

**Angus Council**  
**Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24**  
**2020 Update**

## **1. Background**

Drawing on baseline information and projected five year projections, Angus Council's [Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20-2023/24](#) (RRTP) details how we will achieve our goal that people who experience homelessness reach a settled housing outcome as quickly as possible by:

- Increasing the focus on prevention to stop homelessness happening in the first place.
- Ensuring households get through the homeless system faster.
- Ensuring homeless households can access existing housing.
- Ensuring homeless households can access the right type of support at the right time.
- Increasing affordable housing supply to meet needs of homeless households.

All 32 local authorities submitted their draft RRTPs to the Scottish Government in December 2018. Each plan was assessed by the Scottish Government and feedback was provided capturing areas of good practice and suggested areas for improvement. The final iteration was submitted to the Scottish Government for approval in May 2019.

We received confirmation from the Scottish Government on 17 July 2019 that we were awarded £172,000 to support the beginning of the implementation of our 5 year RRTP. Funding for Year 2 was announced in December 2019 confirming we will be allocated £161,000 for 2020/21. The funding is part of the £50 million Ending Homelessness Together fund announced by the First Minister to support the prevention of homelessness and the implementation of the recommendations from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group.

Governance for the RRTP continues to sit with the Housing, Health and Social Care Strategic Planning Group who have responsibility for the ongoing development and delivery of the plan. This ensures participation and accountability of all partners and stakeholders in the transition to rapid rehousing in Angus.

The current restrictions as a result of Covid-19 will inevitably further impact delivery of the RRTP and at the time of writing all allocations were suspended except in emergency situations, with work to bring void properties up to a lettable standard only just beginning after a pause of nearly 2 months. This will require the plan to be kept under close review as we move into a recovery phase.

## **2. Impact and Recovery from COVID-19**

The UN has recognised that housing is the first line of defence against Covid-19 and the current pandemic has brought into sharp focus how closely our home, health and wellbeing are connected. It has also forced faster progress on tackling homelessness, and it is important we protect that progress and ensure there is no backwards movement as we move into the period of recovery from the pandemic.

Excellent partnership working in Angus and collaboration between council services, the third sector, private rented landlords, other accommodation providers as well as health and social

care partners, has enabled us to support people with an urgent housing need into accommodation quickly and ensure the provision of services, resources and supports are available to people experiencing hardship. The role of the third sector and the Humanitarian Assistance Angus Response Team (HAART) has demonstrated that working together in a flexible and proactive way, across service boundaries is effective and hopefully that new way of working will continue as we move forward.

We must continue to find new and creative ways of working, to ensure the actions and priorities identified in the RRTP can be progressed. There has been a significant reduction in homeless presentations in Angus however we recognise that this is likely to fluctuate once lock down measures are reduced, and the economic and other wider impacts take effect. The temporary suspension of most allocations will also add to the existing backlog of homeless applications, potentially leading to longer periods in temporary accommodation. We recognise that we must resist the temptation to create more temporary, homeless places – especially when those places seem to offer fast capacity and a quick win. In reality, this will just result in the council spending more money to keep more people homeless for more time.

As part of the recovery plan, we will review the RRTP tool at a locality level to establish the required % of lets for each Housing Market Area. We must focus our efforts on substantially increasing lets to homeless households; by increasing allocations across the CHR partnership, increasing section 5 referrals, flipping suitable temporary accommodation placements, continuing to support people to access the Private Rented Sector and bringing empty homes back into use.

### **3. Implementation of RRTP – Year 1**

Work has progressed against a number of actions identified within the RRTP – a revised RRTP action plan (Appendix A) details all actions. Appendix B sets out how we have spent our allocation of funding and progress to date.

Notable achievements and actions completed in year 1, include:

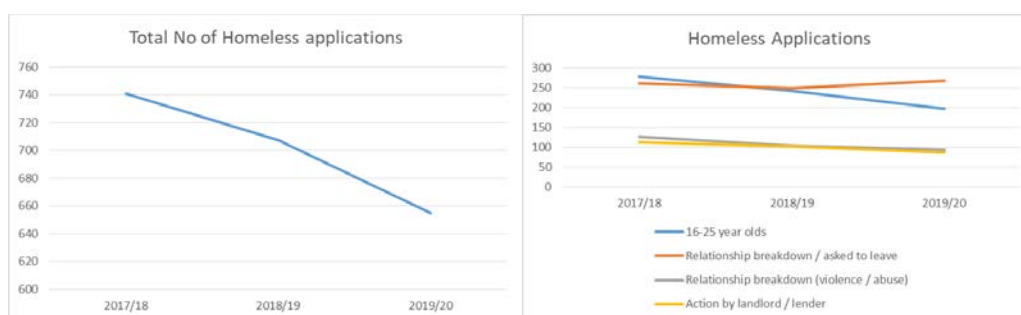
- Implementation of a revised prison protocol in line with the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards;
- Development of information and guidance materials for private tenants;
- Implementation of a rent deposit and rent guarantee scheme;
- Undertaken research into the support needs and outcomes of homeless households in Angus;
- Analysis of homeless need included in Housing Market Area profiles to inform affordable housing supply.

