

Home at the Heart

West Dunbartonshire Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 to 2023/24

Year 2 update and revised plan

June 2021



Home at the Heart – West Dunbartonshire Council’s Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

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Executive Summary

“[Home at the Heart](#)” is West Dunbartonshire Council’s first Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for the period 2019/20-2023/24. The plan was developed in partnership with key stakeholders including the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and all Registered Social Landlords operating in West Dunbartonshire.

The plan highlights the good progress that has been made across West Dunbartonshire in recent years through the implementation of our homelessness strategic approach ‘[More Than a Roof](#)’. The plan also confirms that rough sleeping is not a widespread issue within West Dunbartonshire and that the rehousing outcomes being achieved for homeless households are largely positive.

However, challenges exist, with the levels of overall homelessness and youth homelessness remaining among the highest in the country, the proportion of homeless households with multiple and complex needs remains high and the number of households that lose contact or do not secure a settled housing outcome is a cause for concern.

Our plan acknowledges the challenges faced in terms of developing appropriate Accommodation and Support Pathways which work for homeless households and has the following four key outcomes:

- Deliver a Whole Systems approach to the prevention of homelessness;
- Enable service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly;
- To develop interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment; and
- Implement a Housing First model which enables the most excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment.

Section 1 - Context

Homelessness context in West Dunbartonshire

Our current approach to homelessness outlined in our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is being implemented within the context of previous successful homelessness strategies which have resulted in incidences of homelessness in West Dunbartonshire reducing significantly in recent years.

Table 1 – Homelessness in West Dunbartonshire			
Homelessness Strategy 2008/13	2008/09	2012/13	Reduction
Homeless applications	2140	1364	36%
Homelessness Strategy 2013/16	2013/14	2015/16	Reduction
Homeless applications	1368	1124	18%
Homelessness Strategy 2017/20	2017/18	2019/20	Reduction
Homeless applications	1048	1021	2.6%

Current homelessness position

These numbers have plateaued in recent years and the number of applications, assessments carried out and assessments resulting in a duty to provide settled accommodation in the first 2 years of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan are outlined below.

Table 2 - Homeless applications and assessments in West Dunbartonshire		
R RTP Years 1 & 2	2019/20	2020/21
Homeless applications	1021	1053
Total assessments	1020	1050
Assessed with a duty to house	854	861
% with duty to house	83.7%	82.0%

The reasons for homeless applications shows that consistently the core drivers of homelessness in West Dunbartonshire are households being asked to leave their current accommodation and disputes within a household (both violent and non-violent), accounting for over 70% of all applications.

Table 3 - Reason for homeless application	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on payments	54	5.2	38	3.7	12	1.1%
Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy	83	8.0	74	7.2	30	2.8%
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	21	2.0	36	3.5	11	1.0%
Loss of service / tied accommodation	1	0.1	1	0.1	3	0.3%
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	45	4.3	49	4.8	34	3.2%
Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order from Environmental Health etc.)	15	1.4	8	0.8	8	0.8%

Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	7	0.7	3	0.3	1	0.1%
Other reason for loss of accommodation	22	2.1	31	3.0	18	1.7%
Dispute within household: violent or abusive	168	16.2	215	21.0	231	21.9%
Dispute within household / relationship breakdown: non-violent	185	17.8	153	15.1	244	23.2%
Fleeing non-domestic violence	27	2.6	38	3.7	47	4.5%
Harassment	6	0.6	14	1.4	25	2.4%
Overcrowding	3	0.3	18	1.8	21	2.0%
Asked to leave	265	25.6	263	25.7	287	27.3%
Other reason for leaving accommodation / household	135	13.0	81	7.9	81	7.7%
All	1037	100%	1021	100%	1053	100.0%

The Council continues to perform very well in relation to the benchmark set by the Code of Guidance on Homelessness and is largely meeting its requirements to assess homeless applications within 28 days. Only 13 applications were assessed out-with this timescale in the first 2 years of our RRTP, with 99.6% of applications being assessed within this timescale during 2020/21.

Table 4 - Length of time to assess application	2019/2020		2020/2021	
Same day	99	9.7%	62	5.9%
1-6 days	290	28.4%	289	27.5%
7-13 days	174	17.1%	203	19.3%
14-28 days	450	44.1%	492	46.9%
28-55 days	8	0.7%	3	0.3%
56+ days	1	0%	1	0.1%
All applications	1040	100%	1050	100%

The number of homeless households who reported rough sleeping at time of presentation over the past 2 years is outlined in the table below:

Table 5 – Households reporting rough sleeping at presentation		
RRTP Years 1 & 2	2019/20	2020/21
Slept rough during the 3 months preceding application	91	96
Slept rough on the night preceding application	43	42

As part of our homelessness assessment further questions are asked to better understand the reasons for instances of rough sleeping that are reported. An annual analysis of any households reporting rough sleeping prior to presentation is carried out. Findings from this exercise show that the vast majority state that they have spent part of an evening rough sleeping in emergency circumstances prior to presenting as homeless and no extended periods of rough sleeping have been identified. This continues to be monitored as part of our wider Performance Management Framework.

The average length of time taken to close cases during the first two years of our RRTP is outlined in the table below. Unfortunately this figure increased during 2020/21 largely as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 6 – Average case duration to discharge of duty		
RRTP Years 1 & 2	2019/20	2020/21
Average time to discharge duty	27.1	32.4

At 31 March 2021, West Dunbartonshire had 513 open homeless cases; with 452 of these cases having been assessed with a duty to rehouse (some had not yet had an assessment decision on this date).

Temporary accommodation

The provision and use of temporary accommodation during 2020/21 was heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. A key impact was an increase in demand for all forms of temporary accommodation, due to an increase in homeless applications and restrictions that paused and limited letting activity across the sector.

