

Angus Council

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

Year 3 Update Report

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.

The RRTP was approved by the Scottish Government in May 2019 and update reports for years one and two were submitted in 2020 and 2021 detailing progress and challenges experienced, along with a revised RRTP and activity and spend monitors.

We received confirmation from the Scottish Government on 10 December 2021 that we have been allocated £122,00 to support Year 4 of the RRTP. This is in addition to the funding received for years one, two and three totalling £477,000. We were also allocated an additional £100,000 winter funding for 2020/21 to help accelerate the implementation of RRTP and support the recovery from the pandemic.

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.

2. Implementation of RRTP – Year Three

Work has progressed against several 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.

We are continuing to see a year-on-year reduction in homeless applications in Angus and the number of households accessing temporary accommodation (both with and without children) has also reduced significantly in the last year. The average length of time in temporary homeless accommodation reduced from 182 days in 2020/21 to 150 days in 2021/22 and is lower than pre pandemic levels.

16 individuals are now being supported by Housing First with good engagement and positive outcomes. An annual check-up has been completed, supported by Homeless Network

Scotland, which identified a number of areas of positive practice and some areas for development. Both support workers posts have now been made permanent however there is still a need to consider longer term funding and upscaling of the service. The future delivery of Housing First depends on the review of supported homeless accommodation where the aim is to redirect resources away from short term accommodation to longer term specialist supported housing and Housing First.

The Family Mediation and Conflict Resolution Service, delivered by Relationship Scotland, struggled to embed into general referral pathways and processes in Angus, despite significant efforts going into awareness raising, networking and promotion across services. There remains a requirement for mediation and conflict resolution intervention in Angus however continuing with the delivery of this via the existing contract with Relationship Scotland does not represent value for money and the contract ended on 31 July 2022. The Housing, Health & Social Care Strategic Planning Group will consider options for future delivery of mediation and conflict resolution intervention in Angus and agree a new approach.

We developed a new Private Sector Officer role and recruited two officers to build engagement with landlords in Angus, support people to access the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and act as the first point of contact for tenants and landlords to prevent homelessness from the PRS. Due to the temporary nature of the posts, we experienced significant recruitment challenges and both posts are now vacant. Due to these challenges and uncertainties relating to future funding, it has been agreed to merge the role of the Private Sector Officer with the new Homeless Case Manager role that is under development.

The housing service and Angus Health and Social Care Partnership have agreed to a service review with the view of establishing a new team alongside the Homelessness Support Service within the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership, to deliver the homelessness functions currently sitting as part of the generic Housing Officer role within the three Community Housing Teams. The objectives of the review are to:

- Make better use of existing resources
- Improve collaboration in homelessness services and prevention
- Increase focus on prevention and ensure homelessness is prevented at an earlier stage
- Ensure homeless households can access the right type of support at the right time

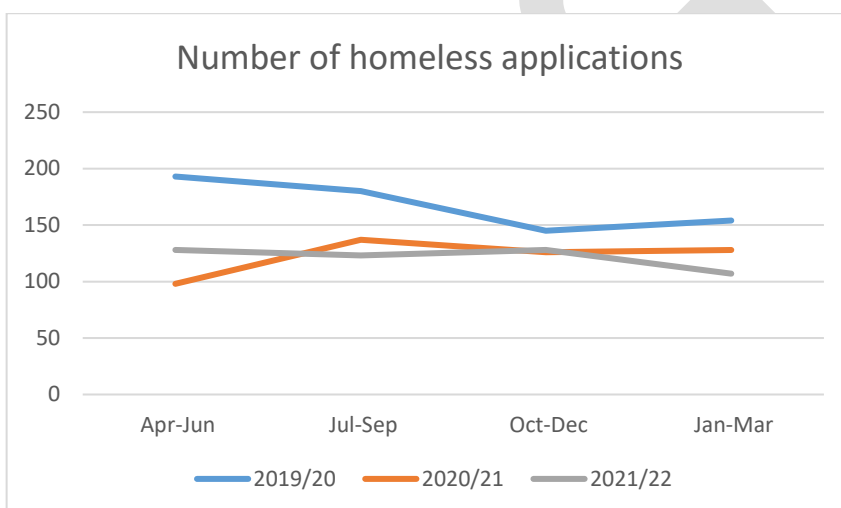
Mapping of the customer journey and pathways has been completed, the job outlines and person specifications have been agreed and graded and final proposals will be reported and agreed in August.

There have been a number of challenges in progressing the delivery of the RRTP over the last year, recruitment challenges and limited staff resources at both a strategic and operational level along with the service review has disrupted delivery of projects and the ongoing development of the RRTP. The current situation is also becoming increasingly more challenging in a context of constrained resources, the impact of and required responses to the cost of living crisis, the humanitarian efforts to accommodate refugees and deliver the more recent Ukrainian schemes, as well as the risks surrounding the potential increase in homelessness presentations when the schemes come to an end and the resources required to implement and meet new Prevention of Homelessness Duties expected to be introduced in 2023. Additional temporary accommodation units have been created to meet the

anticipated demand from homeless presentations when the Ukrainian schemes come to an end.

As a result of these challenges, there is a large balance of unspent RRTP funding. This has been fully committed to planned activities and we hope to continue to carry this forward into later years. To ensure effective implementation of the RRTP, there are requirements for sufficient resources to develop and implement the RRTP and responses to the cost of living crisis and longer term funding for the services and responses required to prevent and address homelessness. Mainstreaming RRTP activities beyond 2023/24 is dependent on the redirection of resources by reducing the capacity in temporary accommodation when we reach a position of rapid rehousing. Mainstreaming these activities will not be achievable if the anticipated increase in demand for temporary accommodation comes to fruition.

