

Home at the Heart

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

Year 3 update and Year 4 plan

June 2022



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 reduce significantly in recent years.

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	1022	2.6%

Current homelessness position

Following a slight increase of 3% in homeless applications last year, this year there has been a further increase of 14%, with presentations rising from 1053 to 1203. The numbers assessed with a duty to house has also increased, meaning an increase in demand for all forms of temporary accommodation and for settled accommodation.

Homeless applications and assessments	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Homeless applications	1022	1053	1203
Total assessments	1024	1050	1196
Assessed with a duty to house	861	866	1015
% with duty to house	84.1%	82.5%	84.9%

At 31 March 2022, West Dunbartonshire had 512 open homeless cases having been assessed with a duty to rehouse.

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.

Reason for homeless application	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Termination of tenancy/mortgage due to rent arrears/default on payments	38	3.7%	12	1.1%	6	0.5%
Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy	74	7.2%	30	2.8%	58	4.8%
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	36	3.5%	11	1.0%	24	2.0%
Loss of service/tied accommodation	1	0.1%	3	0.3%	2	0.2%
Discharge from prison/hospital/care/other institution	49	4.8%	34	3.2%	45	3.7%

Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order from Environmental Health etc.)	8	0.8%	8	0.8%	16	1.3%
Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	3	0.3%	1	0.1%	5	0.4%
Other reason for loss of accommodation	31	3.0%	18	1.7%	31	2.6%
Dispute within household: violent or abusive	215	21.0%	231	21.9%	242	20.1%
Dispute within household/relationship breakdown: non-violent	153	15.1%	244	23.2%	227	18.9%
Fleeing non-domestic violence	38	3.7%	47	4.5%	50	4.2%
Harassment	14	1.4%	25	2.4%	26	2.2%
Overcrowding	18	1.8%	21	2.0%	14	1.2%
Asked to leave	263	25.7%	287	27.3%	377	31.3%
Other reason for leaving accommodation/household	81	7.9%	81	7.7%	80	6.7%
All	1022	100%	1053	100.0%	1203	100%

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 16 applications were assessed out-with this timescale in the past 3 years, with 99.6% of applications being assessed within this timescales during 2021/22.

Length of time to assess application	2019/2020		2020/2021		2021/2022	
Same day	101	9.9%	62	5.9%	80	6.7%
1-6 days	290	28.3%	289	27.5	286	23.9%
7-13 days	174	17.0%	203	19.3	222	18.6%
14-28 days	452	44.1%	492	46.9	603	50.4%
28-55 days	7	0.7%	3	0.3%	4	0.3%
56+ days	0	0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
All applications	1024	100%	1050	100	1196	100%

The number of homeless households who reported rough sleeping at time of presentation over the past 3 years is outlined in the table below and shows a drop in 2021/22.

Households reporting rough sleeping at presentation	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Slept rough during the 3 months preceding application	91	96	79
Slept rough on the night preceding application	43	42	37

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 case duration to discharge of duty reduced in 2021/22, however this still remains higher than it was prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Average case duration to discharge of duty	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Average time to discharge duty	27.1	32.2	30.3

Temporary accommodation

The provision and use of temporary accommodation over the past 2 years has been heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. During 2020/21 an increase in demand for all forms of temporary accommodation led to increased provision and an increase in the overall average time households experiencing homelessness spent in temporary accommodation. We have managed to reduce this during 2021/22, however letting activity has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels and the number of households in temporary accommodation remains high.

Type of temporary accommodation	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
LA ordinary dwelling	113.9	143.1	126.5
Housing association/RSL dwelling	0	0	226.5
Hostel - local authority owned	91.7	80	70.6
Hostel – RSL	126.1	168.2	431.8
Hostel – other	79	108.6	91.5
Bed and breakfast	1.7	1.9	2.6
Women’s refuge	96	0	320
Private sector lease	0	0	0
Other placed by authority	75.1	97.4	541.8
Total (ALL)	103.5	133.6	119.4