To ensure that we continued to meet our statutory homelessness duties throughout the crisis, we had to quickly increase the provision of emergency accommodation. This was done via the Council's own housing stock, stock secured from local RSL partners and by the development of a new Private Sector Leasing Scheme, where the Council has leased properties from registered private sector landlords within the West Dunbartonshire area.

A summary of this provision and of households living in all forms of temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2021 is outlined in the table below:

Table 7 – Households living in temporary accommodation			
Type of provision	Provider	Capacity 31 Mar 2021	Occupancy 31 Mar 2021
Temporary furnished flats	WDC	243	220
Temporary furnished flats	RSL	15	15
Temporary furnished flats	PSL	19	19
Interim Supported Accommodation	WDC	20	17
Interim Supported Accommodation	Blue Triangle	31	24
Interim Supported Accommodation	Action for Children	10	9

The average time spent in temporary accommodation in days for the past 5 years is outlined in the table below.

Table 8 - Type of temporary accommodation	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
LA ordinary dwelling	97.1	94.8	104.5	113.9	143.1
Housing association/RSL dwelling	0	0	0	0	0
Hostel - local authority owned	47.7	55.2	59.3	91.7	80
Hostel – RSL	98.1	117	113	126.1	168.2
Hostel – other	91.2	93.9	66.2	79	108.6

Bed and breakfast	6	0	3.2	1.7	1.9
Women's refuge	86	256.5	0	96	0
Private sector lease	0	0	0	0	0
Other placed by authority	55.2	65.3	118.9	75.1	97.4
Total (ALL)	91.5	94.2	94.6	103.5	133.6

As outlined, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the overall average time that homeless households spent in temporary accommodation during 2020/21. However, due to our existing provision of temporary furnished flats and our ability to increase this provision in response to the pandemic, we have managed to avoid any large scale use of B&B or hotel accommodation, with only 16 households being placed in this accommodation during the year and for very short timescales (an average of 1.9 days). More detail around the time homeless households spent in temporary accommodation in relation to the targets outlined in our RRTP is provided in Section 2.

Outcomes

The outcomes of all homeless applications closed during 2020/21 are outlined in the table below:

Table 9 - Outcomes	2019/20	2020/21
Scottish Secure Tenancy	602	620
Private Rented Tenancy	20	25
Hostel	0	0
Bed & Breakfast	0	0
Returned to previous/ friends/ vol org.	102	135
Women's Refuge	1	0
Residential care/nursing home/shared supported	0	0
Other - Known	63	54
Other - Not Known	17	15
No duty owed to applicant	129	179
Contact lost before duty discharge	93	51
All	1027	1079

One of the key objectives of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is to ensure that homeless households are able to access settled accommodation as quickly as possible.

We have developed a RRTP model which takes into account the level of new homeless decisions, the backlog of homeless households, projected future demand, the number of lets made to homeless households and projected letting activity. The RRTP model uses this data to determine the number of lets that will be required for homeless households on an annual basis, alongside a projected lettings % target.

The below table details the targets that were set for Year 2 alongside the actual activity during 2020/21:

Table 10 - Calculation of homeless lets required and % of expected letting activity required to meet need - split by LA & RSL		
	Year 2 target	Year 2 actual
Lets required for to meet demand	781	613
Split LA	517	442
Split RSL	264	171
% Allocation of lets required		
LA	61%	63%
RSL	48%	37%

During 2020/21, whilst WDC increased the percentage of available lets that were made to homeless households, this was lower in number than projected due to reduced letting activity. Lets from RSL's to homeless households were also lower than projected, due in part to reduced letting activity and also due to the overall 48% target not being met. This resulted in an overall shortfall of 168 lets to homeless households and these are part of a backlog which are still waiting to be rehoused.

We update our RRTP model on an annual basis and this exercise has now been completed. Whilst letting activity was impacted in 2020/21 due to the lockdowns and restrictions that were put in place, this increased significantly in Quarter 4. The model therefore projects a return to more normal letting activity in 2021/22.

The key outputs in terms of lets that are necessary to meet the targets outlined in our RRTP are outlined in the table below:

Table 11 - Calculation of homeless lets required and % of expected letting activity required to meet need - split by LA & RSL			
	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Lets required for to meet demand	867	704	648
Split LA	567	415	381
Split RSL	300	289	267
Projected turnover			
Split LA	1,019*	779	779
Split RSL	546	546	546
% Allocation of lets required			
LA	56%	53%	49%
RSL	55%	53%	49%

* This includes 240 new builds due to be completed during the year.

The outcomes of our modelling have been shared with key strategic partners within West Dunbartonshire and we are engaging with our RSL partners to support the objective of meeting the number of lets to homeless households required in 2021/22 to meet the targets outlined in our RRTP and including this commitment within their RRTP Contribution Statement for 2021/22.

Any further impact of Covid-19 in terms of letting is unknown, however, activity will be monitored closely to ensure that the letting activity is directed adequately to homeless households to meet the existing demand and move households on from temporary accommodation.

There has also been improvement in the rate of tenancy sustainment for homeless households within West Dunbartonshire, increasing in each of the last 3 years and now above the Scottish average figure for all local authorities.

Table 12 - Tenancy sustainment (homeless lets)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
West Dunbartonshire Council	86.6%	90.0%	91.6%
Scottish LA average	87.3%	87.6%	89.9%

Section 2 – Year 2 Progress

Year 2 of our RRTP was not the year any of us planned. Covid-19, lockdowns and ongoing restrictions did impact plans; however, we still continued to reach milestones and made progress with our plan. Updates on Year 2 are detailed below.

RRTP Objective 1 – Whole Systems Approach to the Prevention of Homelessness

Enhanced Prevention Service

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected our plans to deliver a more proactive approach to prevention, where the officer would initiate contact with households identified as being at risk of homelessness. Emergency legislation was put in place that banned evictions taking place in both the social and private sector, resulting in a lower number of Section 11 notices being issued. In addition, the stay at home message throughout 2020/21 impacted on our plans to be more proactive in terms of carrying out home visits to help improve engagement with tenants and the likelihood of preventing homelessness.

