of each of the meetings. The group's work will be supported through a linked group of people with lived experience of homelessness and those working on the frontline to support them, and will be informed by a gendered analysis.

**Next steps** – The Prevention Duty Review Group will be informed by understanding and evidence of the particular issues faced by women, and their recommendations will be informed by gender-specific experiences of homelessness.

Recommendations will be made by the Group to the Scottish Government in 2020.

12 Scottish Parliament Social Security Committee report (2019) [Support for Housing](#)

13 Scottish Federation Housing Associations (2019) [Universal Credit Survey Results January 2019](#)

14 <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/scotland-prevention-review-group/>

**Additional action - We will seek to adopt housing advice, Housing Options and housing management actions to avoid homelessness for women and families who have been victims of domestic abuse.**

**Progress** – It was recently announced that legislation on emergency barring orders to exclude the perpetrators of domestic abuse from the home will be taken forward in year five of this parliament. The lead for this work sits in the Justice portfolio, and Ministers and officials in Communities and Local Government are committed to working actively with Justice colleagues to take this forward and see it is implemented effectively.

**Next steps** – The publication in the summer of guidance for social landlords on responding to domestic abuse takes us considerably further forward in what practical steps are needed to safeguard vulnerable women and children. We will work with the Chartered Institute of Housing, SWA and others to ensure the relevant actions are progressed.

**Additional action – SHORE Implementation Review**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government is progressing a review of the implementation of the SHORE standards as part of its wider work on prevention pathways. A first meeting took place on 27 August 2019, gathering national and local partners to discuss the proposed approach.

**Next steps** – The intention is to run locally based reviews based around the five Housing Options Hub areas early in 2020. The reviews will draw in key local partners, including those with lived experience, to understand the on the ground issues they are facing and seeking to identify interventions which will unlock the consistent, effective delivery of SHORE across Scotland.

**Additional action - Homelessness Prevention Fund**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government committed within the Programme for Government to introduce a Homelessness Prevention Fund. It will provide £1.5 million over three years to increase and spread the work of social landlords in supporting low-income families in social housing to prevent crisis points and avoid homelessness.

**Next steps** – The funding is being jointly provided from the Ending Homelessness Together Fund and the Child Poverty Fund. The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations agreed at the September 2019 meeting of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group to develop proposals for Ministers to consider on the best way to target this funding. It has been working together with a range of partners to draw up options in advance of its introduction in financial year 2020-21.

# Prioritising settled housing for all

---

As highlighted in our *Action Plan*, homelessness is about so much more than housing. Having a settled home must be seen as a priority for supporting people to live their life with good health, wellbeing and a sense of community and belonging. Our commitments set out below to embed a housing-led response to homelessness contribute to delivering National Outcome: we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.



## **Action – Every local authority will submit a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) by the end of 2018, to be finalised – including an equality impact assessment – by March 2019.**

**Progress** – All local authorities submitted Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans by 31 December 2018. All plans were reviewed by the Scottish Government and feedback given by 31 March 2019. Second iterations were provided in summer 2019 with feedback given to 30 local authorities on 13 September. At present 24 of the 32 local authorities have submitted Equality Impact Assessments with their Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

**Next steps** – Focused work will continue to better understand the funding requirements of the new approaches set out in the plans alongside work in partnership between local and national government to achieve effective implementation and transition from current arrangements, within combined available resources. The Scottish Government will request annual review of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans. Monitoring frameworks on progress and spend will be agreed between local and national government. The Scottish

Government will provide support to all local authorities who have not yet developed an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure their Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan sets out how it will advance equality and reduce discrimination for groups with protected characteristics.

In response to our understanding that women do not have equal access to statutory services, we will also use the next phase of RRTP development to proactively work with local authorities. We will encourage them to take a gendered approach to their homelessness plans and respond to the needs of women in homelessness in their area in accordance with their findings. As with other areas of RRTP development, this could include support, peer mentoring and sharing good practice. Over time, this should develop in response to findings emerging from the work to improve our understanding of women's experiences of homelessness.



**Action – By April 2019, all 32 LA RRTPs will be evaluated and feedback will be provided to local areas.**

**Progress** – We have established a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans sub-group of the HPSG. It includes local authorities, ALACHO, COSLA, Homeless Network Scotland, Housing Support Enabling Unit, Scotland’s Housing Network and others to oversee the development of rapid rehousing. It will also develop a basket of ideas so that learning can be shared between local authorities.

**Next steps** – The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans Sub-group of the HPSG will lead work to develop and share ideas and learning between local areas in partnership with Housing Options Hubs, including facilitation of an event for RRTP local coordinators in early 2020.



**Action – Each local authority RRTP will include plans for Housing First provision.**

**Progress** – 30 of 32 local areas include plans for Housing First provision within their RRTP. We are working with Homeless Network Scotland and local authorities to develop monitoring frameworks around Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans in the non-Pathfinder areas.

**Next steps** – Develop a monitoring framework for Housing First across Scotland and ensure the learning is shared between Pathfinder and non-Pathfinder local authorities who already had Housing First prior to HARSAG recommendations.



**Action – We will support five Housing First Pathfinder cities: to secure up to 830 Housing First Placements between December 2018 and March 2022.**

**Progress** – Ongoing as part of the Pathfinder Programme. As at the end of November 2019 – more than 150 people were in Housing First Pathfinder tenancies, with a 95% sustainment rate, and no evictions or abandonments at that time.

**Next steps** – We will continue to support Housing First in the Pathfinder areas, engage in the Connect events (bringing all five pathfinder areas together to share experiences). Focus will shift to secure

mainstreaming of Housing First funding from local authority budgets and contributions from other local partners so there is no “cliff-edge” at the end of Scottish Government, Social Bite and Merchant’s House funding. We will support the Housing First Training Academy, which is supporting the Housing First Pathfinder, programme to include training on gender inequality. We will ensure this training is made more widely available as Housing First develops throughout all areas of Scotland.



**Action – We will seek partnership with health and justice bodies as we embed a Housing First approach for people with multiple and complex needs.**

**Progress** – Joint investment between Health and Homelessness in support of the Housing First Pathfinder programme is now being strengthened through the response to Hard Edges and Health and Homelessness Data Linkage. A letter sent jointly from the Minister for Housing Local Government and Planning and the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport to local partners in 2019 highlighted the importance of joint working in support of delivering RRTPs and preventing and tackling homelessness.

**Next steps** – We will seek to work in partnership with local NHS bodies to plan services in a way that can meet the total needs of the people in their local population who are experiencing homelessness; substance use; mental ill health; domestic abuse and involvement in the justice system (i.e. the Hard Edges cohort). This includes the provision of health and justice services through the Housing First model.



**Action – We will highlight best practice examples (of developing a wider range of choice in what a settled home could look like) from RRTPs.**

**Progress** – Throughout the year we have made use of the regular meetings of Housing Options Hubs and other events and conferences to share emerging practice and ideas regarding choice in a settled home. An event was held on 3 December which was attended by 150 delegates, including local authorities, third sector and advocating organisations. This event allowed attendees

the opportunity to share ideas from Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans via presentations, interactive breakout sessions and panel discussions.

**Next steps** – This will continue to be a core part of the activity outlined above to share learning and emerging practice and ideas from RRTP.



**Action – We will assess the impacts of providing a wide range of options in different local authority areas.**

**Progress** – An event held on 3 December brought together local authorities, third sector and housing associations to share a range of ideas that have emerged via Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans and through other mechanisms, including discussion of understanding the impact of the changes being implemented.

**Next steps** – This will continue to be a core part of the activity outlined above to share learning and emerging practice and ideas from RRTP.



**Action – We will undertake robust analysis of data on the funding of temporary accommodation to inform our position on a new funding framework: this will support discussions between national and local government in Scotland and the UK.**

**Progress** – While this analysis has been undertaken, it has not been possible to draw robust conclusions that could be applied across local authority boundaries to inform a national picture of temporary accommodation funding. At the same time, discussions with the UK Government about modifying existing funding through Housing Benefit have not been fruitful, amid continued uncertainty about Department for Work and Pensions and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government spending priorities.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government has pursued early engagement with the new UK Government with the aim of, by November 2021, having developed and implemented changes to the existing funding model to tackle poverty by lowering rents in Temporary Accommodation. Through 2022-23 the Scottish Government will aim to evaluate the impacts of the revised model to adjust and refine accordingly.

**Additional action – Third Sector Bid Fund**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government committed in the Programme for Government to support the transformational change set out in the *Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan*. Funding of up to £4.5 million will be provided over three years to third sector organisations on the frontline to innovate and transform the services they provide.

**Next steps** – Applications to the fund will open in early 2020 with funding available from financial year 2020-21. Applicants will need to be able to demonstrate the work they are doing will support transformational change. They will need to show clear alignment with actions and outcomes set out in the *Action Plan* or engagement and tie-in with local authority Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans.

Applicants to the bid fund will be required to assess the equality impact of their proposals and will need to demonstrate alignment with outcomes and 49 actions identified in the *Action Plan*. We will also invite applications which ensure a clear, effective focus on preventing and responding effectively to homelessness amongst women.



# We will respond quickly and effectively when homelessness happens

---

An effective response is crucial to safeguard people and prevent a worsening of the issues which led to homelessness in the first place. Understanding the circumstances which led to experiences of homelessness is crucial so we can support frontline services to perform their vital role effectively. Recently released Scottish Government statistics on how equality groups experiences of homelessness differ is a key part of building our understanding and supporting delivery of the National Outcome: we respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.