Progress against some actions has been slower than anticipated due to a number of factors. Implementation of the plan was delayed as we worked on further iterations of the plan and awaited our funding announcement (confirmed in July 2019). A shortfall in the funding allocation meant the plan had to be further revised to address this – the coordinator post was removed from the plan and is being met by existing resources in the Housing Strategy Team. Service restructures, staff recruitment and training have also led to delays in implementing some of the actions identified and we have faced challenges with finalising some initiatives due to internal resources constraints within the Council's contracts and legal teams.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were effectively one year behind anticipated delivery however this has been reflected in resource planning in later years and any funding which has not been spent will be carried forward into later years.

#### 4. Key Indicators

In order to track progress towards the transition to rapid rehousing, we are monitoring a range of performance indicators against the actions, detailed in Appendix A. 2019/20 data has been provided from internal reports and will be verified on receipt of the homeless publications from Scottish Government which are delayed as a result of Covid-19.



Homeless applications have continued to reduce in Angus, from 741 applications in 2017/18 to 655 applications in 2019/20.

We have seen similar reductions in applications made from 16-25 year olds and a reduction in applications received as a result of relationship breakdown (violence / abuse) as well as action by landlord/ lender.

Relationship breakdown / being asked to leave continues to be the most common reason for homeless applications in Angus and while we have seen a reduction in homeless applications overall, we seen an increase in applications as a result of relationship breakdown in 2019/20 (41% of all applications).

We are continuing to monitor homeless applications made following release from prison and despite the implementation of the revised prison protocol and adopting a pathway approach to prevent individuals leaving prison from entering the homeless system, we have seen an increase of homeless applications made from prison (28 in 2019/18 - an increase of 6 from the previous year). Work is ongoing to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised protocol – as part of this work we will investigate how these cases are being recorded and make appropriate recommendations to address the increase in homeless applications.

Increasing access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has been identified as a priority help to both prevent homelessness and reduce the backlog of homeless applications. There has been a considerable increase in homeless applications securing accommodation in the PRS. However the % of people securing PRS accommodation following housing options advice has reduced since 2017/18. A number of actions are being progressed to ensure we continue to increase access to the PRS.



Rapid rehousing aims to ensure people who experience homelessness reach a settled housing outcome as quickly as possible. Based on projections using April 2019 – December 2019 HL1 data, we have seen a slight reduction in case duration, however length of stay in temporary accommodation has remained relatively the same throughout the implementation of rapid rehousing (following a peak in 2018/19) despite a reduction in homeless applications. This highlights the importance of increasing allocations to homeless households to reduce the current backlog of applications and time spent in the homeless system. The requirement to increase the proportion of lets to homeless households to 58% in 2019/20 was missed by some considerable margin in 2019/20 with only 37.65% of all lets made to statutory homeless households by Angus Council and CHR partners.



A number of actions have been identified to ensure homeless households can access the right type of support and sustain accommodation to prevent repeat homelessness. The percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year has reduced from 88.78% in 2017/18 to 84.13% in 2018/19. Although the number of tenancies that end are relatively low in Angus and the reasons vary – the case review of failed tenancies and support outcomes research make a number of recommendations which should help to increase tenancy sustainment as we implement a rapid rehousing approach.



## 5. RRTP Actions – Progress to Date

The following sections provide a summary of the key actions progressed in the past year, progress made, and challenges faced.

### 5.1. Review of existing pathways, prevention and early intervention approaches

The RRTP data analysis highlights that the most common drivers of homelessness in Angus continue to be relationship breakdown, followed by action by landlord / lender. To inform a review of existing pathways, prevention and early intervention approaches we completed a multi-agency case review of RSL and LA tenancies that ended in 2017/18. The case file

review focussed on households that had failed to sustain a tenancy for 12 months where the tenancy had ended under abandonment; households who had been evicted; and section 5 referrals that had ended in abandonment or eviction.