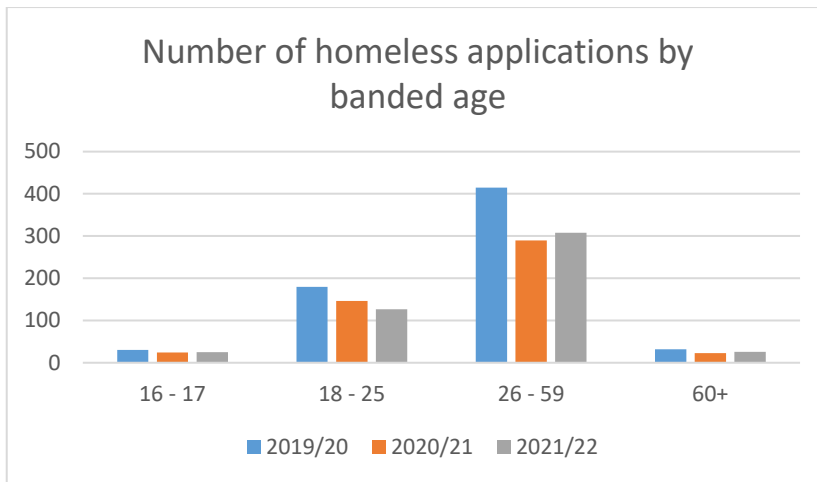
3. Key Homeless Indicators – Trends and Analysis 2021/22



Source: HL1, Scottish Government

Homeless applications have continued to reduce year on year in Angus and although the rate of reduction slowed in 2021/22 compared to the previous year, it was anticipated that applications would increase as the ban on evictions was lifted in August 2021. Homeless applications remain significantly lower than pre pandemic levels, having reduced by 28% from 672 applications 2019/20 to 486 applications 2021/22.

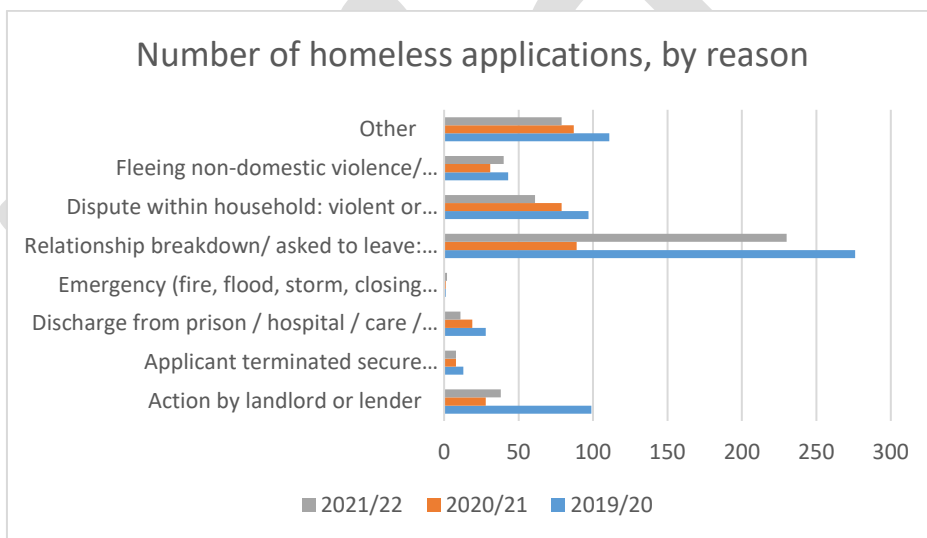
The profile of applicants is largely consistent with previous years. Single person households continue to make up the greatest proportion of homeless applicants, 73% of applications were from single person households and 25% of applications included children in the household – this is a slight increase on the number of applications from families with children from the previous year (increased by 4%).



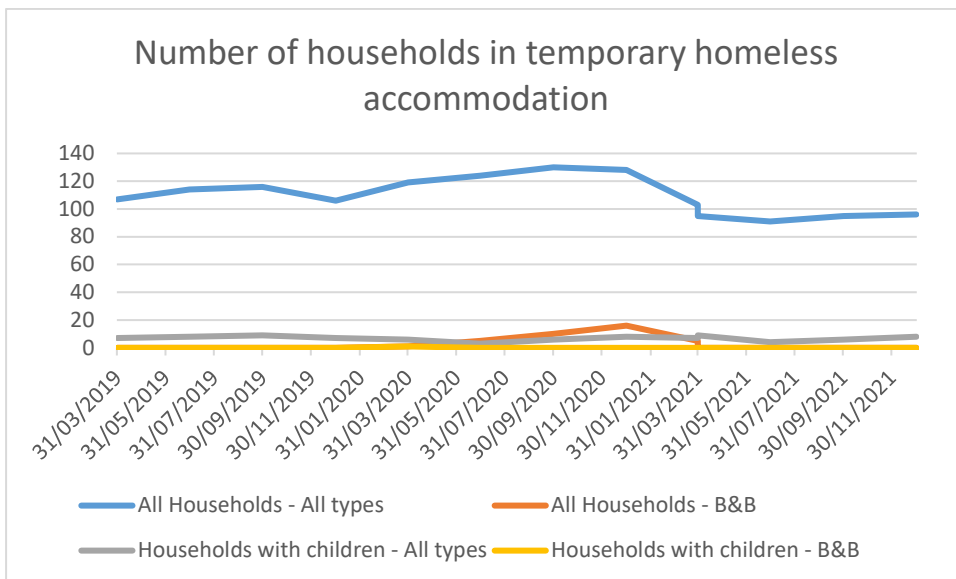
Source: HL1, Scottish Government

Applications from 26-59 year olds continue to make up the majority of homeless applications and the number of applications made by younger people under 25 is continuing to reduce year on year, in line with the reduction in applications overall.

