

South Lanarkshire Council

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

Annual Review 2020-2021



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## Foreword

**Councillor Josh Wilson**

**Chair of Housing and Technical Resources Committee**



I am pleased to report that that despite the challenges faced in responding to the impact of Covid-19, the second year of South Lanarkshire's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan has been a successful one with a wide range of services and partner organisations coming together and working towards our shared aim of addressing homelessness across South Lanarkshire.

This review shows the breadth of work that has been undertaken over the second year of the RRTP. In particular I am pleased to see the good progress on scaling up the council's commitment to a Housing First approach, providing housing and wrap around support for individuals with multiple and complex needs. We have also continued to work towards our commitment to delivering 1,000 additional council homes, alongside significant increases in the numbers of additional affordable housing provided by our housing association partners.

While Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the programme of construction, as we move forward into year three of the plan, I am confident that we will continue to build on the good work and outcomes already achieved. Ensuring we maximise opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing will provide the essential foundation for delivering the impact on homelessness which we seek to achieve over the remaining years of the plan.

**Councillor Maureen Chalmers**

**Deputy Council Leader**

**Chair of South Lanarkshire's Community Planning Partnership Board**



Over the past 12 months, a broad range of work to tackle homelessness and meet the needs of homeless households has been delivered by partners from across the Community Planning Partnership.

The scale of the homelessness challenge facing local authorities from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that new approaches were required to streamline systems to ensure that the council's commitment to homeless service users was not compromised. A number of innovative approaches have been put in place using the fundamental strength of our community partnerships commitment to allow continuity of our emergency response to homelessness.

This review highlights just some of the excellent work that is being delivered every day by partners, to improve the lives of people in South Lanarkshire, in particular those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable and who most need help and support. We must ensure that we continue to maintain focus to ensure that we achieve a step change in addressing homelessness across South Lanarkshire.

# 1. Summary of Year Two progress

1.1 Effective partnership working and a shared commitment to addressing homelessness has enabled good progress to be made during the second year of the South Lanarkshire Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan (RRTP).

This review, co-ordinated by the Homelessness Strategy Group, confirms South Lanarkshire's commitment to partnership working in the delivery of services and support to those experiencing homelessness, and the progress made in delivering on the outcomes within the RRTP.

A summary of the key highlights from the second year of the RRTP include:-

- The council and its Housing Association partners have continued to increase the supply of affordable housing in South Lanarkshire, delivering a total of 339 additional homes during the year.
- Continued growth of the Housing First approach with a further 13 households with multiple and complex needs supported during the year. A total of 26 households are now included within the programme.
- An 8% reduction in the number of homeless households with children under 16 years of age.
- An increase in the percentage of vacant social rented properties directed to homeless households, 61% of all vacant council homes and 42% of Registered Social Landlord homes compared to 51% and 37% respectively the previous year.
- Reducing long-term homelessness, with 41% fewer homeless households living in temporary accommodation for more than 12 months.
- A 3% increase in the number of homeless households sustaining their tenancies for more than 12 months, to over 91%.
- Reducing repeat homelessness at 4.6%, compared to 6% nationally (latest available annual statistics 2019/20).
- A further 27 temporary homes converted to secure tenancies, reflecting the choice of the homeless household and settled position reducing any further upheaval.
- Significantly increased the supply of temporary accommodation during the year to meet increased demand resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Deployment of full range of support services to meet immediate needs including provision of food and mobile phones, in partnership with internal and external partners, minimising the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable households.
- Establishment of the Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service to support households to access private sector accommodation which met their needs.
- Increased funding available through the Tenancy Sustainment Fund to assist council tenants experiencing financial difficulties.
- Improving homeless prevention outcomes with a 17% increase in the number of cases closing with final outcome prevented homelessness.
- Continuation of the successful HomeStart team which supports and assists all new council tenants to set up and maintain their tenancy.
- Through the continuation of the digital inclusion project, 'Bringing IT Home', 55 homeless families with children have been provided with devices and unlimited internet access for 2 years.
- Continued commitment to meeting the needs of vulnerable groups through the development of specific housing pathways for victims of domestic abuse and care experienced young people.
- Developing a Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan, that links to RRTP objectives and national accommodation standards.

- Partnership approach to creating alternatives to homelessness for care experienced young people, including additional support available via a central throughcare and aftercare team and work to introduce supported accommodation as an alternative to children's house or independent living.
- 'Make A Stand' partnership group completed a review of refuge accommodation which confirmed appropriate provision.
- Continued development of a partnership approach to homeless prevention and response for victims of domestic abuse.
- Continued implementation of SHORE standards.
- Establishment of pathways to housing and homelessness assistance and advice where risk is identified by the new Community Link workers, who receive referrals from GP's.
- Introduction of a crisis response service delivered by Turning Point Scotland which aims to prevent/reduce harm.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 National Context**

The Scottish Government set a national vision for rapid rehousing transition plans to be developed in 2019 and implemented across Scotland as a way of reducing homelessness.

During 2020/21 there have been further national developments in housing and homelessness policy, some in response to the pandemic, which incorporate objectives which encourage embedding Rapid Rehousing and a Housing First approach into homelessness services. These include:-

- Reconvening of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) in June 2020, which updated recommendations and required actions to address the impact of the public health emergency, including a top line objective of ensuring ongoing access to emergency self-contained accommodation to minimise infection risk and maximise opportunities locally and nationally.
- Subsequent revision to the 'Ending Homelessness Together' Action Plan to take account of key learning points from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Extension of the Homeless Persons Unsuitable Accommodation (Scotland) Order in May 2020, to all homeless households and to include new types of temporary accommodation as exempt from the Order (with temporary Covid-19 exemptions in place until September 2021).
- Preventing Homelessness in Scotland, a report by the Prevention Review Group recommending the introduction of statutory prevention duties across public bodies
- Housing to 2040, the Scottish Government's route map for the housing sector over the next 20 years published in March 2021.