This meant the enhanced prevention role altered and initially the officer was able to assist in our wider service response to the pandemic. The Prevention Officer also made proactive contact with local RSL's with the aim of identifying households at risk of homelessness and where a Section 11 notice may be issued once the restrictions ended.

As at 31 March there had been 70 referrals made directly to the Prevention Officer. This led to engagement with 52 households where advice and assistance was provided which included assistance in terms of agreeing sustainable arrears arrangements, referrals to Money Advice, assistance to apply for DHP payments and providing assistance from the pilot prevention fund where appropriate. In total 15 households were provided assistance from the fund with a total spend of £5,200 and at year end all these households remained in their tenancies and were maintaining agreed arrears arrangements. The underspend of this fund will be carried forward into Year 3 of the RRTP.

We continued to look at agreeing a new Section 11 process with our RSL partners to ensure consistency in terms of when cases are highlighted to the Prevention Officer. These discussions were affected by the impact of Covid-19 and the consequent ban on evictions and also by continued varying practices by our RSL partners and a lack of agreement in terms of when is the best point to serve a Section 11 notice.

Whilst there remains no overall agreement, there is consistency in terms of early intervention providing the best chance of preventing homelessness and recent discussions suggest most RSL's are agreeable to advising the Prevention Officer when a Notice of Proceedings is served. In addition we are developing good partnership working with key officers responsible for tenancy sustainment with local RSL's. This approach and the number of households referred will continue to be monitored closely during Year 3.

More widely, our prevention initiatives have led to a 37% increase in approaches being dealt with by our Housing Options Service during 2020/21. In terms of outcomes, there has been a slightly higher proportion where the outcome is a homeless application and a slightly lower proportion where homelessness has been prevented. This will continue to be monitored closely.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Prevent1 approaches	178	240	332
Prevent1 closures	177	221	249
*remained in current	43	70	75
*moved to alternative	71	57	53
*homeless application	42	58	68
*lost contact/NK/other	21	36	53
% homelessness prevented	64%	57%	51%
% closed with presentation	24%	26%	27%

R RTP Objective 2 – Enable service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly

Resettlement Service

We recruited a FTE staff member to provide this additional resettlement service to ensure all homeless households in West Dunbartonshire received this service. Due to the pandemic, however, the staff member wasn't in place until August 2020 and therefore there is an underspend in terms of staffing costs.

The impacts of the pandemic changed the way we delivered our Accommodation and Support Service as outlined above. In addition, due to the restrictions in place and the challenges that existed moving households into settled accommodation, a more intensive resettlement service evolved and not the structured 8 week service initially envisioned.

This involved not just the Resettlement Officer but staff across the homeless services and included identifying and addressing barriers that households faced when moving, such as the provision of furniture packs and carpets sourced from suppliers when it was difficult to access these.

Each partner of the R RTP updated their Contribution Statement and in particular all RSL partners agreed to new letting targets to help achieve the aims of the plan. Covid-19 and the ongoing restrictions due to the pandemic impacted letting activity (including delays in our new build programme), and the number of overall lets reduced as a result.

Whilst overall letting activity was less than projected, 468 homeless households with no/low support needs were rehoused and were supported to move into settled accommodation. The overall length of time households with no/low needs were open for, increased slightly in Year 2 to 19 weeks, though this still met our original target of 20 weeks and we have maintained existing targets for Years 3-5.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Target	23 weeks	20 weeks	17 weeks	15 weeks	13 weeks
Actual	15 weeks	19 weeks			

RRTP Objective 3 – interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment

Interim Supported Accommodation

During Year 2 the provision of our Housing Support and Accommodation Service was heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and new ways of working had to be developed. A key impact was an increase in demand for all forms of temporary accommodation, due to an increase in homeless applications and restrictions that paused and limited letting activity across the sector.

To ensure that we continued to meet our statutory homelessness duties throughout the crisis, we had to quickly increase the provision of emergency accommodation. This was done via the Council's own housing stock, stock secured from local RSL partners and by the development of a new Private Sector Leasing Scheme, where the Council has leased properties from registered private sector landlords within the West Dunbartonshire area.

To help facilitate this, we have managed to deliver additionality from within our own resources via the recruitment of 2 property officers within the support service and redirecting 2 existing Support Workers to carry out this function. This increased the capacity of existing support workers to provide support directly to homeless households and has allowed us to continue to provide support on a case by case basis, according to need. We therefore did not need to recruit an additional support worker from the RRTP funding and this resulted in spend of £36,000 not being directed to this.

Housing Pathways

Our Prison Leavers and "No Home for Domestic Abuse" campaigns continued in Year 2 and we reviewed and updated our Young Care Leavers protocol, making the pilot rental exemption scheme a permanent feature of our service provision. We also reviewed and updated our existing Hospital Discharge Protocol and launched our Armed Forces pathway in Year 2.

Whilst work has begun in relation to reviewing our existing protocols with mental health services the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, these have not yet been completed due to the impact of the pandemic in terms of staffing resources and priorities particularly within the Health and Social Care Partnership. Some initial work has also been started in terms of scoping out our LGBT+ pathway and this will be taken forward in Year 3.

Conversions

In Year 2 we achieved 32 Conversions. As outlined, provision of our Housing Support and Accommodation Service was heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and a key impact was the increase in demand for all forms of temporary accommodation.

Our focus on ensuring that we continued to meet our statutory homelessness duties throughout the crisis, meant that we have had to increase the provision of emergency accommodation, which has limited the number of conversions we were able to carry out.