The purpose of the review was to identify any gaps in support and consider if there were any changes required to existing eviction and failed tenancy prevention pathways. The case reviewers included representation and input from Housing Strategy, Community Housing, Homeless Support, Hillcrest Homes, Angus Housing Association, Justice Service, Angus Integrated Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service and the Community Mental Health Service. Twenty cases were selected at random across the four localities and each service provided details of their service involvement.

This findings from the review supports the findings from Hard Edges Scotland which highlighted the complexity of the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage, the mismatch between the range of needs people have and the fact that services are often set up to address single issues. Work is ongoing in Angus to consider the findings of Hard Edges research and we recognise that a whole systems approach to change is required to ensure services are proactive, provide stickable support and work in collaboration. Prevention and earlier intervention are also recognised as key to addressing multiple disadvantages.

As well as feeding the case review findings into other work streams, including the Hard Edges work in Angus, we identified a need to revise section 11 and eviction prevention pathways to ensure a coordinated approach to prevent homelessness at the earliest opportunity. We are also continuing to raise awareness of housing needs across all services to embed a 'no wrong' door approach to homeless prevention.

## **5.2. Review hospital and mental health facility discharge protocols and practice**

Through the Housing, Health and Social Care Strategic Planning Group, partners completed a multi-agency review of all delayed discharge cases from 2016/17 to identify any common issues or themes that could be addressed. The case review highlighted a number of people were unable to return to their existing property due to unmet adaptation needs. Another common theme emerging from the case review was delayed discharge as a result of poor property conditions.

To support people from all tenures to be discharged in a timely manner, £10,000 of funding has been allocated from the Angus Health & Social Care Partnership to create a 'prevention fund' to support hospital discharges for the following:

- Cleaning costs of the property
- To clear utility bill debt
- Interim accommodation costs (rent, service charges, council tax)
- Essential furnishings
- Removal/packing costs
- Any other housing costs may be considered

The fund went live from 1 April 2020 and it is proposed that the impact of this funding will be evaluated after one year.

A number of other actions have also been identified including the review of the existing multi agency Tayside Admission and Discharge protocol, staff training, and we are exploring

the use of 'attend anywhere' and other technology to assist with housing needs assessments and property viewings. We have experienced difficulties progressing the review of the Tayside Admission and Discharge Protocol due to the number of agencies and local authorities involved however we continue to highlight this as a priority through the Admission and Discharge planning group in Tayside.

### **5.3. Review and implement a revised protocol for Angus prisoners in line with the SHORE standards**

In line with the vision of rapid rehousing, the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) National Standards were published in December 2017 to ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are handled at an early stage, in a consistent way across Scotland. Supported by the Angus Community Justice Partnership, the Angus Prison Protocol has been reviewed and adopts the pathway concept of the SHORE standards setting out how the housing needs of individuals from Angus should be considered:

- on imprisonment
- during sentence
- prior to and following release.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, the revised protocol aims to secure permanent accommodation for individuals leaving prison, avoiding prison leavers entering the homeless system and being placed into temporary homeless accommodation, where possible.

The revised protocol was implemented with HMP Perth prisoners and other prisoners who made contact requesting assistance from April 2019 and fully implemented when the SPS Information Sharing Agreement and the SPS weekly report was implemented in Angus in February 2020. Work is ongoing to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised protocol.

### **5.4. Review the delivery of services aimed at preventing homelessness for women and children experiencing domestic or sexual abuse in line with the recommendations from the Change, Justice, Fairness Report**

Angus Council have signed up to the Chartered Institute of Housing's Make a Stand Pledge and one of the four commitments of the pledge is to develop and embed a policy to support people who are affected by domestic abuse. The recommendations from the Change, Justice, Fairness report, aimed at preventing homelessness for women and children experiencing domestic or sexual abuse will be considered in the development of the policy.

A working group involving stakeholders from Angus Violence Against Women Partnership was established in January 2020 and is taking forward agreed actions to meet the recommendations of the report and develop a domestic abuse policy for the Housing service. The policy has been drafted and is out for consultation. As well as introducing a domestic abuse policy, we are currently reviewing referral pathways to support women to engage with relevant agencies and services and exploring staff training resources in partnership with the Tayside, Fife and Central Housing Options Hub.

### **5.5. Monitoring housing outcomes for Care Leavers**

Work is ongoing by the Corporate Parenting Lead Officers group and Care Leavers Panel to monitor longer term housing outcomes for care leavers in Angus, and tenancy

sustainment monitoring has been extended to include care leavers who report they were looked after by the local authority more than 5 years ago.