Households living in temporary accommodation			
Type of provision	Provider	Occupancy 31 Mar 2021	Occupancy 31 Mar 2022
Temporary furnished flats	WDC	220	222
Temporary furnished flats	RSL	15	5
Temporary furnished flats	PSL	9	0
Interim Supported Accommodation	WDC	17	13
Interim Supported Accommodation	Blue Triangle	24	30
Interim Supported Accommodation	Action for Children	9	7
Other		10	4
Total households in temporary		304	281

Outcomes

The outcomes of all homeless applications closed during the past 3 years are outlined in the table below:

Outcomes	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Scottish Secure Tenancy	603	620	750
Private Rented Tenancy	20	26	19
Hostel	0	0	1
Bed & Breakfast	0	0	0
Returned to previous/ friends/ vol org.	98	134	129
Women's Refuge	1	0	2
Residential care/nursing home/shared supported	0	0	0
Other - Known	63	52	65
Other - Not Known	17	13	12
No duty owed to applicant	129	178	174
Contact lost before duty discharge	95	48	43
All	1026	1071	1195

A higher proportion of all cases being closed are being housed in settled accommodation and there has also been further improvement in the rate of tenancy sustainment for homeless households within West Dunbartonshire, increasing in each of the last 4 years and above the Scottish average figure for all local authorities.

Tenancy sustainment (homeless lets)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
West Dunbartonshire Council	86.6%	90.0%	91.6%	94.6%
Scottish LA average	87.3%	87.6%	89.9%	90.2%

Section 2 – Key Objective Updates

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

Our whole systems approach to the prevention of homelessness aims to ensure that tenants and people on the housing list can review their housing options, people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them and that people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

Housing Options approach

In addition to reviewing all current waiting list applications our Housing Options Service aims to proactively identify those at risk of homelessness, provide advice and assistance on preventing homelessness where possible and on the housing options that are available to them.

During 2021/22 there was a 68% increase in approaches being dealt with by our Housing Options Service. The reasons for this include a more pro-active approach to referring households for assistance but also those households who applied for assistance from the Tenant Hardship Grant Fund have been provided with wider advice and assistance and recorded on the Prevent1 system. In terms of outcomes, there has been a slightly higher proportion where homelessness has been prevented compared to 2020/21 and this will continue to be monitored closely.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Prevent1 approaches	243	385	647
Prevent1 closures	220	276	456
*remained in current	69	84	148
*moved to alternative	57	61	106
*homeless application	59	77	133
*lost contact/NK/other	35	54	69
% homelessness prevented	57%	53%	56%
% closed with presentation	27%	28%	29%

Enhanced Prevention Service

As planned, a more proactive homelessness prevention service is now embedded within our wider service delivery with a dedicated officer responding more proactively to Section 11 referrals received by the Council. Initially funded as part of the RRTP funding, this is now a permanent post funded by WDC. This officer initiates contact with households at risk of homelessness where the landlord or lender is considering actions to end the tenancy or begin the repossession process

The ending of emergency legislation put in place banning evictions taking place in both the social and private rented sector, has resulted in an increase in the number of Section 11 notices being received from 20 in 2020/21 to 114 in 2021/22. Of those where contact was made and there was engagement with the household, homelessness was prevented in 62.5% of cases.

Pilot Prevention Fund

There have been around 100 referrals received in 2021/22 and with the assistance of the Prevention Officer many of these households were able to then access other available funding to reduce their arrears and agree an affordable repayment. A further 22 households received a direct payment from the Prevention Fund in 2021/22 totalling £8350. This brings the total of payments from the pilot fund in the two years to 37 with a total spend of £13,550, leaving a balance of £8,283 that can be used in 2022/23.

Prevention Service	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 actual	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Pilot Prevention Fund		£5,200	£8350	£8283	TBC

Tenant Hardship Grant Fund

In June 2021 the Scottish Government announced its intention to launch a £10m grant fund to support private and social rented tenants who had incurred rent arrears as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

West Dunbartonshire Council was allocated £263,000 from this funding and we have used this to assist tenants at risk of homelessness due to financial challenges faced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As at 31 March 2022:

- 239 grant awards have been made totalling £263,000;
- 133 awards were made to RSL tenants totalling £123,718, an average of £930 per case;
- 102 awards were made to WDC tenants totalling £131,003, an average of £1284 per case;
- 4 awards were made to tenants in private lets totalling £8760, an average of £2190 per case.