Applications from households with White Scottish and Other British ethnic origin continue to represent the majority of homeless applications (93% of applications). There were no applications from households who were ineligible for assistance or had no recourse to public funds.

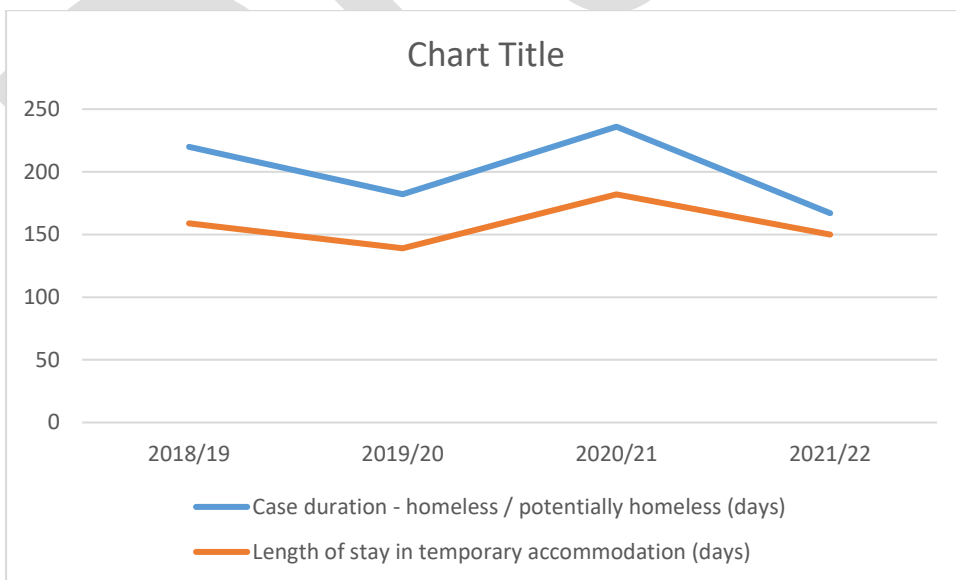


Relationship breakdown/ being asked to leave continues to be the most common reason for homeless applications in Angus and spiked again in 2021/22 following a significant reduction in applications in 2020/21, although numbers remain lower than pre pandemic levels. Although there has been a slight increase in applications following action by landlord or lender these are significantly lower than anticipated. The number of applications resulting from a violent or abusive relationship has also reduced, whereas applications resulting from non-domestic violence or harassment has increased. There are plans to develop a policy with the aim to prevent homelessness arising from harassment or non-domestic violence, in line with the domestic abuse policy.



Source: HL2, Scottish Government

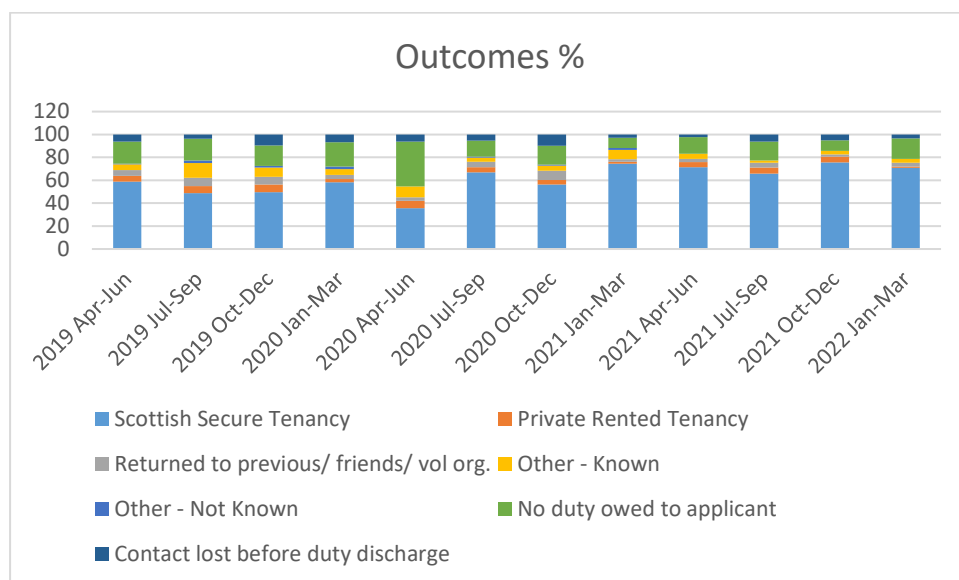
The number of households in temporary accommodation has reduced significantly this year, having peaked in 2020/21 following the first lockdown because of a temporary suspension of allocations during this period. B&B use has also reduced significantly with no households recorded as living temporarily in B&B at the end of each quarter in 2021/22. The number of households with children in temporary accommodation remained relatively low and there have been no households with children placed into B&B in 2021/22. There has been one breach of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order recorded since the extension to all households came into force in May 2020 and we are continuing to monitor the use of unsuitable accommodation and breaches of the Order on a monthly basis.



Source HL1 & HL3, Scottish Government

Both case duration and length of stay in temporary accommodation has reduced significantly in the previous year having peaked during the pandemic as a result of restrictions on repairs activity and a temporary suspension of allocations during the first lockdown. The aim of the R RTP is to minimise the use of and time spent in any form of temporary accommodation and we will continue to aim to avoid the use of temporary

accommodation and support people experiencing homelessness to secure suitable settled accommodation as quickly as possible. If a household is appropriately housed in temporary accommodation, content living there and there are no tenancy issues, consideration will be given to 'flipping' the accommodation to a Scottish Secure tenancy (SST). Where 'flipping' is agreed, a formal offer will be made to the tenant and the tenant will be able to keep the furniture if they wish. In 2021/22, 23 temporary accommodation tenancies were 'flipped' to a Scottish Secure Tenancy.