As well as monitoring housing outcomes for care leavers, the existing housing options joint working protocol has been reviewed to include support to young people involved with or on the periphery of offending. Not every child or young person with care experience is included within the legal definitions of a 'looked after child' or a 'care leaver'. Some young people, however, have similar needs and backgrounds to care leavers, yet remain outside these legal definitions, increasing their vulnerability beyond that of their peers.

As corporate parents, we are committed to delivering services based on the needs of individuals and recognise that supporting young people as early as possible could protect them from experiencing further disadvantage in later life. The revised protocol is out for consultation and we plan to implement this in Angus from summer 2020.

## **5.6. Develop a Youth Homelessness Strategy**

We are undertaking a scoping exercise with our stakeholders to determine what support and prevention activities are currently available for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Angus. This alongside planned engagement work with young people with lived experience of homelessness, will help inform the development of a Youth Homelessness Strategy in Angus.

## **5.7. Implement a Mediation and Conflict Resolution Service**

Relationship breakdown continues to be the most common reason for homeless applications in Angus, supporting the need for the introduction of mediation or conflict resolution intervention.

We envisage the Mediation and Conflict Resolution Service will be accessible from a variety of referral sources to work with families, young people and couples where either there is a current threat of homelessness due to relationship breakdown or earlier, where there are relationship difficulties to prevent homelessness or the threat of homelessness occurring.

Where it is safe to do so, the service will provide support to identify and address the root causes of the relationship difficulties, and use communication, conflict resolution skills and mediation to build relationships and help the person remain in the family home. Where remaining in the family home is not possible, the service will work with the family so any move can be completed in a planned and supported way.

The tender for the service was published in March 2020, initially delayed due to resource issues in our internal contracts team and the deadline for submissions was then extended to allow for any difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The contract has been awarded to Family Mediation Tayside and Fife (Relationships Scotland) with implementation progressing, albeit with contingency measures in place as a result of the current social distancing restrictions.

## **5.8. Review roles and processes in housing teams in order to ensure early intervention to prevent homelessness**

During 2018/19 a full service review was undertaken of the Community Housing Teams in which our homelessness and housing options officers are based. One of the key aims of the review was to support the transition to the rapid rehousing model, moving to a one customer, one officer approach from initial contact with the service, through to allocation and maintaining of the tenancy. It is envisaged this approach will provide a more person-centred, customer-focussed service, which will modernise the service and also improve outcomes for the service and more importantly, our customers.

During the review it quickly became apparent that there was a vast amount of duplication between different roles within the Community Housing Teams. This could often lead to a customer having to “tell their story” more than once to different staff which could be both frustrating and distressing for them. As a result of this the new service will see a considerably flattened structure with a generic housing officer role. This role will allow for career progression by incorporating a career grade structure and competency framework into the post. The new generic role will have responsibility for a much smaller and more manageable patch, which will mean the officer will have full accountability for everything, from first point of contact through to tenancy management including providing the homelessness and housing options service in their patch. This will allow a much greater focus on early intervention and prevention, in line with the rapid rehousing approach. It will also bring greatly improved customer service with a focus on increased tenancy sustainment.

The new service was implemented from the 1 October 2019, so is still relatively new. However from the outset it was recognised that full transition to the new service would take approximately 2 years from implementation due to the learning and training required for the new Housing Officer role. As part of the implementation of the service, and as we transition to a rapid rehousing approach, we will review the appointment system to ensure households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness receive necessary assistance at first point of contact. We will also review voids and allocations processes to allow 'just in time' allocations to homeless households.

A comprehensive training plan is in place for officers based on their individual training and team requirements. A key element of the training plan will be the Housing Options Training Toolkit, to allow for a more consistent approach to homelessness prevention and housing options across the service. The training plan and competency framework also aims to address cultural changes required, with training and competencies focused on person-centred customer service and trauma-informed approaches.

The implementation has been difficult and there has been a number of challenges, as there is when introducing any new service. However the transition had started to settle from February 2020 with training plans developed and being delivered, then COVID-19 hit. This resulted in all staff suddenly finding themselves working from home, which has seen aspects of group training being placed on hold at the current time due to issues with technology although individual training is progressing. We are starting to adapt and think of new ways of working to engage with customers and deliver the service, while adhering to social distancing and reducing any risks for staff and customers.



## **5.9. Increase Allocations to Homeless Households**

In order to achieve rapid rehousing and ensure people who experience homelessness reach a settled housing outcome as quickly as possible, a priority was identified as part of the transition to rapid rehousing to increase allocations to homeless households.