Review of Housing Allocations Policy

During 2021/22 we carried out a review of our Housing Allocations Policy. Due to the continued high levels of youth homelessness in West Dunbartonshire, a key aim of the review was to explore potential options to increase access to housing for young people.

We consulted on a proposal that young people at risk of homelessness should be created as an additional group given a reasonable preference within the allocations policy and that a certain proportion of available properties should be allocated to this group (this would be similar to our current provision for Young Care Leavers). Feedback from the consultation showed clear support for the proposal and it was approved by the Housing and Communities Committee in February 2022.

The expectation is that those that will be allocated housing via this route will be sourced from live cases at risk of homelessness that are engaging with the Council's Housing Options Service and have an open Prevent1 case. The quota will be reviewed and updated annually as is the case with other groups given reasonable preference within the policy.

We hope that this will be key system change in our effort to prevent homelessness and specifically reduce youth homelessness. As with young people housed through a homelessness application, we will ensure that the Homelessness and Housing Options service provide full resettlement support to young people housed via this route and that this will be resourced appropriately.

Youth Shared Living Project

Youth homelessness is a key challenge in West Dunbartonshire. As part of tests for change activity to try tackle this alongside Action for Children (AFC) the service partnered with Simon Community Scotland (SCS) to create a pilot. The Youth Shared Living Pilot Project was to increase access to housing for young people at risk of homelessness by offering a shared living option. The aim of the project was to tackle two crucial elements that threaten tenancy sustainment within our younger population, which are identified as social isolation and affordability.

The pilot has been in place for 18 months. To date 42 referrals have been made to SCS, half of those referred declined offer of the service due to not being ready etc. Of the 21 which did, we can report the following:

- 12 young people housed, 6 tenancies created;
- 4 young people in the process of being matched ; and
- 5 young people unmatched

Most of these were escalated to homeless presentation therefore homelessness was not prevented. Of the 6 tenancies, 2 have failed to date.

During the pilot, issues have been identified that with the SCS support worker being external it still required high involvement of WDC staff and that having an additional person has also led to delays sharing updates. The pilot has also allowed for learning to take place, specifically in terms of matching households who express an interest in this option. Following the change to our Allocations Policy outlined above and the recruitment of an additional resettlement worker, shared living will remain a housing option within West Dunbartonshire Council but will be supported internally rather than by the Simon Community.

Plans for 2022/23

Whilst none of our RRTP funding is now being directed specifically to prevention activities, we have reviewed our current action plan and key activities during 2022/23 include:

- The implementation of our revised allocations policy and close monitoring of impact on youth homelessness;
- Recruitment of an additional resettlement officer to ensure that those young people housed via this route get appropriate support to move into and sustain their tenancy;
- We will continue to monitor the impact of the pilot prevention fund and consider options to identify and provide longer term funding;
- It is expected that our Enhanced Prevention Service will include home visits now Covid-19 restrictions are lifted;

- We will continue to make follow up contact with homeless cases that were closed with a non-housing outcome, to check that the housing circumstances of these households are stable and that there is no risk of repeat homelessness (internal process 3 months after case is closed);
- We will pilot with one RSL a process where a Section 11 referral is sent at an earlier stage and assess positive impacts and resource implications to inform future discussions with RSL partners to agree a consistent approach is adopted;
- We will review internal processes to ensure that adequate support is in place to respond to an expected increase in Notice of Proceedings following Covid-19 restrictions being lifted.

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

One of the key aims of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is ensuring that households experiencing homelessness secure a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible and that time spent in any form of temporary accommodation is reduced to a minimum.

Our plan includes the key target of reducing the length of time homeless households with no/low support needs spend in temporary accommodation from 23 weeks at the end of Year 1, to 13 weeks by the end of Year 5.