Source: HL1, Scottish Government

The majority of homeless applications (71% in 2021/22) continue to be discharged into a Scottish Secure Tenancy however despite the good response from private sector landlords during the pandemic and the introduction of the Private Sector Officers in 2021 only 4% of households applying as homeless secured a Private Residential Tenancy in 2020/21 and 2021/22 reducing from 5% in 2019/20.

Of the 310 Scottish Secure Tenancies offered to homeless households in Angus in 2021/22, only 81 (26%) of these were offered from housing associations in Angus despite housing association stock making up around 33% of all social housing stock in Angus. Further engagement is required to ensure Housing Association partners maximise allocations to homeless households.

4. Supply and Demand Tool

The Scottish Government provided local authorities with a tool to calculate the gap between supply and demand to establish the percentage (%) of lets required to meet homeless demand and clear the backlog of existing homeless applications over the course of the RRTP. To be in a position of rapid rehousing we need to effectively clear the backlog of homeless applications by the end of the 5 year plan (2023/24).

We discovered that applying an Angus wide target to all areas is not sufficient to meet demand due to differences in demand and turnover across the four Housing Market Areas (HMAs). The tool has therefore been repeated using locality data to establish the required % of lets for each HMA.

The number of homeless applications has reduced significantly in the last two years however allocations as a whole and both social housing and private rented sector lets to homeless households have also reduced significantly in the same period and with only two years remaining of the RRTP, the gap between demand and supply has increased since the tool was previously completed.

There is a current backlog of 77 homeless cases (September 2022) where there is a duty to offer secure accommodation. Based on the rehousing outcomes for Duty homeless in 2021/22 (including lets in social housing, lets in private sector, offers refused and lost contacts) this leaves a gap between demand and supply of 131. To meet this gap by social housing alone, we require a minimum of 337 lets to homeless households across Angus based on calculations to clear the backlog over 3 years. This represents 52% of all social housing lets last year, a substantial increase from 32% of lets in 2021/22.

The table below shows the breakdown of analysis for Angus and the four Housing Market Areas:

| | Angus | North (Brechtin & Montrose) | East (Arbroath) | South (Carnoustie & Monifieth) | West (Forfar) |
|--|--------------|--|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <i>Total lets to homeless (CHR)</i> | 206 | 55 | 61 | 16 | 74 |
| <i>Total lets to homeless (PRS)</i> | 28 | 5 | 15 | 1 | 7 |
| <i>Current backlog (existing Duty cases)</i> | 77 | 12 | 23 | 18 | 14 |
| <i>Projected new demand - Duty to find settled accommodation</i> | 412 | 78 | 206 | 4 | 124 |
| <i>Lost contacts</i> | 41 | 10 | 25 | 1 | 5 |
| <i>Refusals</i> | 32 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 13 |
| Demand | 365 | 63 | 185.5 | 11 | 113 |
| Supply | 234 | 60 | 76 | 17 | 81 |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Gap between demand & supply | 131 | 3 | 110 | -6 | 32 |
| No of lets required to meet demand | 337 | 58 | 171 | 10 | 106 |
| % lets required (based on 2021/22 lets) | 52% | | | | |

5. RRTP Actions – Progress to Date

Prison Protocol

Angus Council has operated a prison housing protocol since 2010. The protocol was revised and strengthened in 2019, in line with SHORE standards and rapid rehousing guidelines. The focus is on partnership working to prevent homelessness on entry to prison, and to prevent homelessness on release. The Council has an information-sharing agreement in place with the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and receives weekly reports on prison admissions and upcoming liberations. A central team of housing staff identify and cross-check housing and related issues, liaise with landlords, benefit agencies and any relevant support providers to prevent housing loss across all tenures - including Council, Housing Association and private rented sector (PRS) tenants, linking in with private rented landlords as required. In 2019, the Common Allocations Policy was revised to award the highest priority to applicants in institutions, including prisons, to whom the Council has rehousing duty. Housing staff aim to assess prisoners' housing needs early, avoiding a homelessness application and temporary accommodation, by securing a home in time for release. Prisoners are supported with furniture, utilities and benefits claims, where needed, through housing support and justice services. There has been a substantial reduction in homelessness applications from people previously in prison since introducing the original prison protocol in 2010. This underlines the success of in-prison advice, preventing the loss of housing. Since implementing the updated prison protocol in 2019, there has been a 260% reduction in people applying as homeless directly from prison.

Effective partnership working has been key to both preventing tenancy loss on admission, and facilitating housing on release, where a prisoner would otherwise be homeless. In one case, information-sharing between SPS, Council, Angus Housing Association and benefits staff identified a prisoner with high arrears and legal action. A substantial backdate was successfully applied for on mental health grounds, cancelling arrears and legal action, and the person able to return home on release.

Review of Common Allocations Policy

A revised allocations policy and Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system has now been in place since November 2020. At 31 August 2022, a total of 1259 properties have been let by the

Council and its Common Housing Register (CHR) partners through CBL and a total of 19,400 bids received on these properties. This is an average of 15 bids per property let. The number of bids per property can vary quite significantly with 103 being the highest number of bids received for a property.

Using available reports, we can see that 1382 applicants have placed one or more bids to date, this is 35% of those eligible to bid. We have yet to carry out a full review of our register since moving to CBL and this will help ascertain a clearer picture of those on the register who are actively looking for rehousing and inform any further work that may be required around access to the bidding system.

The allocations policy is now under review and consultation has been carried out in the form of a survey to staff and members of the public. The responses suggest that we need to consider changes to how we advertise our properties, how we support access to the system and how we prioritise applications. There is support for a review of the priority bandings to give greater priority to homeless households (from silver to gold priority banding) which will allow a higher proportion of lets to homeless households and help to reduce the backlog of applications.