The RRTP analysis tool was used to establish the % of lets required to meet homeless demand in Angus. The backlog (existing homeless cases where there is a duty to house) plus projected new demand was considered alongside rehousing outcomes for homeless households to show the gap between demand and supply.

From this Angus wide analysis, we calculated a requirement to increase the proportion of lets to homeless households to 58% in 2019/20.

The target of allocations was missed by some considerable margin in 2019/20 with only 37.65% of all lets made to statutory homeless households by Angus Council and CHR partners in 2019/20.

A review of data was undertaken to establish the current position, and this has shown that applying the Angus wide target to all areas is not sufficient to meet demand due to differences across the four locality areas.

In order to identify local targets, the RRTP tool was completed at a locality level to establish the required % of lets for each Housing Market Area (HMA). The analysis shows a clear difference in the position across the four areas. In the North and South HMAs, social housing allocations can continue to meet demand and clear the existing backlog of applications by maintaining current levels of % of lets to homeless households.

However, in order to clear the existing backlog and meet new demand in the West HMA by social housing lets alone, allocations to homeless need to increase from current levels (33%) to 56% of all lets.

Based on current waiting list figures, the existing backlog along with new demand will not be able to be met in the East HMA where the demand from statutory homeless outweighs the supply of social housing available from the CHR. The findings show that unless urgent action is taken, we will not be able to meet one of the critical milestones of the RRTP which is to remove backlog need from homeless households. If this is not achieved it will be impossible to reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation or the capacity of temporary accommodation in Angus.

While it is recognised that the levels of poverty and prevalence of multiple disadvantages in the East locality is linked to high levels of homeless demand, there are examples of good practice that could be replicated in both the East and West which have worked to reduce the levels of demand and increase supply of housing in the North locality. Work is ongoing within the housing teams to ensure a renewed focus on proactive, person-centred prevention and housing options advice. Work is also continuing to review nomination and section 5 agreements with housing association partners, with focus on increasing section 5 lets in the East and West localities and to establish local links with private rented sector landlords and agents in these areas.

## **5.10. Implementation of Revised Common Allocations Policy and Choice Based Lettings**

The revised allocations policy takes account of the legislative changes introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 as well as setting out a new choice based approach to allocating our properties. To meet our 'reasonable preference' obligations and help us to achieve the aims of rapid rehousing, as well as providing a fair system and continuing to give appropriate priority to people who are in most need of housing, we have reviewed our priority categories. The bedroom eligibility criteria has also been revised to allow single people or couples who wish to be considered for two bedrooms to bid or be matched to larger accommodation. We continue to experience pressures on single person accommodation, particularly from homeless households, and a high turnover of 2 bed properties in Angus therefore this ensures we make the best use of the stock that becomes available and will help us to increase allocations to homeless people.

Work has been ongoing since early 2018 to implement an online application form alongside a Choice Based Letting System. We have faced a number of challenges along the way in terms of the functionality of the system and the ability to link with our existing Northgate Housing System. This has led to a number of changes being made along the way. These changes have been essential to ensure that applications attract the correct bedroom allocation, priority banding and to ensure a seamless transfer of application data from Northgate to the new system. The changes that have been made also mean that there will now be minimal impact on the customer during the transition period.

Since January 2020 we have been delivering awareness and training sessions with Housing staff, ACCESS staff, Angus Alive and the Health and Social Care Partnership. These sessions have proved popular and have been a great tool in raising awareness of the system so that staff across a number of agencies are in a position to support applicants with the transition to the new system.

The system was due to go live in June 2020 however due to issues with IT and the current situation with COVID-19, the decision was made to postpone implementation until October 2020. In the meantime, we will be continuing with testing of the system, development of operational guidance for staff and applicants, staff training and development of a PR schedule to outline our plans for keeping our customers and stakeholders informed on our progress.

## **5.11. Implement online housing need and homeless assessment case management system**

Following implementation of the online housing application and choice based lettings, we hope to introduce a housing need and homeless assessment case management system, maximising the benefits of the existing systems to introduce self-serve assessments, reduce duplication of information entry and streamline current processes. Freeing up officers' time from processing assessment information would allow officers to focus on providing increased support to customers, proactively supporting people to prevent homelessness and helping people to secure suitable housing, where homelessness cannot be prevented.

The implementation of the case management system, alongside the existing housing options wizard, online application and choice based lettings system is dependent on logic being developed in the back office of the system. At present the back office system does not provide the logic required to support statutory homeless reporting and we are in discussions

with the software developer to consider options around this prior to progressing this project.