Having an efficient assessment process is important and the Council continues to perform very well in relation to assessing homeless applications within 28 days (as detailed in Section 1).

The number of lets made to homeless households each year is central to achieving this target however and our RRTP modelling takes into account the backlog of homeless households waiting to be housed, projected future homeless decisions and projected letting activity, to calculate the number of lets that will be required for homeless households on an annual basis in order to meet the targets within our RRTP.

All key stakeholders in West Dunbartonshire, including our RSL partners, were involved in the development of our RRTP and are committed to a collaborative approach to deliver its objectives and ensure positive and sustainable outcomes for households experiencing homelessness.

As part of the development of our RRTP, the concept of a Key Partner Contribution Statement was raised and received wide support and was subsequently adopted. The aim of these contributions statements is for key partner organisations to formally state support for the vision outlined and to commit to specific actions annually to help deliver the desired outcomes we are trying to achieve.

Year 3 activity

Resettlement Service

As planned, a more proactive resettlement service for all households experiencing homelessness is now embedded within our wider service delivery, with the resettlement officer role initially funded as part of the RRTP funding, now a permanent post funded by WDC.

All staff across the homeless service are involved in ensuring that a move-on plan and appropriate resettlement support is provided. This support is flexible and can be more intensive for some households with low support needs.

RRTP modelling

We updated our RRTP modelling and the below table details the targets that were set for Year 3 alongside the actual activity during 2021/22:

Calculation of homeless lets required and % of expected letting activity required to meet need - split by LA & RSL		
	Year 3 target	Year 3 actual
Lets required to meet demand	867	733
Split LA	567	515
Split RSL	300	218
% Allocation of lets required		
LA	56%	57%
RSL	55%	46%

Each of our RSL partners updated their Contribution Statement at the beginning of 2021/22 and agreed new letting targets to help achieve our aim of reducing the time spent in temporary accommodation for those households with no/low needs to 17 weeks in Year 3 of our plan.

During 2021/22, 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. Not all RSL's agreed to meet a 55% lettings target and only 3 of 8 RSL's were able to meet their agreed own target. In addition, the overall letting activity across all the RSL's was also lower than projected, resulting in an overall shortfall of lets and some households being in temporary accommodation for longer than our target timescales.

Despite this, 592 homeless households with no/low support needs were rehoused and supported to move into settled accommodation. The overall length of time these households spent in temporary accommodation reduced from 19 weeks in Year 2 to 16.7 weeks in Year 3, meeting our target of 17 weeks.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Target	23 weeks	20 weeks	17 weeks
Actual	15 weeks	19 weeks	16.5 weeks

Year 4 plan

Our target for the end of Year 4 is to reduce the time homeless households with no/low needs spend in temporary accommodation to 15 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	16.5 weeks		

We update our RRTP model on an annual basis and the key outputs in terms of lets that are necessary to meet the targets outlined in our RRTP during 2022/23 are outlined in the table below:

Calculation of homeless lets required and % of expected letting activity required to meet need - split by LA & RSL	
	Year 4
Lets required for to meet demand	986
Split LA	641
Split RSL	345
Projected turnover	Year 4
Split LA	929
Split RSL	500
% Allocation of lets required	Year 4
LA	69%
RSL	69%

Our modelling currently projects that around 1150 households experiencing homelessness will need to be housed across all tenures in 2022/23, in order for our target of reducing time spent in temporary accommodation to be met. This accounts for a high proportion of all social lets across West Dunbartonshire and the Council has committed to ensuring that 69% of all lets made in 2022/23 are made to households experiencing homeless.

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 2022/23 to meet the targets outlined in our RRTP and include this commitment within their RRTP Contribution Statement for 2022/23. We have written to all our RSL partners to request that they match the 69% lettings target committed to by the Council.

At present we have seen lower numbers of voids being returned for let at West Dunbartonshire Council. As a result, overall case numbers are increasing and at the end of March 2022 we had 145 cases that have been open longer than the target outlined in our RRTP. The majority of these cases are in temporary accommodation and on offer waiting for properties to be made available to let. If the return rate doesn't return to pre-Covid19 levels this will seriously impact times spent in temporary accommodation along with overall numbers in temporary accommodation.