**Action – We will support frontline practitioners to develop and implement a national model of empowered frontline outreach throughout 2019 and 2020.**

**Progress** – Early discussions with stakeholders took place in June 2019; key messages emerging from this focused around empowering staff, prioritising relationships, and supporting the creation of a person-centred system. Additional action across wider government includes national roll out of trauma informed training which is significant for this action. It is clear an effective response to people facing homelessness needs to respond well to multiple and complex needs across health, justice and housing. As such the work we are doing to build partnerships in these areas provides important context to develop the national model envisaged.

**Next steps** – How issues present at the frontline is contributing to emerging responses to the Hard Edges Scotland report,

considering what an appropriate frontline response looks like for people with severe and multiple disadvantage, including diverse groups of women. We will continue to engage in this work to support our principle of no wrong door and person-centred services, integrating learning and approaches from homelessness with other public services and vice versa. A key point of action for the year ahead will be the launching of the Inclusion Scotland Fund, ensuring that homelessness considerations are a key focus. We know relationships formed at the frontline are key and the frontline needs support and training to particularly reflect gender inequality and the needs of women. We will work with stakeholders to ensure the training and support being developed as part of our programme to support and empower frontline services is gender sensitive.



## **Action – We will develop training and support for staff working across the wider frontline.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government is working closely with the five Housing Options Hubs on the development of the Housing Options Toolkit. Development of the toolkit has been procured and the development of modules has commenced, bringing in support from other area experts where necessary to provide support across the Scottish Government.

**Next steps** – Delivery of the Housing Options Toolkit for staff training across housing and frontline delivery staff will be a continued focus through 2020. In addition, we will consider the wider training and support needs of staff through our partnership with the newly appointed Change Team for the participation programme.



## **Action – We will continue to support local winter planning in 2018-19, learning from experiences in 2017-18, and with the aim of responding to immediate years and seeing a decline in need for next year (2019-20) as our wider changes start to take effect.**

**Progress** – Winter 2018-19 plans were put in place, implemented and funded. Learning from previous years has contributed to Scottish Government’s announcement of funding for winter 2019-20, which includes further spending on flexible emergency funding for the frontline, support for a multi-agency hub for people at risk of rough sleeping in Glasgow, and projects to support people who have no recourse to public funds. A number of interventions put in place in

previous years have since been adopted into local authorities’ mainstream plans for response to people at risk of sleeping rough all year round.

**Next steps** – From 2020-21, funding for local winter planning will be more fully aligned with third sector funding in support of delivering the *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan* through the third sector bid fund which will be launched in early 2020.



## **Action – We will explore ways of providing effective support to people engaged in street begging.**

**Progress** – This is being considered as part of the frontline outreach group and winter planning. As part of our frontline outreach strategic priorities we are:

- Exploring the drivers behind street begging, including mental health and addictions and their connection to social isolation and the importance of community.

- 
- Exploring the links between street begging, human trafficking and organised crime.
- 

**Next steps** – This will continue to be progressed as part of frontline outreach model and participation programme.





## **Action – We will continue to press the UK Government to address issues relating to migrant homelessness.**

**Progress** – This is an ongoing discussion point with the UK Government, gaining particular prominence in the context of evictions of people who have exhausted their rights of appeal in the immigration system. The Scottish Government has frequently urged the UK Government to take a different approach however as it is a reserved matter our ability to influence is limited.

**Next steps** – We will continue to have discussions with the UK Government in relation to this issue and report our progress in future reports. We will further develop our response for people with no recourse to public funds, establishing clarity around what can already be offered and what works for people within the existing legal framework.



## **Action – We will continue to explore what measures can be put in place to prevent rough sleeping and homelessness for those without recourse to public funds.**

**Progress** – An anti-destitution strategy is in development and this issue has been considered as part of planning for winter that was undertaken by our frontline practitioner working group. The Scottish Government is engaging with the Glasgow Shelter for Destitute Asylum Seekers regarding its project funded by the Big Lottery to create a strategic accommodation pathway for destitute asylum seekers, and supporting an action focused collaboration across Glasgow to respond to the eviction without destination of asylum seekers who are designated by the Home Office as having exhausted their appeal rights. We continue to press the UK Government to act on this issue to prevent risk to life for this population.

For those who have insecure immigration status but are not in the asylum system, we have developed a number of small interventions as part of the winter plans. These will test approaches with frontline services and establish what can be done

within the existing legislative framework. We are also facilitating discussions with third sector partners to consider a strategic approach. This will include supporting the third sector to provide information in other languages, initiating a peer support worker model, holding a practitioner roundtable on successful approaches and supporting work with City of Edinburgh Council around a symposium on the issue.

In the winter 2019-20 the Scottish Government provided a £252,000 funding package over two years to organisations to help ensure asylum seekers have access to legal professionals and other services.

**Next steps** – Completion of the anti-destitution strategy in 2020 and further work across the sector to prevent rough sleeping and homelessness among this population, including in response to the Serco lock change evictions, and seeking to prevent people reaching this crisis point.



**Action – We will continue to work with the UK Government to clarify the protection to be afforded to those without recourse to public funds.**

**Progress** – In February 2019, the Scottish Government and COSLA launched updated Scottish guidance relating to no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The guidance sets out the legal position for local authorities to assist them in making make decisions on provision of support, with due attention to their duties under devolved legislation and in respect of human rights. The Scottish Government has committed to regular review of the guidance to ensure it remains up to date.

The Scottish Government has raised concerns with the UK Government about a number of issues impacting people living in Scotland because of no recourse to public funds policy. The Scottish Government is also providing

£252,000 for advocacy support and legal advice access, which will support people at risk of eviction from asylum accommodation in Glasgow.

**Next steps** – Development of the new guidance was a first step toward an anti-destitution strategy, focusing on people who are subject to NRPF. The Scottish Government and COSLA are working in partnership to develop the anti-destitution strategy, which will aim to prevent and mitigate destitution for people, as far as it is possible to do so within the restrictions of reserved UK immigration law and policy. The Scottish Government will continue to press the UK Government to protect the rights of people who are subject to NRPF.



**Action – We will support local areas to develop a broader range of options for accommodation in crisis situations, including the development of community hosting.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government held an event in December 2019 which local authorities, housing providers, third sector and advocating organisations attended. At this event, the Rock Trust delivered a presentation which encouraged attendees to look at community hosting models.

**Next steps** – We will continue to support local areas following this event and we will produce a report from the day to highlights common themes and examples of good practice discussed and share with all participants.



**Action – We will facilitate sharing of information during 2019 about how short-term community hosting can broaden options within local area and provide support to local authorities.**

**Progress** – The December event (above) brought together a wide range of stakeholders who heard from the Rock Trust about community hosting. Everyone was given the opportunity through breakout sessions to share ideas from RRTPs about how they are looking to diversify temporary and permanent accommodation options.

**Next steps** – Through 2020-2021 the Scottish Government will respond to this early work to explore best options to support the adoption and expansion of Nightstop throughout Scotland.



## **Action – We will publish an options appraisal for a new national rough sleeping data collection in 2019.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government commissioned the Centre for Homelessness Impact in 2018 to undertake an options appraisal for the development of a new national data collection system. The options appraisal was published in May 2019.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will conduct a programme of engagement with local authorities and third sector organisations in 2020 to support development of a new data collection

system, with the aim of starting a pilot by the end of 2020. An important aspect of the development of the data collection will be a review of the homelessness data collection questions. We need to ensure we are collecting the information we need in order to understand the issues facing the diverse range of people experiencing homelessness, with a particular focus on understanding women’s experiences, and monitor the impact of any changes. The work to review data requirements, gaps and possible sources will start early in 2020.



## **Action – We will revise legislative arrangements on local connection and intentionality.**

**Progress** – The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No. 4) Order 2019 was commenced on 7 November 2019, introducing discretion for local authorities in assessing homelessness applications for intentionality. It also started a process for developing new local connection rules, which will involve development work and a public consultation in 2020.

**Next steps** – In 2020 the Scottish Government will engage with local authorities, other organisations and people with lived experience to develop the local connection Ministerial Statement which will be published in November 2020. This will specify Ministers’ plans for local connection legislation.



## **Action – We will work with lawyers and stakeholders to develop options for the definition of intentionality to focus on deliberate manipulation of the homelessness system.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government’s consultation on local connection and intentionality included a question about whether people thought the definition of intentionality should be narrowed to focus on deliberate manipulation. There was limited consensus among respondents about this question, with some support and also calls for careful consideration of any possible changes and new guidance.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will continue to engage with lawyers about the mechanisms available to take this forward. The overhaul of the Code of Guidance, detailed below, will also involve consideration of this commitment.



## **Action – We will consult on extending the Unsuitable Accommodation Order to all homeless households.**

**Progress** – A consultation was held in summer 2019 that closed on 14 August with a full analysis of the responses published in January 2020. Based on initial analysis, we committed in the *Programme for Government* to introduce legislation to extend the Order this parliamentary year, to come into force this parliamentary term, by May 2021.

**Next steps** – Now we have committed to extending the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO) to all homeless households, as we prepare the new legislation, we will work with local authorities right up until the legislation comes into force to help them overcome any barriers they face and to ensure they don't breach the Order. Part of that role will be to learn from good practices in the sector and share these amongst local authorities - and where possible reflecting these as we draft the legislation.