Domestic Abuse Policy

Angus Council's housing division made a commitment as part of the Chartered Institute of Housing's (CIH) Make a Stand campaign to implement a domestic abuse policy. The policy was drafted based on the recommendations from the [Change, Justice, Fairness](#) research, the CIH Domestic Abuse Guidance for Social Landlords and following discussions with key stakeholders.

The policy supports the aims set out in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by focusing on preventing homelessness wherever possible and maximising other opportunities for women experiencing domestic abuse to access settled accommodation. It sets out how the Housing Division will provide a proactive housing response to preventing and addressing domestic abuse by:

- Providing a confidential, sensitive, and supportive response to victims/survivors, whether that be women, children, or men
- Working collaboratively across the organisation and with partners to provide a coordinated response to enable victims/survivors to access a range of housing options, advice, information and support;
- Holding perpetrators to account – domestic abuse is the responsibility of the perpetrator and action will be taken, where possible, to support victims/survivors to remain in the family home.

The policy was approved in September 2020 and has been implemented alongside guidance and training for staff. Since the policy and guidance was implemented, homeless applications resulting from people experiencing violence or abuse within the household have reduced by 23%. In the coming year we plan to complete a full evaluation the effectiveness of the policy, involving women who have been supported by housing and other stakeholders.

An action identified in the 2021 RRTP update report to develop a Safer Homes project as part of the community benefits offering from the council's repairs contract was not

progressed. The repairs contract was terminated in early 2022 however we have made use of the Victims' Fund, which is administered by Victim Support Scotland and is open to any victim of crime who is resident in Scotland and currently accessing victim and other support services. The funding is for the direct purchase or reimbursement of goods and services on behalf of the victim. The fund can cover household items, food, utility or clothing expenses, costs to repair or replace damaged property or goods, contributions to funeral costs, moving costs, travel costs to place of safety or to attend court and security equipment costs.

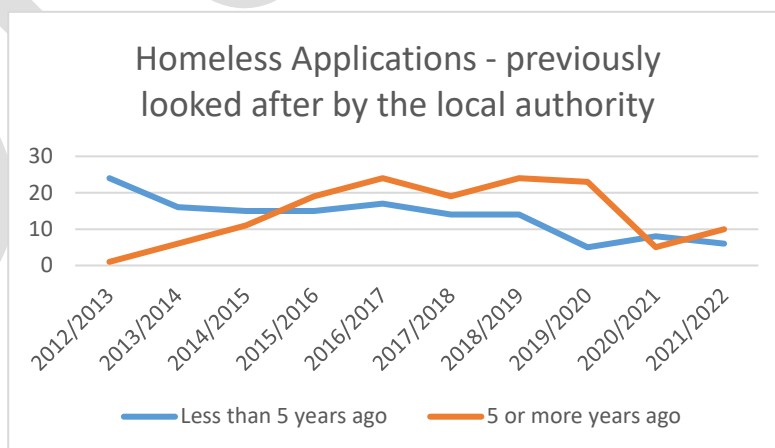
We will continue to access the fund, where appropriate, and consider if any additional measures are required at a local level.

Care Leavers Housing Options Protocol

The Housing Options for Care Leavers protocol was agreed and implemented in 2013 and following a review in September 2020, now includes young people aged 16-25 involved with or on the periphery of offending who are working with the Horizon (through care aftercare) service.

Supported accommodation continues to be provided for young people leaving care, with a number of scatter flats created nearby to provide accommodation close by with intensive outreach support. Multi-agency panel meetings continue to be held on a bi-monthly basis where young peoples' housing and support needs are discussed, and actions agreed. The meetings also provide an opportunity to highlight other issues that will impact on practice and are attended by staff from the Horizon service, a Team Leader from each of the Community Housing teams, Hillcrest's Housing Manager (Operations), a representative from the Community Investigations & Resolutions team and the Team Manager of the Homelessness Support Service. Other service representatives are invited to attend when required.

Since the protocol was implemented in 2013, the number of young people applying as homeless who had been looked after as a child by the local authority less than 5 years ago has reduced by 75%.



Since 2019 there have also been significant reductions in the number of young people applying as

homeless who had been looked after as a child by the local authority more than 5 years ago over the last 3 years. This coincides with an earlier review of the protocol to extend it to care leavers beyond the point of leaving care.

Family Mediation & Conflict Resolution Service

Despite a reduction in homeless applications, relationship breakdown/ asked to leave continues to be the most common reason for homelessness in Angus.

A two-year contract for mediation and conflict resolution was awarded to Relationship Scotland (Family Mediation Tayside & Fife) and the service went live in August 2020. The service provided support to identify and address the root causes of relationship difficulties, and used communication, conflict resolution skills and mediation to rebuild relationships and help the person remain in the family home. Where remaining in the family home was not possible, the family was supported to improve relationships to ensure that a move could be completed in a planned and supported way. As well as providing a mediation service, Relationship Scotland also employed a Family Support Worker to actively engage with families and address any additional support needs identified.

Since launching, the service received 159 referrals involving 193 individuals. Due to a lack of referrals received from staff working in front line services, the vast majority of these referrals were been made using an automated weekly report from homeless applications received and only 40 families referred engaged with the service. Of those engaging with the service, only 11 engaged in mediation meetings. The small number of cases which went to mediation did however show a high success rate and agreed outcomes were achieved in 75% of these cases.