#### **5.12. Provision of furniture and goods to homeless households**

Having a satisfactory range of furniture and furnishings is essential for homeless people who are being rehoused. Without this, it is much more likely that the tenancy will fail and that the cycle of homelessness will be repeated; a considerable cost to both the person concerned and to local authorities.

Since 2010 we have provided second –hand furniture, white goods and starter packs to homeless households in partnership with local recycled goods projects. Since April 2018, 303 households have been supported to access household goods and while this provision has been vital to support homeless households into sustainable tenancies, the quality and choice of goods on offer can be inadequate at times.

As part of the RRTP, we explored an alternative provision to help all new tenants equip their accommodation, choosing from a wide range of new products and appliances and adding a weekly payment to their rent as a service charge. This was expected to achieve savings of around £38,000 per annum from the homeless budget however cannot be implemented fully due to housing benefit regulations around assistance with housing costs. We are exploring an alternative option of providing fully furnished tenancies and expect to implement this over Summer 2020 alongside the existing recycled goods initiatives.

As well as reviewing the existing provision of furniture and goods to homeless households, we have worked with our revenues and benefits team to review existing processes to ensure applications for the Social Welfare Fund are streamlined in line with the objectives of rapid rehousing. Despite agreement to prioritise applications for homeless households, people continue to experience lengthy waits for community care grant awards. Service user research completed as part of an analysis of support needs and outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Angus has highlighted that many people had ‘practically nothing’ in place when they moved into their permanent home. This has highlighted an urgent requirement to revisit this work to review the Community Care Grant processes - to enable households to access the resources required to get the basics to set up home as quickly as possible.

#### **5.13. Increase Access to the Private Rented Sector**

There are around 7200 registered privately rented properties in Angus and despite this sector seeing a 50% increase since 2010 and a steady 4% increase each year since 2015, as well as changes to the regulations making it a more secure and viable housing option, the numbers of homeless households in Angus securing PRS accommodation are relatively low. A number of actions have been identified in the RRTP to increase access to the private rented sector including introducing flat share initiatives; implementing a rent deposit scheme and establishing a grant for empty home owners to bring back empty homes for letting to homeless households.

Progress in implementing these later initiatives was accelerated as a result of difficulties allocating tenancies during the COVID-19 pandemic and this has presented an opportunity to engage with private rented landlords in Angus. A call for assistance from landlords has, at the time of writing, seen around 60 properties put forward for helping people with an

urgent housing need into PRS tenancies. A rent deposit, rent in advance and rent guarantee schemes have been launched, alongside guidance for housing officers to assist them to negotiate with landlords to help support people to access accommodation. We are working alongside Crisis to consider a range of options which will assist us to continue to build on the engagement with landlords and improve access to the PRS in Angus to prevent and respond to homelessness in Angus.

#### **5.14. Review Outcomes from Support Provision**

The impact of existing support services on homeless households was not well understood in Angus and in developing the RRTP we recognised there was a requirement to review outcomes from current support provision to ensure we fully understand the support needs of homeless households in Angus and that these households can access the right type of support.

Using the RRTP development funding, we commissioned Indigo House to complete a research project undertaking data analysis, service user research and service provider research to:

- Understand the support needs of homeless households in Angus, including current and projected future needs;
- Map existing support services;
- Assess how effective existing support services are in meeting the needs of homeless households in Angus;
- Assess the effectiveness of the current models of supported homeless accommodation in Angus;
- Identify gaps in support services for homeless households in Angus;
- Make recommendations to effectively meet the support needs of homeless households in Angus.

The research concluded in March 2020 and provides consistent findings across secondary data analysis, interviews with service users, and with service providers. Findings show:

- A strong Homelessness Support Service for which there is very high demand, which could serve more people in need of support;
- Supported accommodation with strengths but limitations around lack of clarity of purpose / client group;
- Lack of access to services – geographically in the north, and functionally in mental health services, and in welfare benefits/DWP, exacerbated by poor transport;
- Problems around culture and skills in some parts of the housing service for the most vulnerable clients, with lack of an embedded approach to prevention and person-centred approach to complex needs;
- Silo working and inadequate approach to multi-disciplinary working and communication across Council services.