We have taken this opportunity to review our planned Conversion Programme and how this is funded and our future plan is outlined below:

- We have increased our own resources to support our Conversion Programme from £50,000 to £75,000 to support 30 conversions during Year 3;
- We aim to continue to provide this funding in future years to ensure this option remains part of our wider mainstream service response;
- Due to the need to fund other elements of our RRTP, we will not use any of our ring fenced RRTP funding to further increase this programme;
- This, together with the Year 2 underspend in this area, results in reduced costs of £345,000 over Years 2 to 5 from last years plan;

RRTP Objective 4 – Housing First

A key element of our plan was the introduction of a Housing First initiative in West Dunbartonshire and Year 2 progress is outlined below:

- We have created 15 new Housing First tenancies – this is lower than the 22 new Housing First tenancies we projected;
- Unfortunately two Housing First tenants have died and the tenancies have ended;
- In addition to the new Housing First tenancies created, at the end of Year 2 we had a total of a further 15 Housing First clients being assessed or awaiting an offer of a tenancy;
- There have been some staffing changes throughout the year and whilst at year end we have a total of 5 fixed term FTE Housing First staff, staffing costs are similar to what was projected (equating to roughly 4 FTE staff members).

This impacted on planned resources for Housing First in Year 2 in the following ways:

- Reduced tenancy set-up costs from £82,000 to £57,500; and
 - Slightly reduced staffing costs from £155,167 to £152,000.
- We continued to provide regular updates of the progress of our Housing First initiative to the Housing and Communities Committee, the Housing Solutions Partnership and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership;
 - We have made the eligibility criteria more flexible and extended this to include clients who have not been assessed as homeless but have complex needs and have contact with HSCP services and may be at risk of homelessness. This aligns with the recommendations from the reconvened HARSAG;
 - We have delivered on our commitment that at least one new build home in each new Council development is allocated to a Housing First tenant.

Section 3 - Year 3 plan and looking to the future

R RTP Objective 1 – Whole Systems Approach to the Prevention of Homelessness

Enhanced Prevention Service

We have fully updated our activity and costings model and our Year 3 plan and costings for our Enhance Prevention Service is outlined below:

- We have managed to fund the cost of this role in Year 3 from our own resources;
- The Prevention Officer will continue to engage with households at risk of homelessness as outlined above;
- It is expected to include home visits as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted;
- We will continue to monitor the impact of the pilot prevention fund and consider options to identify and provide longer term funding;
- We will explore options to mainstream this role within our wider service provision; and
- We have updated staffing costs.

Enhanced Prevention Service	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Number of Prevention Officers	0.4 @ £36k	1 @ £36k	1 @ £38.5k	1 @ £38.5k	1 @ £38.5k
Staffing costs	15,000	36,000	38,500	38,500	38,500

Enhanced Prevention Service	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Pilot Prevention Fund		£5,200	£16,633		

Youth Shared Living Project

In 2018 Action for Children was successful in bidding for the Big Lottery 'Early Action System Change' funding to tackle youth homelessness in West Dunbartonshire. During the development of the Early Action System Change projects, Simon Community Scotland (SCS) offered to extend the roll out of a Shared Living Pilot, funded by DWP already up and running in Glasgow to West Dunbartonshire (specifically to Clydebank area). This could be included as one of the tests for change for a period of three months.

Referrals for shared living are sent to SCS who is responsible for matching young people into their shared tenancy. SCS's experience in matching and supporting shared living and risk management processes mean that they are comfortable to safely match households.

Each household would be allocated a key worker who would provide weekly housing support to sustain the tenancy. The keyworker would also be the key contact for both the tenants and local authority and can respond immediately to any issues or concerns which might arise. The support provided by the key worker includes income maximisation and asset protection.

Of the initial trial, 11 candidates have been assessed as suitable and four have been matched. Due to the initial success and positive impacts it has to made, we have

agreed to fully fund a year long pilot for the whole of West Dunbartonshire Council and not just Clydebank.

RRTP Objective 2 – Enable service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly

Resettlement Service

We have taken this opportunity to fully review this aspect of our plan and consider how the provision of resettlement support can be best delivered for all homeless households and we have made the following changes:

- We have identified the need for resettlement support to be flexible and can be more intensive even for those households with no/low support needs;
- Some of these households require more than the 8 hours of support modelled and often over a shorter time period;
- All staff across the homeless service will be involved in ensuring that a move-on plan and resettlement support is provided to all homeless households;
- We have reviewed the focus of the re-settlement officer for Year 3;
- We have updated expected staffing costs.

We have fully updated our activity and costings model and our Year 3 plan and costings for resettlement support is outlined below:

- We have managed to fund the cost of this role in Year 3 from our own resources;
- Due to resettlement work also being delivered from existing staff within the homeless service, this reduces the need for an additional officer in Year 4 and 5;
- This, together with the Year 2 underspend in staffing costs, results in a reduction in cost to deliver this aspect of our RRTP from £216,000 to £139,500;
- The re-settlement officer will focus specifically on those households who are experiencing difficulties moving into settled accommodation;
- We will also contact households whose cases were closed without a housing outcome, discuss their current circumstance, assess whether further assistance is required and provide the appropriate service; and
- We will mainstream other re-settlement activity and move-on planning within our wider service provision.

Resettlement Support Service	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
New lets requiring Resettlement Support		468	460	460	460
Staffing costs		24,000	38,500	38,500	38,500
Number of workers		1 @ £36k	1 @ £38.5k	1 @ £38.5k	1 @ £38.5k

All partners have been asked to update their Contribution Statements and in particular our RSL partners to agree to Year 3 lettings target. This will be key in enabling us to meet our target of continuing to reduce time in temporary accommodation. Our target for the end of Year 3 is to reduce this to 17 weeks.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Target	23 weeks	20 weeks	17 weeks	15 weeks	13 weeks
Actual	15 weeks	19 weeks			

There were also a significant number of applications closed without a secure housing outcome and we have identified a need to carry-out some follow up work to better understand the current circumstances of these households and if further assistance is required now that the most severe restrictions have been lifted.