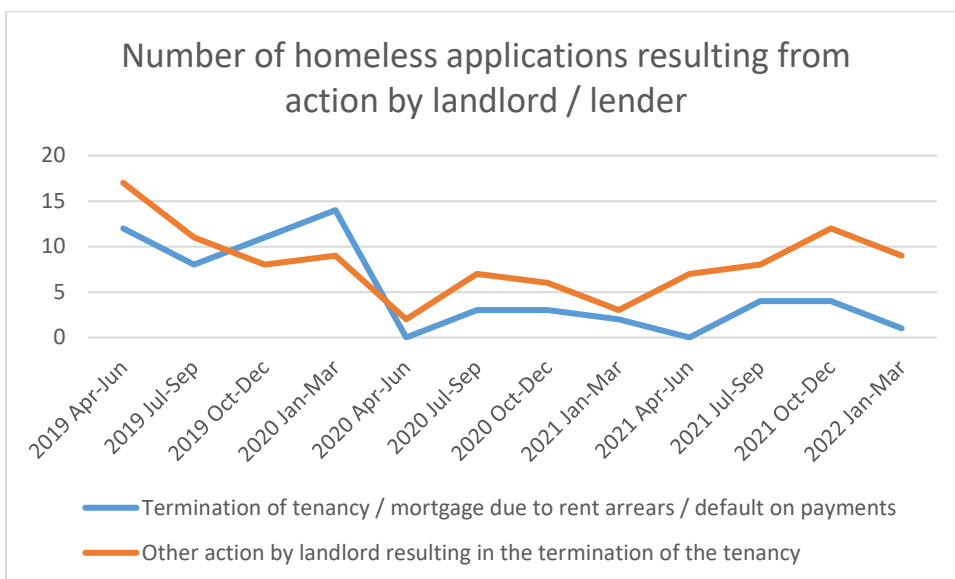
Relationship Scotland faced difficulties connecting and establish working relationships with frontline service providers. In between lockdowns, Relationship Scotland were able to meet with some agencies face to face, but most contacts we made over online services such as MS Teams or Zoom, which was not conducive to creating in a shift in referral practices. The Project's base, The Cross in Forfar, enabled a level of networking and relationship building, however mainly due to the pandemic it was not possible to establish active working partnerships with the housing teams or other services and support providers.

There remains a requirement for mediation and conflict resolution intervention in Angus however continuing with the delivery of this via the existing contract with Relationship Scotland did not represent value for money and the contract was terminated on 31 July 2022. There is need to review how mediation and conflict resolution interventions are delivered in Angus, how families are engaged in these interventions and how consideration of these resources is embedded in processes and referral pathways for frontline services working with families.

The Housing, Health & Social Care Strategic Planning Group, who have governance of Angus RRTP, will consider options and agree a new approach for future delivery of mediation and conflict resolution intervention in Angus. Funding has been allocated within the RRTP for 2022/23 to spot purchase mediation services while we consider options for future delivery of this service.

Review of Section 11 Guidance

The number of homeless applications resulting from action by landlord or lender has seen a downward trend since 2019 and have fluctuated since the protection against eviction measures were removed following the pandemic, although not increasing to the levels seen pre pandemic.



Revised Section 11 guidance was implemented from 1 April 2021 and is based on findings and guidance developed from a project established and funded by the North and Islands Housing Options Hub and Scotland’s Housing Network. The lessons that were learned from the project, and were used to inform the guidance, were:

- intervene earlier when the situation can be more readily resolved;
- share more information, and information that will be more useful in terms of seeking to prevent homelessness;
- ensure that communication is between known, named contacts;
- act jointly to prevent repossession;
- standard letters sent in response to section 11 notices are of little practical use;
- keep each other informed of action taken after serving of the section 11 notice;
- actively involve other agencies in preventing homelessness where relevant;
- hold regular joint meetings to review section 11 caseloads, and
- ensure organisational resources are committed to prevention.

At the point a notice of proceedings is served by Angus Council or a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), the Homelessness Support Service is notified and completes system checks to confirm if anyone in the household is open to or has previously been open to services. This helps to identify any vulnerabilities or support needs and allows the landlord to work jointly with other services to engage with the tenant and prevent repossession. A section 11 case management panel was also established and involves a range of services including RSLs, Homelessness Support Service, Welfare Rights, Justice, Alcohol and Drug Services and Community Mental Health to discuss and review section 11 cases and agree any additional actions that can be taken to prevent homelessness. Due to staffing and resource issues within the Community Housing Teams, the guidance has not been fully implemented and the joint case management panel meetings have been postponed until the service review is completed and the new homeless team is established.

Improve Housing Options and Support in the Private Rented Sector

A number of actions have been identified in the RRTP to increase access to the private rented sector (PRS) 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 because of difficulties allocating tenancies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rent deposit, rent in advance, and rent guarantee schemes were launched and the additional winter RRTP funding to support the recovery from the pandemic was used to recruit two new officers to build engagement with landlords in Angus, support people to access the PRS and be a first point of contact for tenants and landlords to prevent homelessness from the PRS. The service was launched in June 2021 and key tasks include:

- Ongoing mapping of available PRS housing in Angus
- Develop creative ways of engaging with landlords
- Administration of access initiatives
- Provide expert and comprehensive advice to private landlords and tenants in order to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
- Support households to search, apply, view and move into PRS housing, including assistance with benefit claims, utilities, furniture and rent payments
- Carry out 'setting in' visit and provide advice or support for any emerging issues, in partnership with other agencies working with the household
- Remain the first point of contact for the tenant and landlord, minimising potential for tenancy breakdown and repeat homelessness and referring for additional support when required
- Proactively seek landlord feedback to maintain good relations, learn from negative experiences and contribute to the development of new strategies and initiatives to increase access to and prevent homelessness from the PRS
- Maintain appropriate records as required to monitor and record tenancy sustainment to contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the project
- Provide advice, guidance and training to internal and external stakeholders in order to embed good practice in accessing and preventing homelessness from the PRS.