## **Action – We will introduce the means to enforce and monitor standards for temporary accommodation in all tenures. We will publish and implement new standards by 2023.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government has included advisory standards in the 2019 Code of Guidance update, based on standards previously published by Shelter and CIH, and consulted on the development of a legally enforceable standards framework.

**Next steps** – A working group will be set up in early 2020 to take forward the findings of the consultation; develop a new standards framework across all types and tenures of temporary accommodation and determine ways in which these standards can be progressed as a legally enforceable framework.

### **Additional action – Glasgow voluntary review**

**Progress** – Glasgow City Council Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) agreed to a voluntary review with the Scottish Government focusing on its failure to provide temporary accommodation to homeless people. The HSCP and Scottish Government are working very closely on this and overseeing improvements that are being made.

The Housing Minister met with Glasgow City Council's Leader and CEO in October to reinforce the progress that is needed to ensure Glasgow meets its statutory responsibilities to homeless people. Work is also taking place with other local authorities to understand the issues around recording this part of a local authority's duties.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will continue this work addressing Glasgow's failure to accommodate homeless people.

# We will join up planning and resources

---

Joining up planning and resources is vital to ensure we respond better to the range of causes of homelessness and the range of support needs people in homelessness may have. This will also support our National Performance Framework vision of eradicating poverty in Scotland. The *Fairer Scotland Action Plan*<sup>15</sup> and the *Child Poverty Delivery Plan*<sup>16</sup> both recognise the importance of addressing links between income, housing and health as well as understanding the specific needs of groups at higher risk of poverty and homelessness.



**Action – We will ensure local authorities, housing providers and public bodies work together to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping at every opportunity.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government established the Preventing Homelessness: Registered Social Landlords fund which will drive and support action in this area. Prevention also forms an important element of all local authority Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans which will be monitored with learning and progress shared.

**Next steps** – We will be supporting successful delivery of the Registered Social Landlords fund and monitoring prevention outcomes in Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans. We will also be using the work to develop proposals for a public sector duty for the prevention of homelessness, outlined above, to highlight the opportunities for better joint working to achieve better outcomes for citizens.



**Action – Following consultation and development with partners, we will publish a new, accurate and up to date version of the Code of Guidance reflecting the current legislation and setting out a clear process for future updating of the Code.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government worked with key partners to develop an updated and accurate Code of Guidance which was published on 7 November 2019.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will develop and take forward plans for a more significant update to the structure and content of the Code, to be progressed in 2020. This work will include development of a process to make regular updates when legislative and policy changes are introduced. The initial new version of the Code is expected during 2021.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-action-plan/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

39

**Action – We will commence engagement in 2019-20 with stakeholders regarding the possible development of a Code of Practice addendum for the Code of Guidance.**

**Progress** – This will be considered during the development work on the Code of Guidance.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will confirm its planned approach to take this forward by 2021.

40

**Action – We will embed homelessness as a priority for improving public health, with all areas prioritising it as such.**

**Progress** – Discussions are underway across the Scottish Government and external agencies to raise awareness of homelessness as a public health priority ahead of the formation of the new Public Health Scotland body in April 2020.

**Next steps** – We will continue discussions, including with the new Public Health Body, and provide further updates in future reports.

41

**Action – We will improve the join up between local health, social care, housing and homelessness planning.**

**Progress** – On 29 March 2019, a Joint Ministerial letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport and Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning was sent to Local Authorities and Health & Social Care Partners encouraging collaboration on Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans in March 2019. In addition, a range of cross-government and cross sectoral work has taken place in response to the publication of the Hard Edges Scotland research. A process of awareness raising of the Health and Homelessness data linkage has started to increase understanding of the shared interests different parts of the public sector have in meeting the needs of people with health and housing need.

**Next steps** – This is ongoing. We will continue to work to ensure all parties are taking a joined-up approach and ensure that services, partnerships and systems across the NHS recognise that experiencing housing crisis is often a symptom of wider needs and act in partnership to resolve it. This will include identifying opportunities to increase awareness of the data available on health and homelessness and the Hard Edges Scotland research with key parts of the health system. It will also include sharing health and homelessness partnership examples as identified in RRTPs and providing examples of existing practice, including a focus on prevention.





## **Action – We will join up housing employment and employability support.**

**Progress** – This will take place in future years once other elements of the *Action Plan* have progressed or completed.

**Next steps** – We will provide an update in future reports.

### **Additional action – Throughout 2019 we will work with local authorities and delivery partners to review and support the implementation process; assist with changes required to system and culture and work with partners to share learning**

**Progress** – Ongoing as a core, continuing part of Scottish Government day to day work. This has been done through the development of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans and the ongoing support of the housing options hubs with Scottish Government officials in attendance at each meeting.

**Next steps** – Continue to support the work around Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans and the housing options hubs.

### **Additional action – Cohesive cross-government response to the Hard Edges Scotland report findings**

**Progress** – The Hard Edges Scotland report was published in July 2019 involving a partnership between Lankelly Chase Foundation, Robertson Trust and Heriot Watt University. It outlines the extent of severe and multiple disadvantage (SMD) in Scotland, providing both quantitative and qualitative evidence on the numbers of people experiencing more than one challenging issue in their lives. It includes around 5,600 people that experience all three of homelessness, substance use and the justice system in the course of a year.

**Next steps** – Scottish Ministers have called for a cohesive, cross-government response to these issues. Tackling and preventing homelessness is central to improving outcomes for those facing SMD. A cross portfolio group of Scottish Government officials from homelessness, health, justice and a range of other policy areas are working to develop further proposals in this area, with plans for input from stakeholders and those with lived experience. The Scottish Government's response to Hard Edges Scotland has helped influence the establishment of the Inclusive Scotland Fund, announced in Programme for Government, which will provide financial support to local areas in addressing SMD.



**Additional action - Support the homelessness system to respond more appropriately to the shared needs of mothers and children**

We will work with colleagues in Children and Families and in Health Improvement to identify how local authorities can respond better to mothers and children and incorporate this in:

- a) the work on RRTP set out above;
- b) the emerging work to support and empower the frontline including through psychologically-informed approaches;
- c) ensuring the experiences of women facing severe and multiple disadvantage are reflected in the work emerging from Hard Edges - in particular considering the needs of women who have had multiple children removed and/or are at risk and more broadly seeking to understand whether the ways in which severe and multiple disadvantage impacts differently on women.

# Other actions

---



**Action – We will summarise data available for people with the range of protected characteristics who are experiencing homelessness in 2019.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government published data relating to people with protected characteristics experiencing homelessness in November 2019.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government intends to publish updates to this analysis through the homelessness statistics in future years, starting June in 2020. This will help build understanding of the experiences of all groups with protected characteristics.



**Action – We will conduct impact assessments.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government is conducting equality impact assessments as required, including for the Unsuited Accommodation Order and the modification of local connection legislation. Local authorities are being encouraged and supported to include equality impact assessments in their Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans and the November publication of the Equality Homelessness Statistics will help build understanding and knowledge in this area.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will continue to conduct equality impact assessments and build understanding of the interactions between protected characteristics and homelessness, especially the Participation Programme, prevention pathways, rapid rehousing and housing first.



**Action – We will collect data about protected characteristics through the homelessness data collections.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government is exploring options for updating the homelessness data collections to include questions on more of the protected characteristics.

**Next steps** – This will be on the agenda of the next homelessness statistics user group meeting in early 2020, led by the Scottish Government to support local authority statisticians. The meeting will seek to share good local authority practice and encourage change of practice at a local as well as national level. This will include building understanding of experiences of women with other protected characteristics.



**Action – We will ensure Scottish Government data collections reflect the increased priority of tackling homelessness.**

**Progress** – The Scottish Government has held initial discussions about questions previously asked in the Scottish Household Survey.

**Next steps** – We will fully explore the benefits and drawbacks of adding homelessness questions to existing national surveys.



**Action – We will develop the evidence base as we take forward the actions set out in the Action Plan.**

**Progress** – References have been made throughout the Annual Report to specific areas in which we are improving our evidence base.

**Next steps** – We will continue to work with partners across the public and voluntary sector to seek to understand the impact of the significant changes being made, for people experiencing homelessness and for the services that support them.



**Action - Using our current homelessness data collections and the analysis set out above we will report annually to the Scottish Parliament on our progress towards delivering the actions and outcomes.**

**Progress** – We made a commitment to report annually to Parliament on progress towards delivering the 2018 *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan*. The progress made in the first year demonstrates the commitment and ambition of all partners involved with 39 of the 49 actions have been progressed.

**Next steps** – We intend to publish the next annual report in February 2021 so that it can report on the most up to date statistics which will be published in January 2021.



**Action - we will undertake an analysis of the economic impacts of the actions set out in this plan**

**Progress** – Initial discussions have taken place and we are considering opportunities to better understand the economic impacts with analytical colleagues.

**Next steps** – The Scottish Government will draw on available evidence to seek to understand the economic impact of the actions being implemented.

# Concluding comments

---

The *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan* set out a clear, ambitious programme of change to deliver on our shared commitment to end homelessness. By acting in 2019 on the 70 recommendations made by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group we are beginning to make our vision a reality. Partners across local and national government and delivery partners have begun to bring about lasting change and improvement for people facing, or at risk of, homelessness.