A number of recommendations were made, some of which are already reflected in the RRTP and others which will help inform further actions required to achieve rapid rehousing in Angus:

- Develop a multi-disciplinary approach to address severe and multiple deprivation homelessness – so that those with complex needs (ill-health, criminal justice and homelessness experiences) are collectively considered and addressed through effective joint working, communication and information sharing.
- Review the scale and purpose of supported accommodation – while the current services are well regarded by some service users and service providers, there are questions about the specific purpose of this provision in the context of rapid rehousing. Should they be targeted to very specific needs / client groups / age groups? What scale should they be? Should there be more (but smaller) available elsewhere across Angus? Should these be health and social care responses rather than a homeless response?
- Consider the level of resources for transition to independent living – the Homelessness Support Service is highly regarded and delivers positive outcomes. In the context of rapid rehousing, there appears to be a greater resources requirement for housing support to enable independent living, particularly for those with more complex needs who require more intense wrap around support.
- Embed a housing support culture within the housing service – there is much that housing officers can do to support tenants with low to medium level support needs. Based on the findings from the research this requires some training around person-centred customer service, and trauma informed approaches so that staff understand and have methods for coping with complex needs and difficult behaviours. Linking back to multi-disciplinary services, they also need the support and back-up of other colleagues and external professionals to encourage positive outcomes for vulnerable people.
- Review the Community Care Grant processes - to enable households to access the resources required to get the basics to set up home as quickly as possible.
- Transport and access to services – consider how vulnerable households can better access public transport to maximise access to services and minimise social isolation.

These recommendations cross a number of areas in the RRTP and will be used to inform implementation of the action plan.

#### **5.15. Review supported accommodation provision in Angus progressing towards smaller, specialist units within a psychologically informed environment**

The research findings support a requirement identified in the RRTP to review the current models of supported homeless accommodation in Angus to ensure people with multiple needs beyond housing (where housing first is not possible or preferable) have the option of highly specialist provision within small, shared, supported and psychologically informed environments. To support this work, we have completed a review of the supported housing assessment and allocation protocol, in partnership with AHSCP.

Supported housing services range widely in Angus, but they all play a crucial role in providing a safe and secure home with support for people to live independently. This includes:

- providing the support older people and people with severe and long term health problems need to maintain their independence;
- supporting people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties as well as other complex needs to stabilise their lives, recover and live more independently;

- supporting people with learning disabilities in the longer term to maximise their independence and exercise choice and control over their lives.

The review of this protocol ensures the pathway for assessment, handling of applications and the allocation of tenancies is streamlined and the eligibility criteria has been reviewed in line with the vision of the RRTP to provide specialist supported accommodation for people with multiple and complex needs. The review of supported homeless accommodation provision is anticipated to be completed by March 2022.

#### **5.16. Implementation of Housing First**

The number of homeless households with severe and multiple disadvantages (SMD) or complex support needs who would benefit from a Housing First approach to rehousing in Angus is expected to be around 15 per annum. Introducing this model of intensive support in Angus will ensure households with complex needs can access personalised, open-ended, flexible support to end their experience of repeat homelessness and address their wider needs.

A paper was considered at the Housing, Health & Social Care Strategic Planning Group meeting in August 2019 setting out various options for delivering Housing First in Angus and it was agreed that a full options appraisal was required to identify the preferred method for delivering Housing First support in Angus.

A project team involving key stakeholders from housing, mental health, substance, justice and homeless support services has been established and stakeholders agreed to put forward 2 options for a full appraisal:

Option 1:- Deliver Housing First support in house by expanding the existing homeless support service

Option 2:- Deliver Housing First support by procuring a third party support provider to lead on the delivery of support in partnership with existing services

A number of opportunities and risks were identified against both options however it was agreed that without a detailed tender submission, there were too many unknowns to fully and objectively evaluate both options. The group agreed to tender for an external support provider and invited a tender submission from the homeless support service so this could be evaluated alongside any 3rd party submissions.

As a result of internal resource constraints within our procurement team, the tender did not go live until January 2020. Despite a prior information notice being published and contact made with several support providers, we received no tender submissions and it was agreed Housing First support would be provided in house by recruiting two additional support workers.

Job outlines for the posts have been developed and we received confirmation in April 2020 that we can proceed with the recruitment of these posts. Operational guidance and training requirements have also been agreed and it is anticipated we will be able to implement Housing First in Angus in August 2020.

### **5.17. Increase affordable housing supply to meet needs of homeless households**

Over the first three years of Angus' LHS 2017-22, there have been 308 units delivered against a 360 target, representing an 85% return on delivery-to-target. In 2019/20 there were 92 affordable new supply units delivered however there were number of units (62) near completion prior to the temporary closure of constructions sites. We continue to work closely with RSLs and developers to ensure that projects being delivered meet housing and homeless needs identified in Angus.