Since the service launched in June 2021, the Private Sector Officers have had a total of 316 contacts, most common reasons being: advice to help find a private let (135); Section 11 notifications (51); and Deposit enquiries (33). Other common reasons for contact were arrears advice, receipt of Notice to quit/leave and repairs. The Community Housing Teams have made the most referrals (112) with the remainder of contacts through tenants, other services such as welfare rights and social work, 3rd sector and landlords and their representatives. Since the service was launched 37 people have been supported to remain within their current accommodation and 42 supported in some capacity to move to alternative PRS accommodation.

Both posts are now currently vacant. Due to recruitment challenges and uncertainties relating to future funding, it has been agreed to merge the role of the private sector officer with the new homelessness case officer role that is under development.

Demand for PRS access schemes has reduced this year due to the limited availability of affordable PRS accommodation in Angus. We have also been able to support people to access Discretionary Housing Payments in place of the rent deposit scheme in some cases. Therefore income received this year for previous rent deposits and rent in advance payments has balanced money paid out. In 2021/22 three households were supported to secure PRS tenancies using the rent deposit or rent in advance schemes totaling payments of £2075. A further 30 households have contacted the Private Rented Sector officers enquiring

about a deposit however most had circumstances better suited to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment and were supported to make an application to the Scottish Welfare Fund. We will continue to deliver the PRS access schemes in 2022/23 and explore other potential incentives for landlords to help people in housing need.

Housing Options Service Review

As a generic role, the housing officer has responsibility for a smaller patch area and has full accountability for everything, from first point of contact through to tenancy management, including the provision of the homelessness and housing options service across all tenures in their area. This approach aims to allow a much greater focus on early intervention and prevention and improved customer service, with an intended outcome of increasing tenancy sustainment. However, the results have not quite delivering as envisaged - resources within the housing teams are stretched and staff are under pressure to complete what have become competing tasks and priorities.

The Homeless Support Service sits separately within the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The service works with individuals and families from age 16 onwards to support people who are homeless to access housing and/or the transition into their own home and support those who are struggling to maintain their tenancy to prevent homelessness. This is achieved through an agreed support plan that promotes independent living skills to enable people to live independently in their own home.

A support plan can include:

- advice on welfare benefits, budgeting and debt
- support setting up and sustaining the tenancy
- assistance to access training, education and employment
- support to contact other local authorities, health care and external agencies

Engagement with Housing officers highlighted that the homelessness functions within their role is particularly challenging when balancing other services for housing tenants. It has been proposed that homelessness responsibilities would be removed from the Housing Officer role and a central specialist team would be re-established to deliver this service.

Both the housing and homelessness support services have a role in preventing and responding to homelessness in Angus, however the teams currently work independently from each other and their roles and activities are not closely aligned. Establishing a homelessness service alongside the homelessness support service within the Angus HSCP will make better use of resources to respond more effectively to homelessness and the additional homeless prevention requirements planned to be implemented from 2023. Sitting alongside other Angus HSCP services will also encourage better collaboration with other services, increase access to support for homeless households and help to deliver a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing homelessness in Angus.

It is proposed that eight full time posts are established to create a team to sit within the Homelessness Support Service. All of these posts will be created from existing vacancies within the Housing Service which prevents Housing Officers from having to be matched into posts or apply for the remaining Housing Officer posts. Mapping of the customer journey and pathways has been completed, the job outlines and person specifications have been agreed and graded and final proposals will be reported and agreed in September, with the view of implementing the new working arrangements from April 2023. RRTP funding has been identified to support with training of the new team.

Delayed Discharge Prevention Fund

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

- 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 applications for the fund and actions arising are coordinated by a central team in housing and involves close partnership working with the community housing teams, registered social landlords and services within Health & Social Care. Last year saw an increase in referrals as the funding became more embedded into working practices across community care and housing teams. 12 individuals were supported to return home from hospital by using the fund. The funding requests mostly related to house clearances and cleaning, interim accommodation costs, utility credits and the provision of furniture and white goods.

Tenant Hardship Fund

Angus was awarded £164k to support private and social rented tenants who have accrued rent arrears as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic. An online application has been developed and can be completed by tenants, their landlord or other services supporting the tenant. They are able to upload supporting information and payments can be generated to the landlord if the application is approved. A panel involving members of the Sustainable Communities team in Housing Strategy has been established to review and determine the applications. The team are working closely with landlords and support providers in Angus to gather supporting information to evidence the applications and provide ongoing support to tenants to help address any other needs identified. Communication to promote the fund has been issued via social media and cascaded to partner agencies and a web page has been created on the angus.gov website.

A total of £92,965.16 has been approved for paying out to 63 households, this has prevented eviction action in all cases (16 council tenancies, five PRS tenancies and 42 RSL tenancies). 15 applications have been refused either because there was no risk of homelessness or there was no evidence that the arrears had arisen as a result of the pandemic.

£50,000 has been allocated from the RRTP to extend the fund and the criteria and application has been reviewed to support more households who are in financial difficulties to sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness. The new prevention fund is anticipated to be launched in October 2022. The impact of the prevention fund will be evaluated after one year and a future plan for delivery determined then.

Implementation of Housing First

For people with multiple complex support needs beyond housing, Housing First should be the first response. Housing First provides ordinary, settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs. It recognises a safe and secure home as the best base for recovery and offers personalised, open-ended, flexible support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address their wider needs. The model separates the provision of housing and support, offers choice and control to tenants and works to the principles of harm reduction.

Housing First was launched in Angus in November 2020. Two support workers were initially recruited to sit alongside the Homelessness Support Service within the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership. A third support worker was recruited in November 2021 having successfully applied for an Improvement Fund grant of £33,555 from the Corra Foundation. Operational guidance based on the principles of Housing First has been developed and a multi-agency panel has been established and meets on a monthly basis to consider referrals and provide monitoring and oversight of Housing First in Angus. The panel includes representation from the three Community Housing Teams, RSL partners, Homelessness Support Service, Community Investigations & Resolutions team, Angus Integrated Drug and Alcohol Services, and the Community Mental Health team.