While this transformation will take time, and several important levers including welfare reform and immigration remain reserved, this Annual Report demonstrates the significant progress we have already made and the considerable momentum behind our work to end homelessness. Our partners in housing and the wider third and public sector are key to maintaining this momentum as we continue to drive forward the Action Plan commitments in 2020 and beyond.

Our focus remains on keeping people at the heart of our work and we will continue to prioritise preventing homelessness whenever we can and getting people back into a settled home, with support as needed, as quickly as possible. We will continue to report annually on our progress and the next annual report will be published early in 2021.



The Scottish Government has taken a bold position on ending homelessness, and has demonstrated in the first year of the Ending Homelessness Together plan that it is determined to tackle and end homelessness by supporting people and by preventing homelessness. It is clearly following through on the commitments it made when the HARSAG was created.

There is no time to waste. Ending homelessness is urgent. It has a devastating impact on individuals and families, and is costly to society as a whole. It is not inevitable, but it is going to take a concerted and lasting effort by the Scottish Government and many, many partner organisations to end it once and for all. We look forward to seeing urgent progress in the second year of the plan and beyond.

**Jon Sparkes, Crisis**

**Chair of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) from October 2017 to July 2018**



# ANNEX 1 – HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS

---

## Household support needs

To respond well to homelessness we need to understand what people’s individual needs are and we know (Table 1 below) that households assessed as homeless are increasingly likely to report having at least one support need. This underlines the importance of embedding a person-centred approach, and may also indicate a rise in complex situations. We know that resolving homelessness requires much more than simply housing for many people. The range of needs captured in the official statistics demonstrates the importance of joined-up working across housing, health, social care and education services.

**Table 1: Identified Support Needs of Homeless Households Scotland 2017-18 to 2018-19**

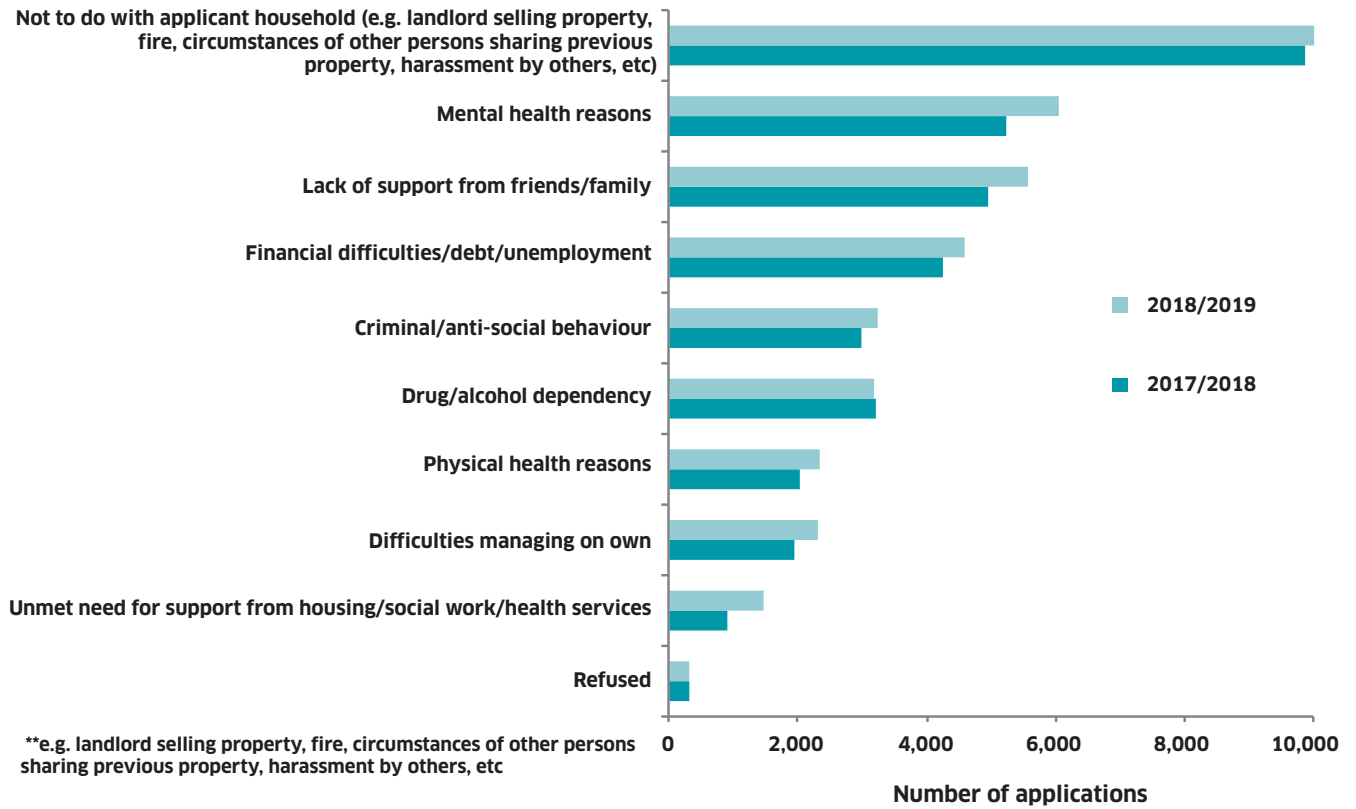
Support need	2017/18	2018/19
Learning disability	808	792
Physical disability	1,505	1,533
Medical condition	2,815	2,873
Drug or alcohol dependency	3,303	3,345
Basic housing management/independent living skills	6,348	6,866
Mental health problem	6,672	7,410
<b>Where at least one support need identified</b>	<b>13,504</b>	<b>14,506</b>

## Reasons for failing to maintain accommodation

As Table 1 (above) shows, there has been an increase in the number of people who identify a support need when they make a homelessness application. When we look at reasons people give for failing to maintain accommodation, mental health reasons, lack of support from friends/family and financial difficulties are all major reasons given. Whilst the main reason overall is ‘not to do with the applicant household’, 16-17 year old applicants are more likely to give their reason as lack of support from friends/family and over 50s were more likely to say it was due to physical health problems. Couples with children said they had an unmet need for support from housing/social work/health services.

Increases from the previous year to mental health reasons, lack of support and unmet need for support are all particularly concerning. We want to see a reduction in all of these as we build understanding through working in partnership across health, social care and other areas to improve outcomes for people with complex needs.

**Chart 2: Reasons for failing to maintain accommodation: Scotland 2018-19**



## Reasons for homelessness

In designing interventions to prevent homelessness it is crucial we understand the drivers of homelessness.

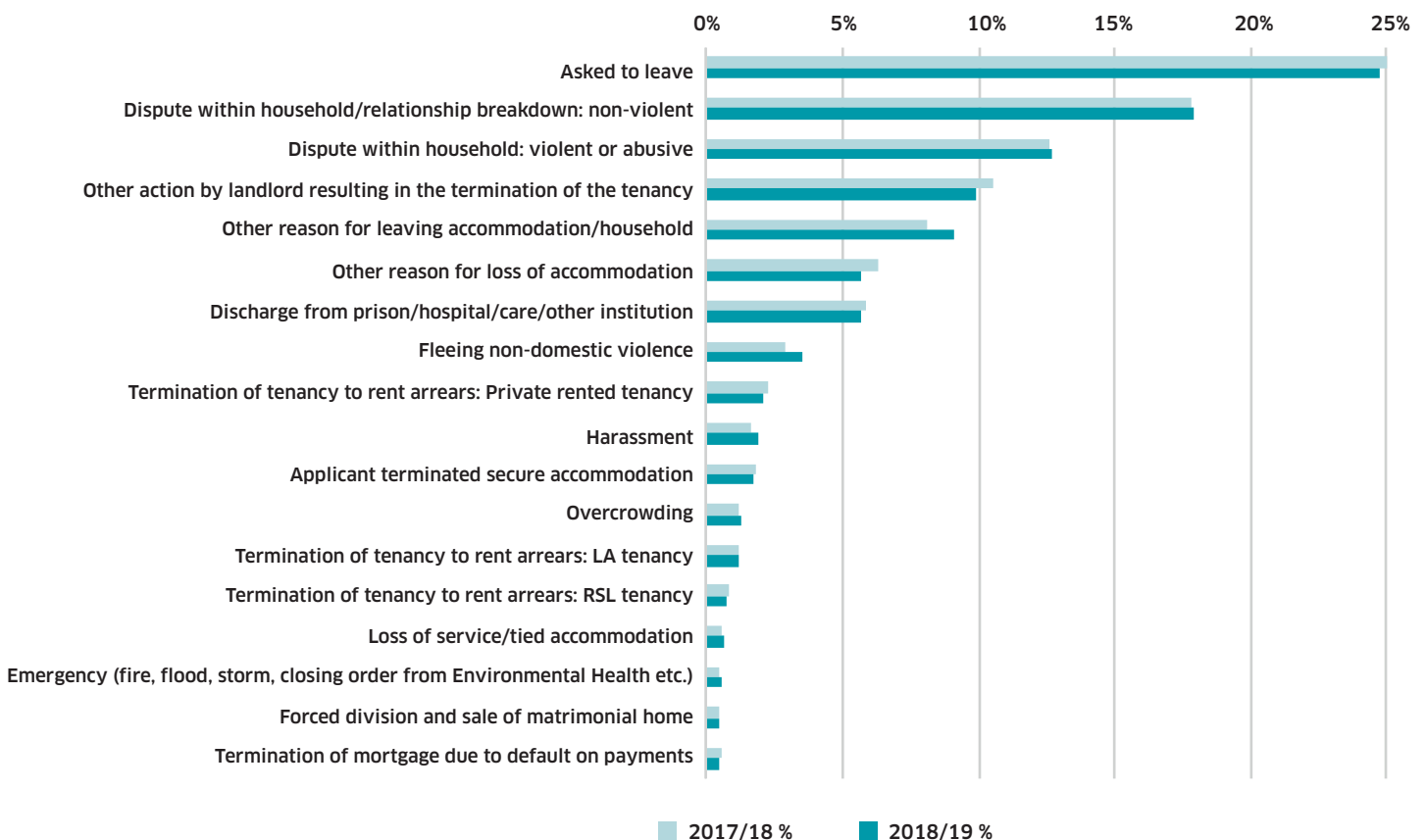
We know there are a number of different reasons people give when making a homelessness application. The most common reason when looking across all applications is that the applicant was asked to leave their current accommodation (see Chart 3). For younger applicants this is even more likely (over half of applications in this age group).