RRTP Objective 3 – interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment

Interim Supported Tenancies

We have taken this opportunity to fully review this aspect of our plan and consider how the provision of interim supported tenancies can be best delivered. Based on our RRTP modelling we have made the following changes:

- We have been able to make permanent the additionality outlined above which increases the capacity of the Support Service from within our own resources;
- The provision of the additional property officers reduces the need for additional support workers to be funded via the RRTP funding; and
- We have identified the need for an additional senior post to help manage this increased service provision.

Our Year 3 plan and costings for Interim Supported Tenancies is outlined below:

- In order to sustain this increased staffing resource we will recruit a senior accommodation post and fund this initially in part from RRTP funding;
- In Year 3 we plan to fund 20% of this post from Council funding and 80% from RRTP funding;
- This results in a significant overall reduction in cost to deliver our RRTP from £552,250 to £93,600, whilst at the same time increasing the capacity of the service and accelerating our transition plan;
- We aim to mainstream this provision within the timeline of the RRTP and will monitor more closely the number of hours spent providing support to individual households, to improve our understanding of the overall demand and use this data to ensure future service provision is sustained and that supported tenancies continue as an option for those with identified support needs.

Delivering Supported Tenancies	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Support Workers (WDC funded)	14	12	12	12	12
Property Officers (WDC funded)	0	4	4	4	4
Senior Accommodation Officer (20% WDC funded;80% RRTP funded)			1	1	0
RRTP funding	£0	£0	£31,200	£31,200	£0

Supported Accommodation Review

One of the interim housing options provided by WDC is supported accommodation, which provides support services in line with the prescribed circumstances contained within the Homeless Persons Interim Accommodation (Scotland) Regulations 2002 and provides a safe, transitional housing option when people can't or don't want a mainstream tenancy of their own and benefit from the reassurance of having access to onsite support that is both planned and responsive. Such support will include consideration of general health and wellbeing, budgeting, substance use, training and employment, community connections and overall preparation for successful tenancy sustainment.

Due to impact of Covid-19 the Scottish Government has reviewed and updated the national [Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan](#) based on recommendations from the reconvened HARSAG.

Some of the key HARSAG recommendations in relation to temporary accommodation are:

- Development of alternative non-institutionalised forms of temporary and permanent accommodation, both to provide a range of options, and facilitate compliance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order – such as community hosting or culturally appropriate homes such as caravans for the gypsy/traveller community.
- Ensure where it is necessary despite all efforts, temporary accommodation meets people's needs and that people have choice and control over what temporary accommodation they accept.
- Co-ordinated/shared multi-agency approach to allocation of specialist accommodation for the small proportion of people who are currently not ready for a tenancy for reasons of safety or choice (for example, specialist accommodation for mental health, learning disability, high risk offenders, or those with complex needs who do not feel ready for their own tenancy).

In addition, the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 (UAO) which ensured that families with children and pregnant women did not have to stay in unsuitable accommodation such as B&Bs for more than 7 days has now been amended and extended to all homeless households.

Comprehensive guidance relating to the provisions within the updated UAO has been developed by a joint Scottish Government and COSLA working group to provide clarity around the requirements of the new Order, including definitions of three models of shared accommodation which can be deemed suitable in certain circumstances.

Whilst the use of B&B accommodation is limited within West Dunbartonshire and we have reported no breaches of the order, we want to ensure that this remains the case and that we fully meet the requirements of the amended UAO and our interpretation and reporting capabilities can accurately capture unsuitable placements and any potential breaches.

As a result we have decided to carry out a review of our current supported accommodation provision which includes the following aims:

- To assess the current provision of supported accommodation in terms of delivering successful housing outcomes;
- To assess the current provision of supported accommodation in terms of the funding model ;
- To assess the current provision of supported accommodation based on service user feedback, gaining their views and an understanding of their experience and align with outcomes, include current and past lived service users;
- To collate stakeholder feedback on current service provision and what they would want to see delivered/offered;
- Review current performance management framework and make recommendations for improvements; and
- To provide recommendations in terms of the benefits of providing additional/ alternative temporary accommodation options to meet the needs of homeless households with West Dunbartonshire, highlighting any “best practice” and whether if hostels in their current form is the best option.

We plan to engage a third party to carry out an independent review. A procurement brief has been developed and this exercise is currently out for tender with the aim to have the review completed by November 2021. We estimate the cost of this exercise to be around £18,000 and have funded this from our own resources. We will review the recommendations that are made and develop appropriate actions.

Housing Pathways

Work has begun in relation to reviewing our existing protocols with mental health services and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and we aim to finalise and embed these in Year 3. We also aim to develop and implement a LGBT+ housing pathway.

We support the aim of addressing migrant homelessness and preventing homelessness and destitution of asylum seekers, EEA nationals and people with NRPF. Whilst the numbers are low within West Dunbartonshire, we have noted the anti-destitution strategy published by the Scottish Government and have and will continue to use this to inform appropriate responses are in place.