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

Interim Supported Tenancies

Another key element of our vision was the introduction of an enhanced Housing Support Service for those households with medium/high support needs.

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in 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. New ways of working had to be developed and following the recruitment of 2 Property Officers within the support

service and redirecting 2 existing Support Workers to carry out this function in Year 2 we managed to increase the capacity of existing support workers to provide support directly to homeless households.

We therefore did not need to recruit an additional support worker from the RRTP funding as originally planned, though we did recruit an additional senior post to help manage this increased demand, with 20% of the post funded by the Council, and 80% from the RRTP funding. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic we still have higher numbers of households in temporary accommodation than expected, we have been able to mainstream this role from Year 4 and it is now be funded from Council resource and embedded within our wider service delivery.

Supported Accommodation Review

One of the interim housing options provided by WDC is residential 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 includes consideration of general health and wellbeing, budgeting, substance use, training and employment, community connections and overall preparation for successful tenancy sustainment.

A key action in Year 3 was to commission a full review of our provision of residential supported accommodation within the context of the updated Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan, the updated Unsuitable Accommodation Order and a range of new policy and legislative standards on temporary accommodation arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and national policy agenda.

In July 2021, Arneil Johnston was commissioned to carry out this review. A six-stage project methodology was delivered to complete the review including a performance diagnostic, lived experience primary research, stakeholder engagement, service redesign, temporary accommodation modelling and financial impact assessment.

Some of the key findings of the review include:

- Whilst Residential Supported Accommodation should continue to be delivered as an option for those with moderate-complex needs, there is likely to be less required in future years;
- All supported accommodation projects should be founded on a trauma-based care model;
- Current supported accommodation projects should be reshaped to provide opportunities for gender specific provision and should be smaller units;
- The length of stay in trauma informed supported accommodation should be based around a structured support planning journey enabling independence;
- There is a gap in current supported provision for a small but significant population of service users;
 - For those who are unwilling/unable to engage with support but who need a safe place to stay for intermittent periods of time (rapid access accommodation); and

- For those who may need permanent supported accommodation not homeless accommodation (will require partnership working and potentially joint commissioning with the HSCP);
- Current provision is contributing to bottlenecks in terms of households not being able to move to settled accommodation and to a backlog of homeless households in temporary accommodation.

To deliver the optimum service model, it is anticipated that a three year plan will be required. This will include the decommissioning of some existing services, the commissioning of new provision in order to better meet identified need and a full financial impact assessment. In order to develop and lead on the development and implementation of this plan we are seeking to recruit an additional resource to lead on the delivery of new residential supported accommodation.

Conversions

Due to the need to fund other elements of our RRTP, we did not plan to use any of our ring fenced RRTP funding for our Conversion Programme. In Year 3 we increased our own resources from £50,000 to £75,000 to support 30 conversions.

Due to delays in recruiting additional Housing First support workers, we anticipated an underspend in this budget and used this to increase the number of conversions we were able to carry out from 30 to 45. We aim to continue to provide this funding in future years to ensure this option remains part of our wider mainstream service response and currently plan for a minimum of 30 conversions during 2022/23.

Conversion Programme	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 actual	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Number of Conversions	11	32	45	30	30
Cost per Conversion	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500
Cost per Year	£27,500	£80,000	£112,500	£75,000	£75,000

Housing Pathways

Within West Dunbartonshire we have well established housing pathways and protocols relating to prison leavers, Young Care Leavers and those being discharged from hospital. We have also developed clear housing advice and information about housing options for those leaving the armed forces and we have refreshed our “No Home for Domestic Abuse” policy and approach in response to the the Domestic Abuse Protection (Scotland) Act 2021.

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.

Initial work began in Year 3 researching the experiences of LGBT+ communities accessing housing. We also updated our equalities data questions to improve the data we capture for all protected characteristics. In year 4 our aim is to provide training for staff on housing and LGBT+ related issues to increase awareness and

highlight practices that could have a potential negative impact in relation to accessing housing.