When we consider gender, for women the most common reason for making an application is a violent or abusive dispute within the household (22% of all female main applicants, compared to 5% of applications from male main applicants). For men the most common reason is 'asked to leave'.

More people made homelessness applications in 2018/19 (than 2017/18) due to relationship breakdown and violence outside the home and there was a slight drop in the proportion of people being discharged from prison, hospital or care.

Whilst we would hope our focus on prevention will drive reductions in the number of homelessness applications over time, we would expect to see particular decreases among at risk groups for which we are developing prevention pathways, including people experiencing domestic abuse.

**Chart 3: Main reason for making homelessness applications**



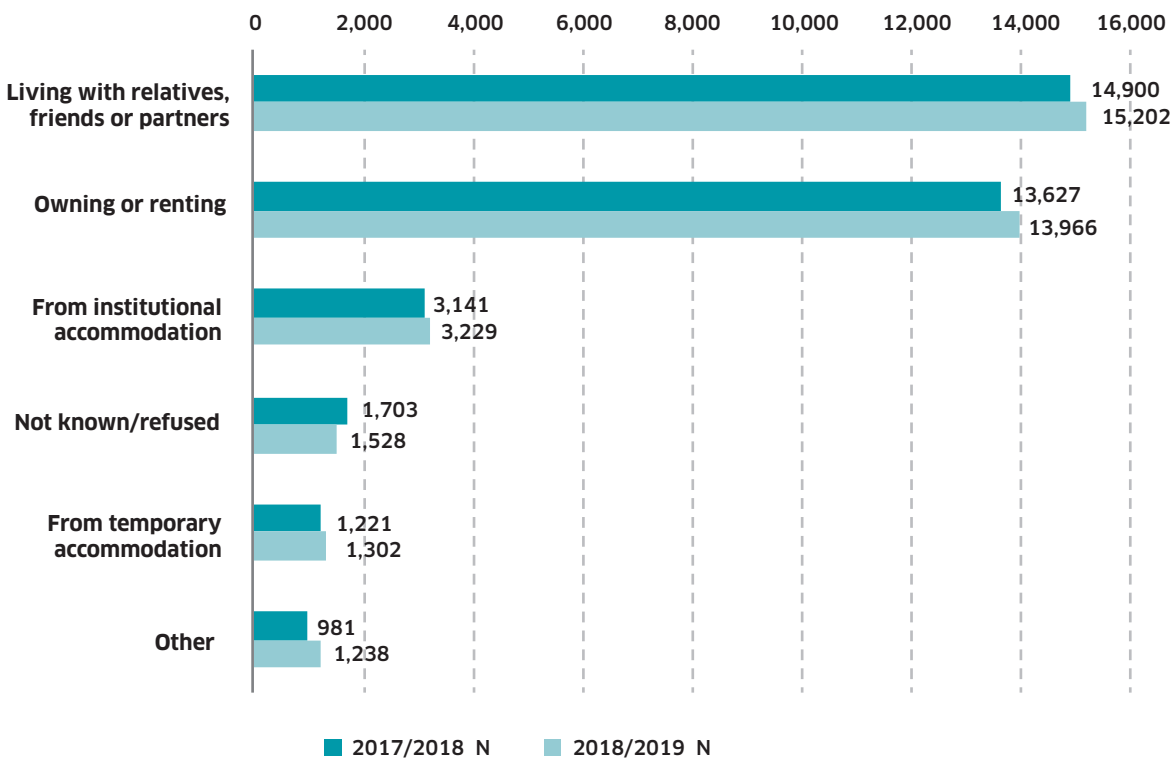


## Prior housing circumstances

A further factor in understanding how best to prevent homelessness is to understand people's living situations before they make a homelessness application. The majority of applicants had either been living with friends or family or owning or renting before making their application (see Chart 4). Younger homelessness applicants are far more likely to have been living with friends than older applicants who were much more likely to have been owning or renting.

Over time as local and national government work together to embed homelessness prevention we expect to see all these numbers decrease. We anticipate that the partnerships we are developing with the wider public sector, including health and justice will lead to a particular reduction in the numbers of those leaving institutional accommodation.

**Chart 4: Prior housing circumstances of applicants Scotland 2017/18 to 2018/19**



## Use of temporary accommodation

Temporary accommodation is a vital safety net for people in emergency situations. The changes to the response to homelessness since devolution have led to a far greater proportion of people facing homelessness being able to access this important protection. Only around 4,000 people were given temporary accommodation in 1995-96, rising to around 11,000 at the time of the abolition of priority need in 2012. However, we recognise that the most effective response to homelessness is to support people back to a settled home of their own in mainstream housing as quickly as possible. That is why we are now seeking to move to a system of rapid rehousing, where there is far less need for any form of temporary accommodation – as well as ensuring that when it is needed, the quality of the accommodation is high, and stays there are short.

The 2018-19 Homelessness Statistics reflect the period to March 2019, just before the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans developed by every local authority were due to begin implementation. There were 10,989 households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2019, an increase of 56 households (1%) since the previous year.

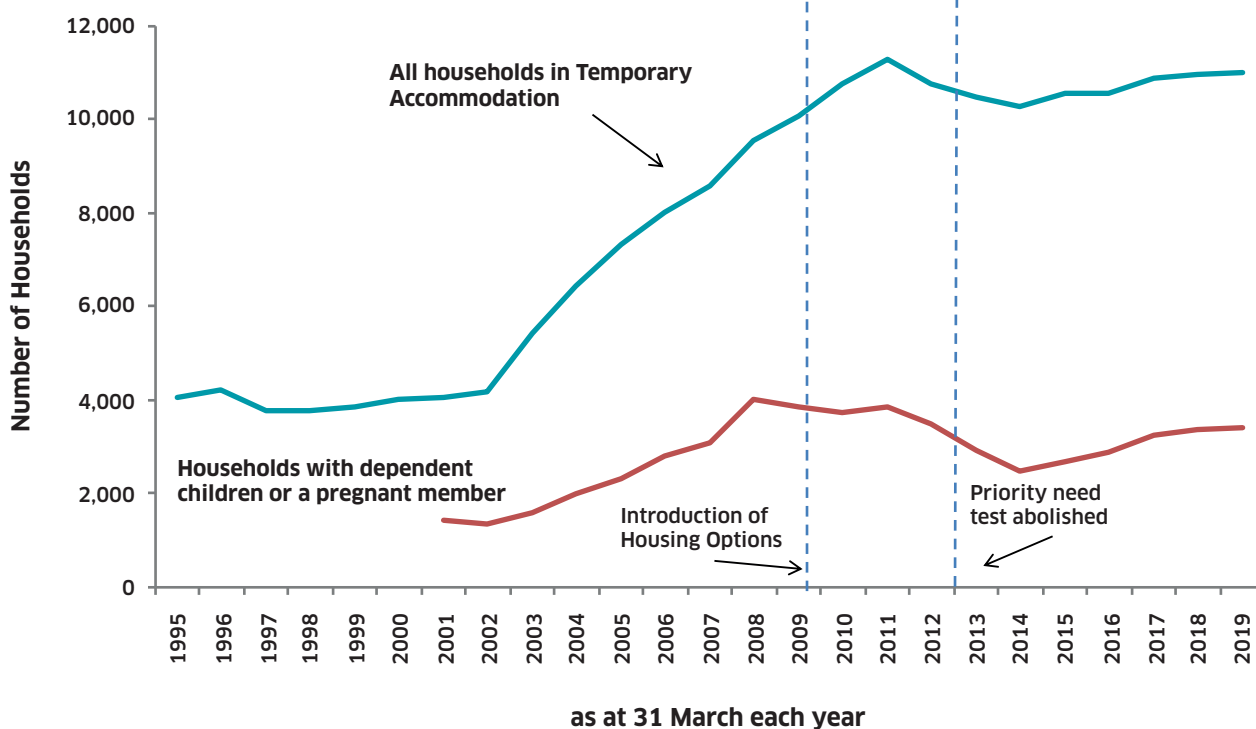
We anticipate the changes we are bringing about to legislation and guidance will help reduce the length of time people stay in temporary accommodation and improve the quality of the accommodation. We also anticipate the implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans developed by every local authority, which include plans for Housing First provision throughout Scotland, will result in fewer people needing to be housed in temporary accommodation.