16 individuals are currently being supported by Housing First. 11 individuals are in settled permanent tenancies; two are currently in prison; two are in temporary homeless accommodation and are being supported to bid on permanent tenancies, both have the highest banding applied to their application to ensure priority is awarded above other applicants and one individual continues to sleep rough, despite ongoing attempts to engage with them and secure suitable accommodation for them. We will continue to deliver Housing First and have agreed to continue funding the third support worker when the Corra funding ends in November 2022. This will give the service capacity to support around 21 individuals. Capacity will be further increased when we re direct resources from temporary supported homeless accommodation to small scale settled supported accommodation and Housing First. The Housing, Health & Social Care Partnership will take forward the review of short term supported homeless accommodation and consider the requirements for small scale supported accommodation and Housing First, considering what is needed in each locality in Angus.

5. Planned RRTP Activities

In addition to activities outlined above, several actions are planned as we progress with the implementation of the RRTP, namely:

- Continue to refresh the RRTP demand and backlog tool at a locality level to establish the required percentage of lets to homeless households for each Housing Market Area.
- Continue to review households occupying temporary homeless accommodation and convert to Scottish Secure Tenancy where appropriate.

- Development of a youth homelessness strategy. A cross public sector group has been set up in Angus to consider Transitions for vulnerable young adults and will help to inform the development of the strategy.
- Implement an online housing need and homeless assessment case management system.
- Continue to evaluate, explore, and develop initiatives to help increase access to the private rented sector.
- Review nominations agreements with RSL partners to increase proportion of lets to homeless households.
- Review the existing processes for the provision of furniture and goods to homeless households - we have worked with our social welfare fund team to review existing processes to ensure applications for community care grants from homeless applications are prioritised and processed quickly 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. As well as continuing to provide second –hand furniture, white goods and starter packs to homeless households in partnership with local recycled goods projects, we will soon pilot the provision of fully furnished tenancies and have committed to additional R RTP funding for the provision of furniture and white goods to support rapid rehousing.

6. Resource Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24

The resource plan has been updated to reflect the current position in Angus. The pandemic, staffing issues and the ongoing service review means we are around 2 years behind delivery however have commitment to carry forward any funding which has not been spent into later years.

The activity and spend return (appendix B) provides a full breakdown of the spend in 2021/22 and how funding that has not been spent to date will be allocated going forward.

R RTP spend and projected spend is detailed below. The resource requirements for future years have 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.

Resource Requirements

| | Action | Resource Requirement (£) | Dependencies |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Year 4 2022/23 | Continue to deliver Housing First | 130,000 10,000 | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|--|
| | Spot purchase of Mediation & Conflict Resolution interventions | 20,000 | |
| | Private Sector Officer | 75,000 | |
| | Implementation of new housing options and homelessness case management system | 10,000 | |
| | Continued delivery of PRS access schemes | 10,000 | |
| | Training to support implementation of service review | 50,000 | |
| | Continuation of Tenant Hardship Fund/ introduction of Prevention Fund | 50,000 | |
| | Provision of furniture & white goods to support rapid rehousing | | |
| Total | | 355,000 | |
| Year 5 2023/24 | Continue to deliver Housing First in Angus | TBC | Service review completed |
| | Continue to deliver Mediation & Conflict Resolution interventions | TBC | Backlog of homeless applications reduced |
| | Increase provision of specialist supported housing | TBC | |
| | Continued delivery of PRS access schemes | TBC | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|
| | Provision of furniture & white goods to support rapid rehousing | TBC | |
| Total | | | |
| Year 3 2024/25 | <p>Continue to deliver Housing First in Angus</p> <p>Mediation & Relationship Counselling Interventions</p> <p>Provision of specialist supported housing</p> <p>Continued delivery of PRS access schemes</p> <p>Provision of furniture & white goods to support rapid rehousing</p> | <p>Mainstreamed</p> <p>Mainstreamed</p> <p>Mainstreamed</p> <p>Mainstreamed</p> <p>Mainstreamed`</p> | <p>Resources redirected following reduction in capacity in temporary accommodation</p> <p>Resources redirected following review of supported homeless accommodation</p> |

| Funding Allocation & Spend 2019/20 – 2023/24 (£) | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Year | 1: 2019/20 | 2: 2020/21 | 3: 2021/22 | 4: 2022/23 | 5: 2023/24 |
| Funding Allocation (£) | 172,000 | 161,000 100,000 (winter funding) | 144,000 | 122,000 | TBC |
| Carry forward from previous year (£) | - | 172,000 | 302,977 | 241,102 | 8,102 |
| Total Available RRTP Funding (£) | 172,000 | 433,000 | 446,977 | 363,102 | TBC |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Less: RRTP expenditure (£) | - | (130,023) | (205,875) | (355,000) | TBC |
| Assumed Redirected Resources (£) | - | - | - | - | TBC |
| Remaining RRTP funding (£) | 172,000 | 302,977 | 241,102 | 8,102 | TBC |

Redirecting Resources through Service Redesign or Refocus

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 for supported homeless accommodation will be redirected towards the delivery of Housing First and smaller, specialist supported housing.

It was anticipated that resources would be redirected by reducing the capacity within our dispersed temporary accommodation by more than half by year five of the plan. As well as freeing up existing staff resource to provide a more proactive housing management service to existing tenants, it was anticipated that we would be able to redirect council tax payments (not currently charged to occupants) and dispersed rent arrears, both of which are met by the homeless budget, to mainstreaming RRTP activities. However, it is unclear whether we will be able to reduce temporary accommodation, given the anticipated pressures arising from the Ukrainian Hosting schemes coming to an end or breaking down and the costs of living crisis. 40 additional temporary accommodation units have recently been created to prepare for an anticipated increase in homeless applications.