Homeless analysis data has been added to our Housing Market Area (HMA) profiles. This analysis highlighted the variances at HMA level in relation to the percentage of lets required to meet demand – East, 101%; West, 56%; South, 45%; and North, 32%. This clearly outlines higher demand and pressures in some housing market areas and the HMA profile analysis will continue to drive Strategic Housing Investment Planning.

Work is also underway to appoint consultants who will undertake a new HNDA for Angus. This work will include our partners at Dundee and Perth & Kinross Council, and it is anticipated that the revised Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) will be produced by end 2020 / early 2021. The work will provide a number of key outputs including an estimate of additional housing units required (over the HNDA lifespan) by tenure, as well as current and future housing requirements across a range of needs, and this will include current and future requirement for homeless households. This in-depth analysis will support the ongoing work of interpreting our own homelessness demand and supply.

## **6. Resource Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24**

The resource plan has been updated to reflect the current position in Angus. We are effectively one year behind anticipated delivery however this has been reflected in resource planning in later years and any funding which has not been spent will be carried forward into later years.

The transition to rapid rehousing in Angus will continue to be achieved partly from within existing resources and by savings created through service redesign or refocus. However, transition will also require additional resources over and above the existing resource allocated locally in Angus. The action plan in appendix A sets out the full resource requirements to implement the actions identified to date.

Many of the current actions identified in the transition to rapid rehousing will be met by existing funding and staff resource from within Angus Health & Social Care Partnership, the Council's housing strategy team, operational housing teams and our Registered Social Landlord partners.

Additional resources required from the Ending Homelessness Together fund over and above the existing resource allocated locally are detailed below. The resource plan has been calculated using existing projections and it is anticipated the resource requirements will change as the plan is reviewed and develops over the transition period and the provision of housing first is ramped up.

The savings identified are projected to be £416,614 per annum however the savings are not expected to be fully realised until 2022/23.

	<b>Projected Resource Requirements 2019/20 – 2023/24</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>1: 2019/20</b>	<b>2: 2020/21</b>	<b>3: 2021/22</b>	<b>4: 2022/23</b>	<b>5: 2023/24</b>
Funding Allocation	<b>£172,000</b>	<b>£161,000</b>	TBC	TBC	TBC
Resource Requirement	<b>£0</b>	<b>£170,057</b>	<b>£241,557</b>	<b>£322,557</b>	<b>£322,557</b>
Carry forward	-	<b>£172,000</b>	<b>£162,943</b>	-	-
Potential Savings realised	-	-	-	£416,614	£416,614
Funding Requirement			£78,614	-	-

### 6.1. Savings Identified

While it is difficult to estimate the overall potential savings achieved by a transition to rapid rehousing, it is anticipated that savings will be achieved by reducing the capacity within our dispersed temporary accommodation by more than half from 201 to 91 by March 2022. As well as freeing up existing staff resource to provide a more proactive housing management service to existing tenants, it is anticipated that we will save around £54,439 per annum in council tax payments (not currently charged to occupants) and £32,175 per annum in dispersed rent arrears, both of which are covered by the homeless budget.

In line with the shift away from a culture of 'tenancy readiness', we will review the scale and purpose of supported homeless accommodation provision in Angus. It is anticipated that the current funding of £330,000 per annum will be redirected towards the delivery of Housing First and smaller, specialist supported housing.

The savings identified are projected to be £416,614 per annum however the full savings are not expected to be fully realised until 2022/23 and in the current climate of budget pressures, it cannot be guaranteed that any savings generated will be reinvested into homeless and support services.



## 6.2. Resource Requirements

	Action	Resource Requirement	Dependencies
<b>Year 2</b> <b>2020/21</b>	Implement Housing First	£96,200	Backlog of existing homeless applications is reduced
	Implement a Mediation & Conflict Resolution Service	£73,857	
<b>Year 3</b> <b>2021/22</b>	Continue to deliver Housing First	£ 92,700	Successful delivery of Housing First and Mediation & Relationship Counselling Service
	Continue to deliver Mediation & Conflict Resolution Service	£73,857	Temporary accommodation capacity is reduced
	Implement online housing need and homeless assessment case management system	£75,000	
<b>Year 4</b> <b>2022/23</b>	Continue to deliver Housing First in Angus	£92,700	Savings achieved by reducing capacity in temporary accommodation
	Continue to deliver Mediation & Conflict Resolution Service	£73,857	Savings achieved by review of supported homeless accommodation
	Increase provision of specialist supported housing	£156,000	
<b>Year 5</b> <b>2023/24</b>	Continue to deliver Housing First in Angus	Mainstreamed	

Mediation & Relationship  
Counselling Service

Mainstreamed

Provision of specialist  
supported housing

Mainstreamed