R RTP Objective 4 – Housing First

A key element of our plan was the introduction of a Housing First Service. This is now well established within West Dunbartonshire as it was implemented in Year 1 of our plan.

Year 3 activity:

- We have created 28 new Housing First tenancies – due to delays in recruiting additional staff, this is lower than the 35 new Housing First tenancies we projected at the beginning of the year;
- Whilst we recruited 3 additional FTE Housing First Support Workers, the delay in recruitment resulted in reduced staffing costs.
- This reduced staffing cost and the lower than targeted new Housing First tenancies has impacted on planned resources for Housing First in Year 3 in the following ways:
 - Reduced tenancy set-up costs from £140,500 to £116,000; and
 - Reduced staffing costs from £344,000 to £301,000.
- Unfortunately one Housing First tenant died during 2021/22 and the tenancy ended;
- In total 3 Housing First tenancies have now ended due to the death of the tenant since our Housing First initiative started;
- We have 3 tenancies being sustained where the Housing First support has been stepped down;
- At year end we therefore have a total of 42 Housing First tenancies being actively supported;

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Housing First tenancies created	5	15	28	48
Housing First tenancies ended (deaths)	1	1	1	3
Housing First tenancies at Step Down	0	1	2	3
Housing First tenancies with active support				42

- We continued to provide regular updates on the progress of our Housing First initiative to the Housing and Communities Committee, the Housing Solutions Partnership and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership;
- We also now provide up to date data to the Scottish Government via the Housing First monitoring return which was introduced in 2021/22;
- 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.

Our Year 4 plan and costings for Housing First is outlined below:

As outlined above in this update report, we have now managed to mainstream most of the initiatives and enhanced service provision introduced as part of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. This means that the £238k funding received from the Scottish Government, along with any underspend from the previous year, can now be used to fund Housing First in West Dunbartonshire.

Whilst this funding will allow us to upscale Housing First, it will not be to a level that fully meets identified demand and the service will need to operate with a targeted capacity.

We have fully updated our activity and costings model and made the following changes:

- We have continued with 8 FTE HF Support Workers and removed the planned increase that would be needed for fully meet identified demand;
- We have reduced the projected new Housing First tenancies in Year 4 from 36 to 14;
- We have retained our assumptions around the staff/client ratio at 1 worker to 7 clients;
- Following feedback from the Housing First Pathfinder and other networking opportunities we have modelled the level of HF support being maintained in future years;
- Following feedback from the Housing First Pathfinder and other networking opportunities we have reduced the HF tenancy set-up costs from £2500 to £1500;
- Due to available funding we have replaced the annual Housing First tenancy sustainment budget of £1000 per HF tenancy, with an Diversionary Activities Budget of £18,000 to cover all HF clients;
- We have updated expected staffing costs.

Funding currently available means that our Housing First Service will operate at capacity during 2022/23. In addition to the 42 HF tenancies currently being actively supported, at year end a further 10 had been assessed by the service and were waiting for an offer of housing and a further 6 were waiting for the Housing First assessment to be completed. We recognize that some capacity may come from existing Housing First tenancies ending or the support being stepped down and we will monitor this closely.

We have therefore projected no additional Housing First tenancies will be created in Year 5 and have projected no tenancy set-up costs. Current funding does allow for the provision of an £11,000 Diversionary Activity Budget in Year 5 and we will continue to monitor the use of this budget in 2022/23.

We are currently taking part in a Housing First Check Up process in conjunction with Homeless Network Scotland and will respond appropriately to a final report that will provide a view on areas of success and challenge.

We will explore funding options and delivery models to sustain Housing First in future years.