In the early years of implementation, we may see an initial increase in numbers of people in temporary accommodation as people who have previously not engaged with the homelessness system start to come forward for assistance from the local authority. This may lead to a short-term increase in the numbers of households in temporary accommodation. Additionally as people who have been living for longer periods of time in temporary accommodation move into mainstream housing, we recognise that this may also initially increase the average length of stay in temporary accommodation. However it must be recognised we expect this to be short-term and the longer term outcomes of helping more people and increasing the numbers into settled and sustained accommodation in the longer term are what we are aiming for.

As we move to a stronger prevention approach to homelessness, temporary accommodation will no longer be required to the same extent and we anticipate that the numbers across all these categories will reduce. The length of time some households spend in temporary accommodation, bed and breakfast in particular, is not acceptable. We anticipate the extension of the unsuitable accommodation order, a focus on prevention, and implementation of rapid rehousing transition plans will all work together to deliver a significant reduction in the use of bed and breakfast, in particular where it is used for long periods.

In order to understand the impact of these changes, we need to continue to record the number of people in temporary accommodation and the length of time they are staying. We also need to continue to work closely with local authorities to understand the local experience and learning from the changes, and to gather further intelligence of what might lie behind the headline statistics.

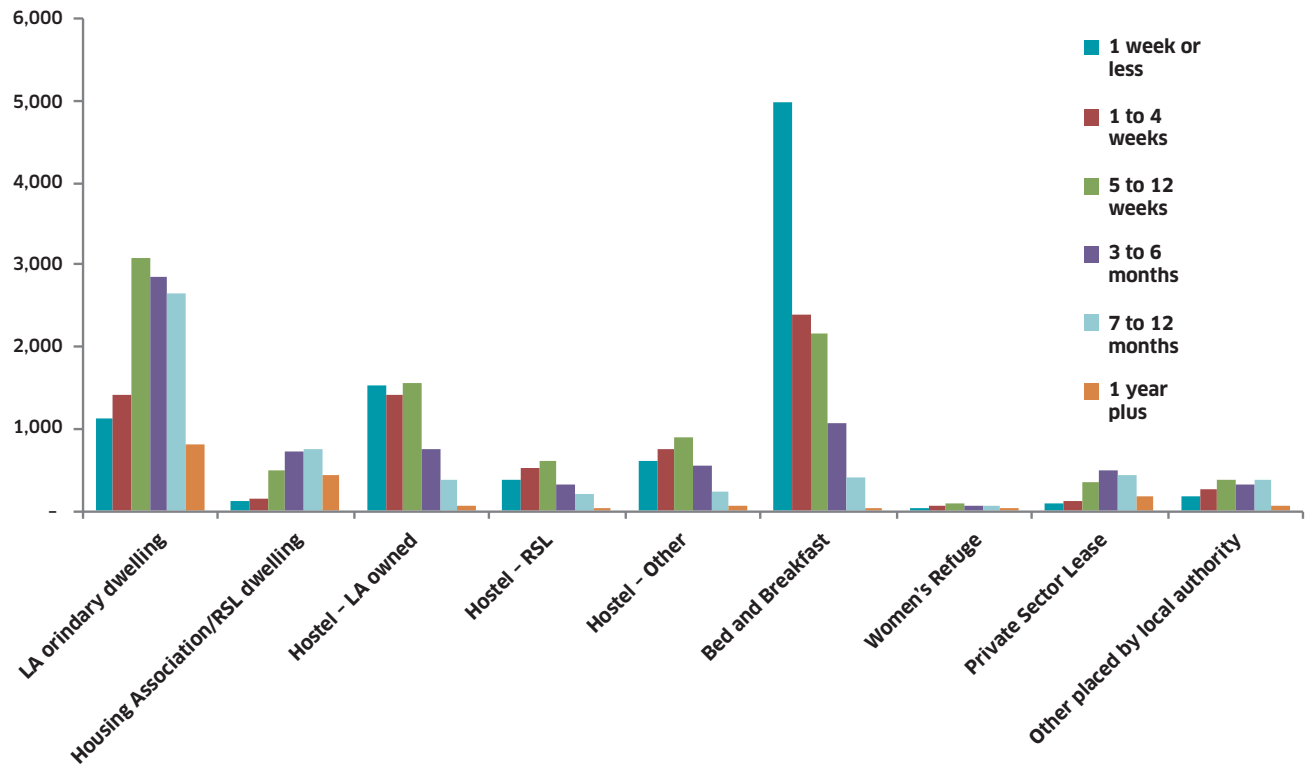
**Chart 5: Households in Temporary Accommodation at 31 March each year**



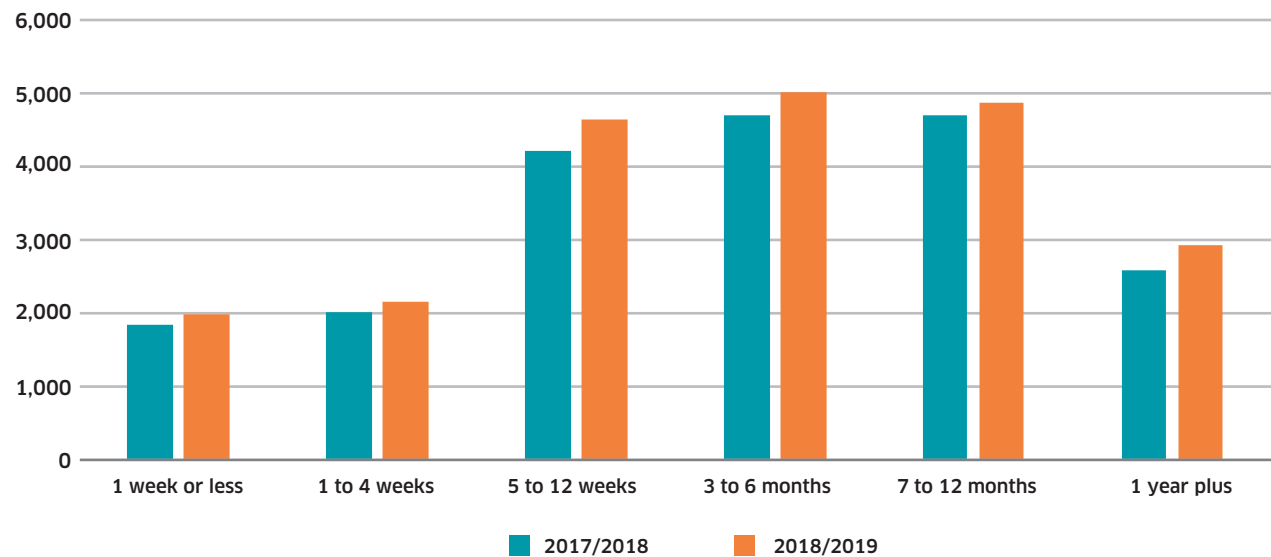
Of these households in temporary accommodation, 3,415 had children or a pregnant member – an increase of 65 households (2%) compared to the same date one year previous, and the fifth consecutive annual increase. The number of children in temporary accommodation increased by 180 children (3%) to 6,795 compared to the same date one year ago, and the fifth consecutive annual increase.

Chart 6 shows that across temporary accommodation placements which ended in 2018/19 the average length of stay can vary by accommodation type. Local authority, housing association and private sector placements are likely to involve longer periods, with hostel placements and in particular bed and breakfast placements tending to be much shorter in length. However, in some cases such placements last for several months and in some cases over a year. And as Chart 7 shows (below) there have been increases across all lengths of stay in temporary accommodation since 2017/18.

**Chart 6: Duration in Temporary Accommodation by placement type**  
Based on the duration of individual placements that ended during 2018/19