Conversions

We have taken this opportunity to review our planned Conversion Programme and how this is funded and our future plan is outlined below:

- We have increased our own resources to support our Conversion Programme from £50,000 to £75,000 to support 30 conversions during Year 3;
- We aim to continue to provide this funding in future years to ensure this option remains part of our wider mainstream service response;
- Due to the need to fund other elements of our RRTP, we will not use any of our ring fenced RRTP funding to further increase this programme; and
- This, together with the Year 2 underspend in this area, results in reduced costs of £345,000 over Years 2 to 5 from last years plan;

Our reviewed Conversion Programme is outlined below:

Conversion Programme	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Number of Conversions	11	32	30	30	30
Cost per Conversion	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500
Cost per Year	£27,500	£80,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000

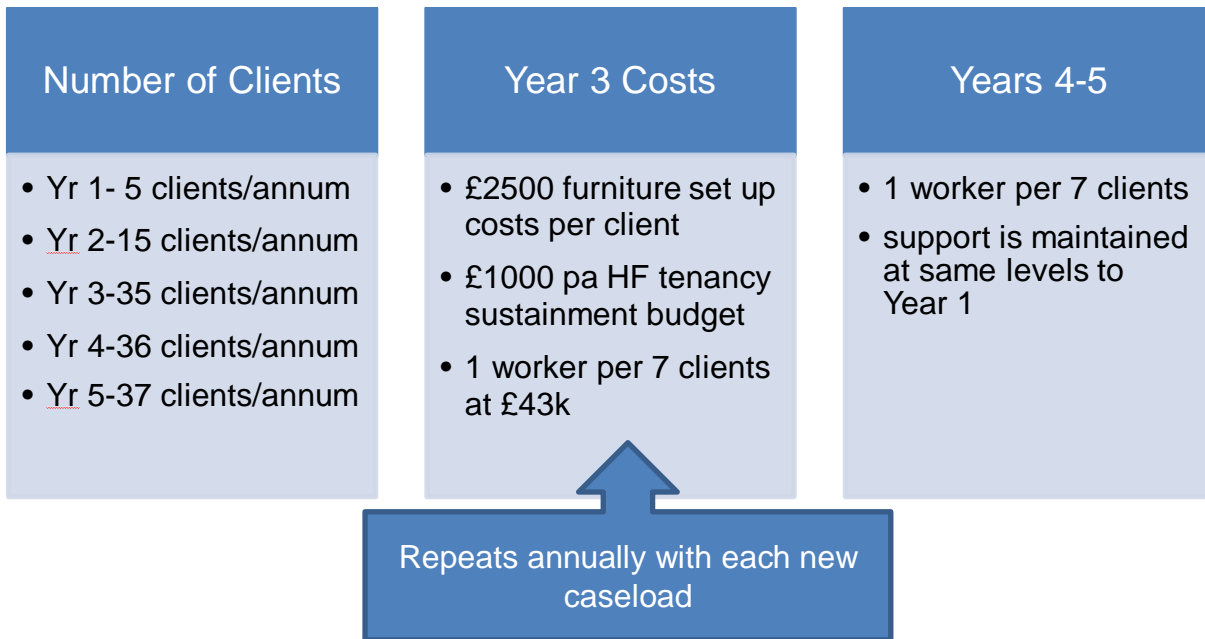
RRTP Objective 4 – Housing First

We aim to upscale our Housing First initiative within West Dunbartonshire based on identified need. We have fully updated our activity and costings model and this includes the following changes:

- Increased the projected Housing First tenancies in Year 3 from 29 to 35 (takes account of current demand and those from Year 2 to be delivered in Year 3);
- Following feedback from the Housing First Pathfinder and other networking opportunities, we have reviewed the assumptions around the staff/client ratio and increased this from 1 worker to 6 clients, to 1 worker to 7 clients and maintained this level for future years;
- Following feedback from the Housing First Pathfinder and other networking opportunities we modelled the level of HF support being maintained in future years;
- We have retained the £2500 HF tenancy set-up costs and the Housing First tenancy sustainment budget of £1000 per HF tenancy, per annum;
- We have updated the demand for Housing First in Years 3 to 5 based on our RRTP modelling; and
- We have updated expected staffing costs.

Our Year 3 plan and costings for Housing First is outlined below:

- We will recruit 3 additional fixed term HF Support Workers to deliver the upscaling of Housing First in West Dunbartonshire;
- We plan to explore options with our partners in the West Dunbartonshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to look at having dedicated staff from all services to create a more consistent level of service and to create a more efficient process for those on the Housing First pathway;
- Monitor the number of hours spent providing support to Housing First clients to inform a review of the staff; client ratio used in our RRTP model; and
- Explore funding options to sustain Housing First in future years.



Housing First	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Number of HF Support Workers	2.5 @ £38	4 @ £38	8 @ £43	13 @ £43	18 @ £43
Staffing costs	95,000	152,000	344,000	559,000	774,000
Tenancy set-up and sustainment	12,500	57,500	140,500	179,000	218,500
Delivering Housing First	107,500	209,500	484,500	738,000	992,500

Section 4 – Resource plan

Our Year 2 activities outlined above have resulted in an underspend of £137,300 of the funding available at the start of Year 2.

RRTP Year 2 spend	Year 2 plan	Year 2 spend	Year 2 underspend
Housing First West Dunbartonshire	£237,167	£209,500	£27,667
Interim Supported Tenancies	£36,000	£0	£36,000
Additional Resettlement Support Service	£36,000	£24,000	£12,000
Enhanced Prevention Service	£36,000	£36,000	£0
Pilot Prevention Fund	£21,833	£5,200	£16,633
Conversion Programme	£125,000	£80,000	£45,000
Year 2 totals	£492,000	£354,700	£137,300

Based on this and Year 3 funding from the Scottish Government and from our own resources, we have reviewed our future resource planning.

RRTP Year 3 plan and funding	Year 3 costs	Sources of funding for Year 3				Total
		Year 2 US	SG Year 2	SG Year 3	WDC	
Housing First West Dunbartonshire	£484,500	£121,857	£156,000	£202,800		£480,657
Interim Supported Tenancies	£31,200			£31,200		£31,200
Additional Resettlement Support Service	£38,500				38,500	£38,500
Enhanced Prevention Service	£38,500				38,500	£38,500
Pilot Prevention Fund	£16,633	£15,443			£1,190	£16,633
Share Living Initiative (Simon Community)	£28,810				£28,810	£28,810
Conversion Programme	£75,000				£75,000	£75,000
Review of Hostel Provision	£18,000				£18,000	£18,000
Year 3 total cost	£731,143	£137,300	£156,000	£234,000	£200,000	£727,300

Whilst the additional funding of £156,000 from the Scottish Government from the Winter Fund and the £234,000 for Year 3 is to be welcomed, it needs to be recognised that we would be facing a significant shortfall of funding if we had not been able to increase our own funding stream to £200,000 and make the changes outlined above which have resulted in significant future savings.