Number of Clients	Year 4 Costs	Level of Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Year 1 - 5 clients •Year 2 - 15 clients •Year 3 - 28 clients •Year 4 - 14 clients •Year 5 - funding to support 56 existing clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •£1500 furniture set up costs per client •£18,000 Diversionary Activity Budget •1 worker per 7 clients at £44k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 worker per 7 clients •Support is maintained at same levels to Year 1 until tenancy is Stepped Down

Housing First	Year 1 actual	Year 2 actual	Year 3 actual	Year 4 plan	Year 5 plan
Number of HF Support Workers	2.5 @ £38	4 @ £38	8 @ £43	8 @ £44	8 @ £44
Staffing costs	95,000	152,000	301,000	352,000	352,000
Tenancy set-up and sustainment	12,500	57,500	116,000	39,109	11,000
Delivering Housing First	107,500	209,500	417,000	391,109	363,000

Section 3 – Resource Plan

The implementation of our Year 3 plan as outlined above has resulted in an underspend of £36,393 from our resource plan at the beginning of the year.

RRTP Year 3 spend	Year 3 plan	Year 3 spend	Year 3 underspend
Housing First West Dunbartonshire	£480,657	£417,000	£63,657
Interim Supported Tenancies	£31,200	£31,200	£0
Additional Resettlement Support Service	£38,500	£38,500	£0
Enhanced Prevention Service	£38,500	£38,500	£0
Pilot Prevention Fund	£16,633	£8,350	£8,283
Shared Living Initiative	£28,810	£28,810	£0
Review of Residential Supported	£18,000	£16,048	£1,952
Conversion Programme	£75,000	£112,500	_- £37,500
Year 2 totals	£727,630	£690,908	£36,392

We have received SG RRTP funding of £238,000 for Year 4 and in addition to mainstreaming some of the initiatives introduced as part of our RRTP, we have also managed to secure the contribution from Housing and Homelessness of £200,000 to help deliver our RRTP. Following the review of our RRTP based on Year 3 activities, our refreshed costings and funding for Year 4 are outlined below:

RRTP Year 4 costings	
Housing First West Dunbartonshire	£391,109
Pilot Prevention Fund	£8,283
Conversion Programme	£75,000
Year 4 total cost	£474,392

RRTP Year 4 funding	
Year 3 underspend	£36,392
SG funding for Year 4	£238,000
Housing and Homelessness contribution	£200,000
Year 4 total funding	£474,392

Whilst the £238,000 SG funding for Year 4 is to be we are still faced with a significant shortfall if we are to continue to upscale Housing First to meet the identified need within West Dunbartonshire.

Appendix 1 – Gendered Analysis of Homelessness in 2022/23

From our analysis last year there have been only slight changes of 1% to 2% increase or decrease in the various categories, nothing at this moment that requires highlighting at this stage.

Presentations

- 48% of presentation in 2022/22 were female (either single person or head of household)
- Of those that presented as homeless who were ages 16 to 24 59% were female (15% of overall presentations)
- Single parent households account for 21% of all presentations. This is split 19% female and 2% male
- Single persons account for 70% of all presentations. This is split 23% female and 47% male.
- 20% (242) of households who presented stated their reason for homelessness was domestic abuse. Of these households 88% were female. Just over a sixth of which were ages 16 to 24. In addition to this of all those who stated this reason, 45% were female single parents, 33% were single females and 10% were single males.

Assessments

- 48% of all homeless assessments were in 2021/22 were female (either single person or head of household)
- Of those who had a homeless assessment who were ages 16 to 24 59% were female (15% of overall assessments)
- 85% (1015) of households assessed were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness. Of which 44% were single males, 24% were single females and 20% were female single parents.

Outcomes

- 1017 cases closed in 2021/22, contacted was maintained with 979 households.
- 53% received a local authority tenancy. 47% was a female led household and 53% male.
- 24% received an RSL tenancy. 51% were female and 49% male
- 9% returned to previous accommodation. 65% female and 35% male

Pathways

Pathway	Female	Male
1- No/low needs/no TA required	53%	47%
2- No/low needs/TA required	38%	62%
3- No/low needs/refuge	91%	9%
4- Med/high needs/supported tenancy	33%	67%
5- Med/high needs/supported refuge	85%	15%
6- Med/high needs/supported hostel	18%	83%
7- Med/high needs/hostel supervision	0%	100%
8- High/complex needs/HF	25%	75%
Withdrew prior to assessment	0%	0%
Withdrew prior to assessment decision	45%	55%