**Chart 7: Duration in temporary accommodation Scotland 2017/18 to 2018/19**



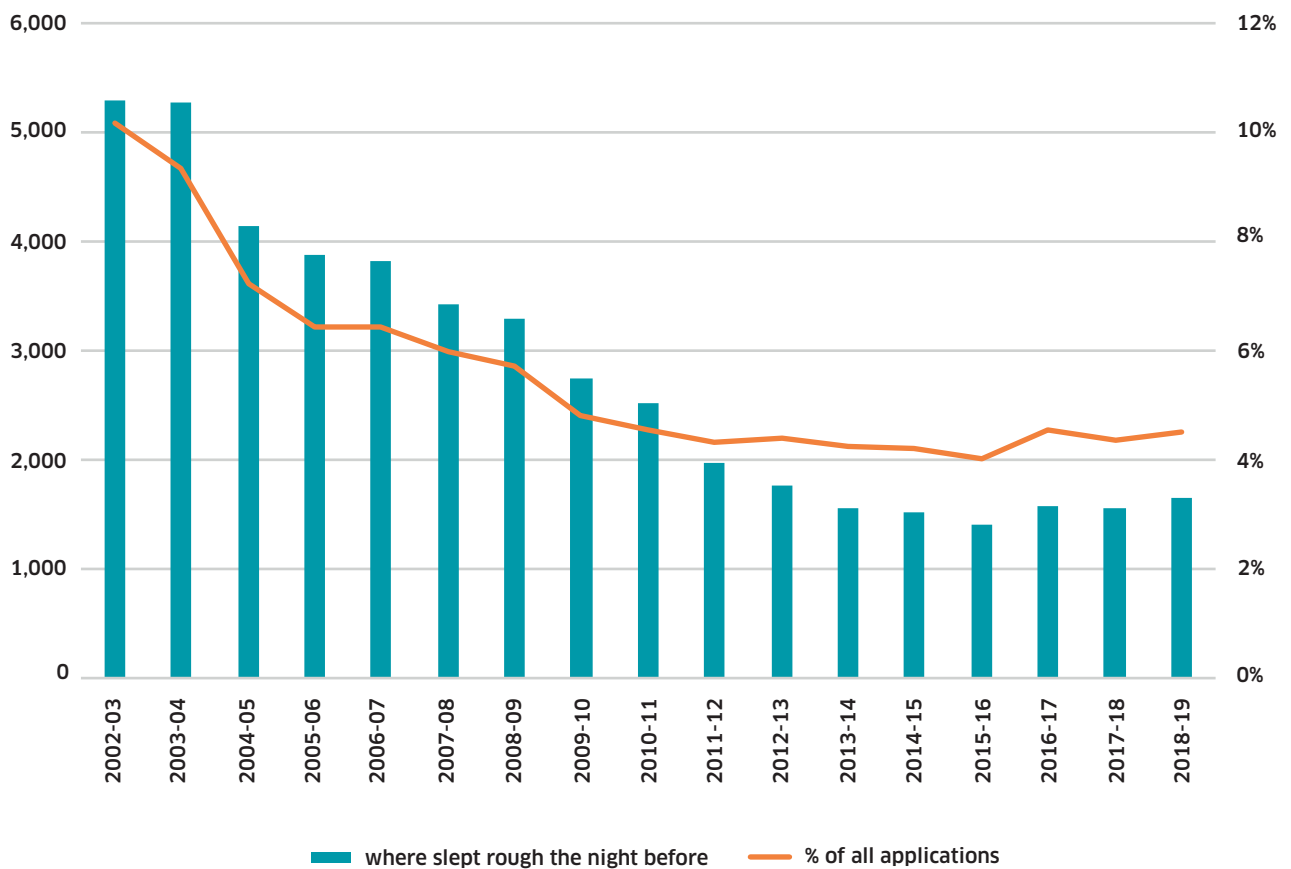
## Rough sleeping

A major focus for our work is around preventing rough sleeping, recognising it as the most urgent and severe form of homelessness.

Although the proportion of applications where a household member reported sleeping rough at least once in the 3 months prior to making an application has reduced considerably since 2002/03, since 2014/15 the number has been increasing slightly and the most recent statistics show that 1,643 applicants slept rough the night before applying for assistance. Male applicants are by far the largest group reporting sleeping rough in the previous 3 months.

We are committed to delivering our vision that no-one sleeps rough and we recognise that the most effective, sustainable way to achieve this is not by simply picking people up off the streets and transferring them to temporary accommodation. Instead by focusing on ensuring everyone has a settled home as well as supporting frontline outreach and emergency accommodation to help people access support to help them avoid rough sleeping, or find sustainable routes out of it.

**Chart 8: Rough sleeping the night before application – Scotland 2002/03 to 2018/19**

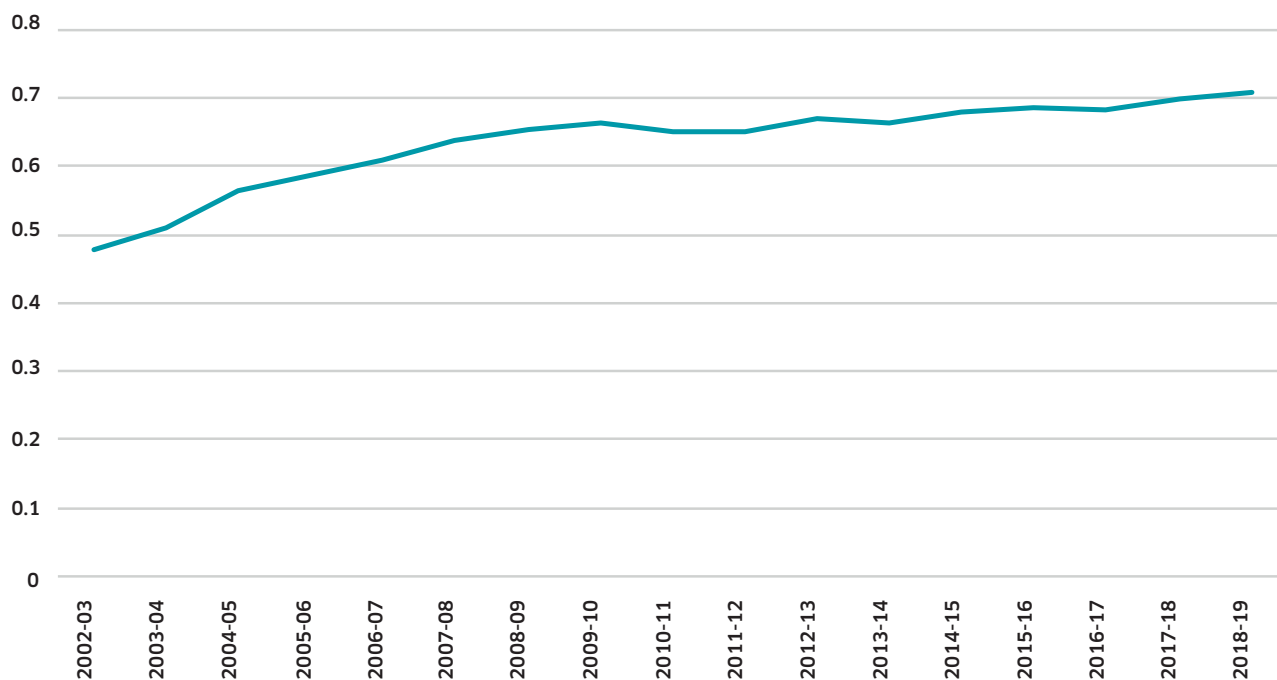


## Outcomes

It is important that we know what happens to someone following their homelessness application so we can understand what is working well in our system and tackle issues and barriers effectively.

Since 2002/03 we have seen a steady increase in households securing settled accommodation<sup>17</sup>. We plan to build on this important success with continued efforts to deliver Rapid Rehousing and Housing First. Chart 9 below shows that around 70% of households secured accommodation in 2018/19 compared to fewer than 50% in 2002/03. Older applicants are more likely to secure settled accommodation and younger applicants (particularly aged 16-17) are more likely to move in with friends or family.

**Chart 9: Proportion of unintentionally homeless households securing settled accommodation 2002/03 to 2018/19**



<sup>17</sup> Usually a tenancy with a local authority landlord, housing association or tenancy in the private sector

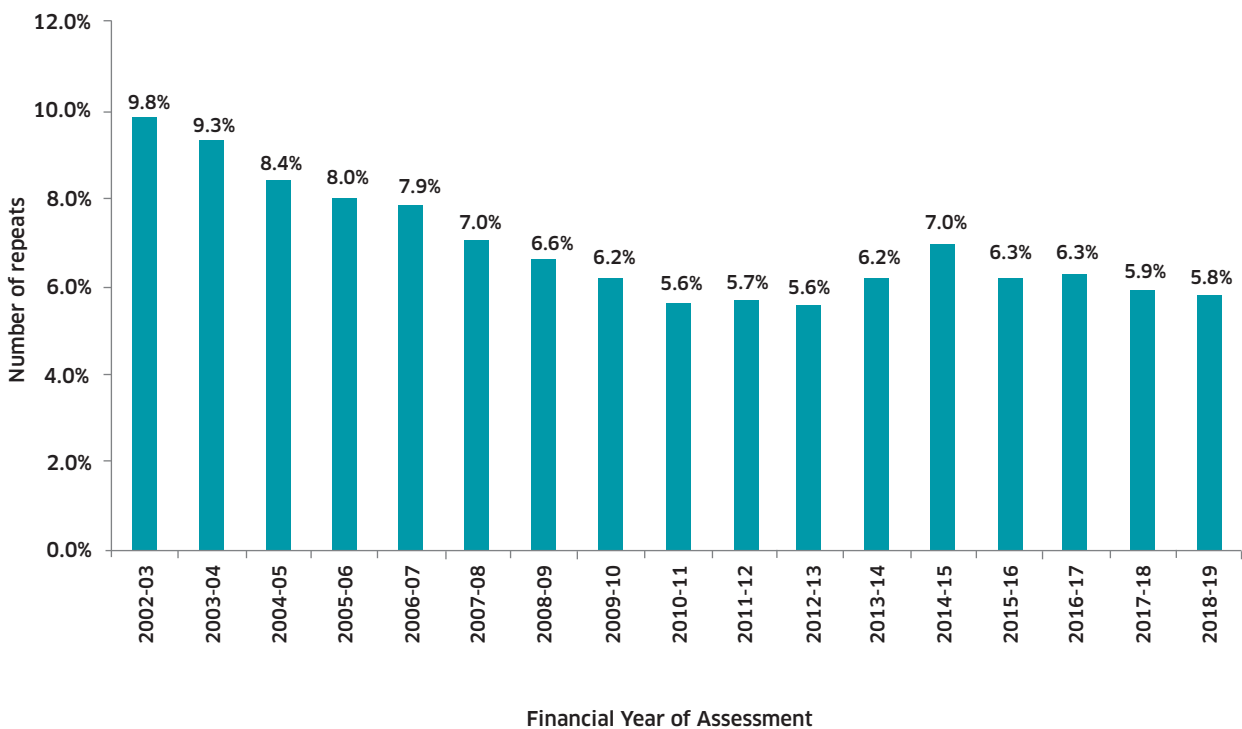
## Repeat homelessness

In order to end homelessness we need to ensure that people get the right help to reduce the risk of homelessness happening again. The proportion of repeat homelessness applications reduced significantly between 2002/03 and 2009/10 but we have seen little improvement in the figures since then.