Whilst our Year 3 plan has a small funding shortfall of £3,843, we have no clarity around funding for future years and long term funding remains our biggest risk and concern for fully delivering our objectives and continuing to transform the service we provide.

Total Costs for transition to Rapid Rehousing in WDC						
Rapid Rehousing Costs	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 plan	Year 4 Plan	Year 5 plan	
Housing First West Dunbartonshire	107,500	209,500	484,500	738,000	992,500	£2,532,000
Interim Supported Tenancies	0	0	31,200	31,200	0	£62,400
Additional Resettlement Support Service	0	24,000	38,500	38,500	38,500	£139,500
Additional proactive Homelessness Prevention Service	15,000	36,000	38,500	38,500	38,500	£166,500
Pilot Prevention Fund	0	5,200	16,633	0	0	£21,833
Conversion programme	27,500	80,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	£332,500
Shared living project	NA	NA	28,810	0	0	£28,810

Supported Accommodation Review	NA	NA	£18,000	0	0	£18,000
	£150,000	£354,700	£731,143	£921,200	£1,144,500	£3,301,543

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

We have carried out another EIA on our revised plans and can demonstrate only positive impacts.

Assessment	374	Owner	CMckay
Resource	Regeneration, Environment and Growth		Service/Establishment Housing and Employment
	First Name	Surname	Job title
Head Officer	Claire	Mckay	Senior Housing Development Officer
	(include job titles/organisation)		
Members	Claire Mckay - Senior Housing Development Officer Stefan Kristmanns – Housing Development Co-ordinator		
	<i>(Please note: the word 'policy' is used as shorthand for strategy policy function or</i>		
Policy Title	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) - Year 2 Update		
	The aim, objective, purpose and intended out come of policy		
	Every local authority must have one and report to the Scottish Government, our 4 aims are; • Deliver a Whole Systems approach to the prevention of homelessness; • Enable service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly; • To develop interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment; and • Implement a Housing First model which enables the most excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment.		
	Service/Partners/Stakeholders/service users involved in the development		
	Housing Development and Homelessness lead on the plan but the plan was developed in partnership with key stakeholders including the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and all Registered Social Landlords operating in West Dunbartonshire.		
Does the proposals involve the procurement of any goods or services?		Yes	
If yes please confirm that you have contacted our procurement services to discuss your requirements.		Yes	
SCREENING			
<i>You must indicate if there is any relevance to the four areas</i>			
Duty to eliminate discrimination (E), advance equal opportunities (A) or foster good relations (F)		Yes	
Relevance to Human Rights (HR)		Yes	
Relevance to Health Impacts (H)		Yes	

Relevance to Social Economic Impacts (SE)	Yes
Who will be affected by this policy?	
This is a homeless plan with policies and strategies within about improving and transforming the service so affects those people who become in need of assistance living in West Dunbartonshire. This will also impact other service partners such as HSCP colleagues and RSL's in the area, who are partners and committed to the plan.	
Who will be/has been involved in the consultation process?	
As detailed Health and Social Care Partnership and Registered Social Landlords and individual policies will consulted the appropriate groups i.e. domestic abuse will include Violence against Women partners such as Women's Aid and those service users.	
Please outline any particular need/barriers which equality groups may have in relation to this policy list evidence you are using to support this and whether there is any negative impact on particular groups.	

	Needs	Evidence	Impact
Age	We have an ageing population in WDC but that's not reflected in our homeless presentations. We have the 2nd highest youth homelessness in the country.	Homeless applications by age Age 2017/18 2018/19 2019/20 No. % No. % No. % 16-17 31 3% 22 2% 38 4% 18-25 259 25% 258 25% 267 26% 26-59 722 69% 715 69% 659 64% 60+ 36 3% 42 4% 57 6% All 1048 100% 1037 100% 1021 100% Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures therefore part of our RRTP includes youth specific project working with Action for Children to research this and help improve and tailor a service to help reduce this.	Positive impact recognising higher youth presentations therefore targeted projects to understand why we have a higher rate and to put in place measures to prevent youth homelessness from occurring.

<p>Cross Cutting</p>	<p>The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan cuts across age, disability, health and social and economic impacts. This EIA also highlights that more information is required around sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race and religion.</p>	<p>Our Young Care Leaver protocol, Prison Leaver protocol, Housing First Service covers many areas creating improvements to housing for those in need and with most complex needs.</p>	<p>Positive impact as the overall aims of the plan are person centred and about accessing the right and secure housing as quickly as possible which itself positively impacts across multiple areas such as social and economic, health, employment and human rights.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>From the 2011 National Consensus 23.1% people in West Dunbartonshire reported having a Long-term activity-limiting health problem or disability.</p>	<p>We offer housing materials in other formats and also offer housing options interviews at locations that meet the needs of the applicant. Hospital discharge protocol within our RRTP to assist with issues of homeless and health and this is partnership with HSCP, NHS.</p>	<p>Positive impact ensuring everyone can access housing or homeless information.</p>