Our ambition to prevent homelessness from happening is even more important when considering people who have already experienced homelessness. We anticipate these proportions reducing over the coming years as we embed person-centred approaches to receiving support and focus on supporting people to maintain settled accommodation.

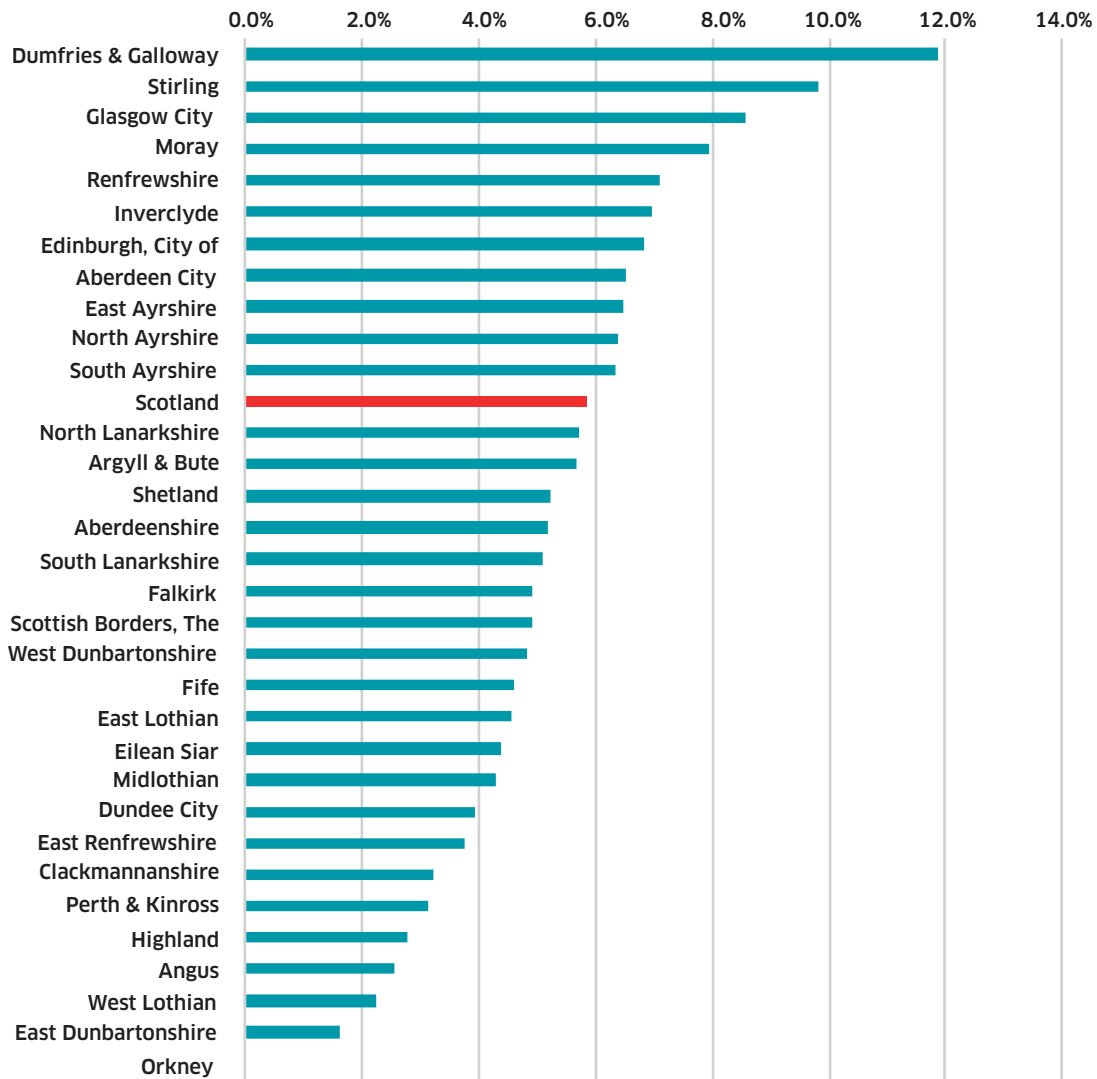
It is also worth noting there is considerable variation between local authorities in the proportions of repeat homelessness applications they receive (Chart 11 on page 52). There is likely to be much to learn from those local authorities with low proportions of repeat applications and we will explore this through year two of implementation of our *Action Plan* in 2020.

**Chart 10: Scotland: Repeat homelessness applications**





**Chart 11: Repeat homelessness by local authority**



# ANNEX 2 – WOMEN AND HOMELESSNESS

---

As highlighted on page 17, we have committed to ensure the actions we take to end homelessness are informed by a gendered analysis and will meet the specific needs of women experiencing homelessness.

This commitment was made following engagement with a range of stakeholders and we have developed a programme of work to integrate a gendered approach to delivery of homelessness policy and practice, as summarised below and noted throughout the document.

Key to embedding a person-centred approach will be our work to developing better understanding of women's experiences of homelessness. We have already conducted a brief evidence review and further evidence was presented at our Gender and Homelessness workshop in August 2019. We will work with partners with expertise in gender as well as partners in the homelessness sector to deepen our understanding of the issues facing women in homelessness through 2020.

Recognising that domestic abuse is a major reason for women experiencing homelessness, we are taking forward work to improve housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse and first meeting of the working group leading on this will be held early in 2020.

We know issues around access to resources, including social security entitlements, particularly impact on women. We will work with colleagues in housing, homelessness, child poverty, social security and employability to progress a Scottish Government wide approach to this issue, including around splitting Universal Credit payments for couples and ensuring direct rent payment to landlords remain as option.

Development towards a homelessness prevention duty is a key pillar of our transformative approach. The Prevention Duty Review Group will be informed by understanding of the particular issues faced by women, and their recommendations will be informed by gender-specific experiences of homelessness. The evidence which feeds into the review group's discussion will include gendered analyses.

In response to understanding that women do not have equal access to statutory services, we will also use the next phase of RRTP development to proactively work with local authorities. We will encourage them to take a gendered approach to their homelessness plans and respond to the needs of women in homelessness in their local area in accordance with their findings.

We know relationships formed at the frontline are key and the frontline needs support and training to particularly reflect the needs of women. We will work with stakeholders to ensure the training and support being developed as part of our programme to support and empower frontline services is gender sensitive. We will also support the Housing First Training Academy, which is supporting the Housing First Pathfinder, programme to include training on gender inequality. We will ensure this training is made more widely available as Housing First develops throughout all areas of Scotland.

# ANNEX 3 – HOMELESSNESS VISION

## Homelessness vision:

Everyone has a home that meets their needs  
Homelessness is ended



### National Performance Framework: Our Values

'We are a society which treats all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion...'

## To end homelessness we will:

The infographic is divided into five vertical panels, each with a different background color and a specific strategy to end homelessness. Each panel includes a quote from a person's perspective.

- Embed a person-centred approach** (Teal background):
  - Quote: "MY SUPPORT IS FLEXIBLE AND BUILDS ON MY STRENGTHS AND SUCCESSES"
  - Quote: "I ALWAYS HAVE CHOICE AND CONTROL"
  - Quote: "I AM LISTENED TO, VALUED AND TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT"
- Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place** (Green background):
  - Quote: "I CAN FIND SUPPORT QUICKLY IF I NEED IT, BEFORE REACHING CRISIS POINT"
  - Quote: "I AM HELPED TO KEEP MY HOME, WHICH HELPS ME FOCUS ON OTHER GOALS"
  - Quote: "MY HOUSING OPTIONS ARE CONSIDERED WHEN MY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE"
- Join up planning and resources to tackle homelessness** (Purple background):
  - Quote: "I KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP"
  - Quote: "I EXPECT SERVICES TO WORK TOGETHER, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ME"
  - Quote: "THE HELP I GET IS RIGHT FOR ME, AND REDUCES THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS HAPPENING AGAIN"
  - Quote: "I TRUST THAT THE RIGHT PEOPLE ARE INFORMED ABOUT MY NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES"
- Respond quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens** (Orange background):
  - Quote: "I EXPECT MY HOUSING CRISIS TO BE RESPONDED TO WITH URGENCY"
- Prioritise settled homes for all** (Red background):
  - Quote: "I CAN EXERCISE MY RIGHT TO ACCESS AND MAINTAIN A SAFE AND SECURE HOME"
  - Quote: "I BUILD AND MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND AM PART OF THE COMMUNITY"



© Crown copyright 2020

ISBN: 978-1-83960-387-7

This document is also available on The Scottish Government website:  
**[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)**

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS670102 01/20)

W W W . g o v . s c o t