<p>Social & Economic Impact</p>	<p>Those on lower income have reduced housing options and can live in poorer housing.</p>	<p>RRTP aims to provide SHQS quality housing and affordable housing to people as quick as we can where we have a duty to house. But also provide a whole system approach allowing more housing options to be affordable with our "Help to Rent" scheme to access private rented accommodation, along with fully utilising DHP to cover rent shortfalls or issues with under 35 LHA rates.</p>	<p>Positive impact ensuring regardless of social/economic background and as many housing options are available for those who require and not excluded.</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>Male and females have potential different experiences of homelessness.</p>	<p>Gender details are collated already as part of the homeless assessment. Gendered analysis will be submitted with our Year 2 update of our RRTP update. Of those who presented in 2020/21 49% were female either single person or head of the household. Of which 22% who presenting reason was domestic abuse 82% were female. Of those housed, 54% were female. More females will experience domestic abuse but our domestic abuse policy mitigates that. Our housing first</p>	<p>Positive impact ensuring those fleeing domestic abuse and in particular females are positively helped into secured housing as quickly as possible recognising the trauma already been experienced.</p>

		<p>service is person centred so a female fleeing domestic violence can also be assisted. No gender is excluded, placement in temporary accommodation are done based on each individuals circumstances. Work with Women’s Aid and part of the Violence against women and children partnerships. This does not mean females are given priority over males just recognising they may need different services involved in their journey.</p>	
Gender Reassign	National no data gathered on this group.	Updating our EQIA questions to improve data for this group.	Positive impact as not collated nationally but want to do this for our area.
Health	homelessness/housing has massive impacts on health and lack of it negatively impacts.	<p>Housing First Objective addresses a house first for those with the most complex needs which lead to positive health improvements. Objective to house people as quickly as possible into settled accommodation will also have a positive impact. hospital discharge protocol will assist with health improvement by allowing people to leave hospital and have a home.</p>	Positive impact as providing good quality secure housing improves people’s health.

Human Rights	Article 8 European convention of Human Rights, right to family life.	Housing is a basic human right, the aim of RRTP to provide permanent housing as quickly as possible and in the right place is ensuring this right is given as soon as possible.	Positive as we aim to provide secure settled housing as quickly as possible.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	NA	Have more presentations from single people but couples not given higher priority and main reason for presenting are relationship breakdown. Domestic abuse policy in place that allows for perpetrators to be rehoused not the victim. Have duty to house all applicants so single people are not negatively impacted as no additional priority is given to couples.	Positive.
Pregnancy & Maternity	NA	Unsuitable Accommodation Order previously only applied to women and children but is extended to all. WDC do not use Bed & breakfast therefore already	Positive.

<p>Race</p>	<p>2011 National Consensus highlights that in West Dunbartonshire shows an increase of people from a Black and ethnic minority background from 0.7% to 1.6%.</p>	<p>We do have a refugee resettlement team, which links into appropriate services. Wider structural issues such as benefit system need to be reviewed to stop negative impact on race regarding access to benefits.</p>	<p>Positive impact as we offer a person centred service to tailor options to the needs of that person.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<p>Just over 27% report no religion in West Dunbartonshire and nearly 66% report Roman Catholic/Church of Scotland/Christian and 0.4% has reported Muslim in 2011 National Consensus.</p>	<p>RRTP is a person centred approach so no-one is excluded. Data on religion limited but an area we want to gather more to ensure no impacts.</p>	<p>Positive impact as we offer a person centred service to tailor options to the needs of that person.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) individuals face a particular set of challenges, both in becoming homeless as well as when they are trying to avoid homelessness. LGBT persons face social stigma, discrimination, and often rejection by their families, which adds to the physical and mental strains/challenges that all homelessness persons must struggle with</p>	<p>Updating our EQIA information we collate to ensure there no barriers. In the process of developing a LGBT+ housing pathway and exploring additional staff training for homeless and housing staff.</p>	<p>A positive impact gaining further understanding of LGBT+ and amending forms and policies if necessary.</p>

Actions
Policy has a negative impact on an equality group, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.
Only positive impacts have been identified in this screening as we understand the needs of those presenting to WDC for assistance.
Will the impact of the policy be monitored and reported on ongoing bases?
Yes, we want to expand the data we collate. All protocols and policies already in place or due to be introduced will continue to be monitored and reviewed. We will provide annual updates of our RRTP to the Housing and Communities Committee along with updates to the Scottish Government.
Q7 What is your recommendation for this policy?
Introduce updated RRTP.
Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the recommendation
There are no negative equalities impacts due to this update to our RRTP however preventing and responding to homelessness has a significant positive impact on individuals and communities. There are some potential positive impacts for some groups as note in EIA 376. Our overall strategy for homelessness aims to tackle current health and other inequalities. Our RRTP highlighted some key groups where we have higher homelessness presentations from and therefore have created policies to allow for further positive impacts such as targeted Youth projects and a Domestic Abuse Policy.

Appendix 2 - Gendered Analysis

We have also carried some initial Gendered Analysis and can report the following information;

Presentations

- 49% of presentation in 2020/21 were female (either single person or head of household)
- Of those that presented as homeless who were ages 16 to 24 61% were female (18% of overall presentations)
- Single parent households account for 20% of all presentations. This is split 18% female and 2% male
- Single persons account for 72% of all presentations. This is split 25% female and 47% male.
- 22% (232) of households who presented stated their reason for homelessness was domestic abuse. Of these households 82% were female. A fifth of which were ages 16 to 24. In addition to this of all those who stated this reason, 42% were female single parents, 35% were single females and 17% were single males.

Assessments

- 48% of all homeless assessments were in 2020/21 were female (either single person or lead applicant)
- Of those who had a homeless assessment who were ages 16 to 24 60% were female (17% of overall assessments)
- 83% (872) of households assessed were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness. Of which 46% were single males, 25% were single females and 19% were female single parents.

Outcomes

- 901 cases closed in 2020/21, contacted was maintained with 853 households.
- 52% received a local authority tenancy. 53% was a female lead applicant household and 47% male.
- 20% received an RSL tenancy. 51% were female and 49% male
- 12% returned to previous accommodation. 57% female and 43% male

Repeat presentations

- 60% of repeats were male households