### **2.2 South Lanarkshire Context**

South Lanarkshire Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-24 (RRTP) was developed in conjunction with a wide range of partners and submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2018, the RRTP builds upon a well-established partnership framework and aims to act upon the unique opportunity to achieve a step change in preventing and reducing homelessness in South Lanarkshire. The vision set out in South Lanarkshire's RRTP is to ensure: -

*"Homelessness in South Lanarkshire is significantly reduced, with homeless households moving to a settled home as quickly as possible"*

- 2.3 South Lanarkshire Council has a long standing strong commitment to meeting the needs of homeless people. Over a number of years, the council has significantly increased and developed our model of temporary accommodation to meet a range of needs, tested and expanded prevention activity, and, since 2019 the council has undergone a fundamental shift to rapid rehousing, working in partnership with a range of stakeholders who have come together to provide improved services which aim to improve the lives of some of the most marginalised people in our society.

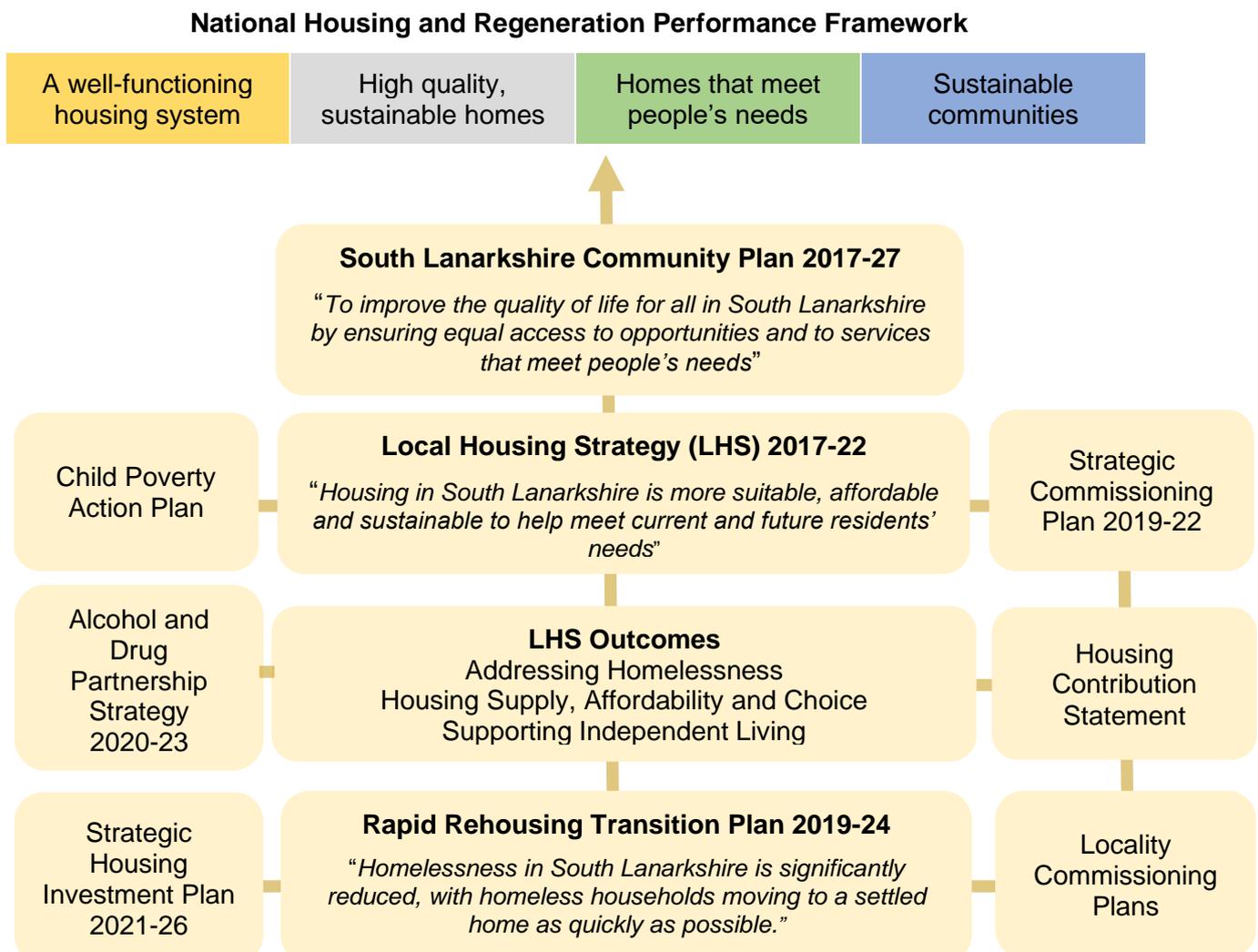
## 2.4 Co-production

This RRTP was co-produced and the second annual review was also carried out in a co-production way through intensive engagement with key partners and stakeholders, including through the range of well-established partnership groups including the Local Housing Strategy Steering Group, Homelessness Strategy Group, 'Make A Stand' Group, which includes representation by Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire, a range of Corporate Parenting groups and boards, Alcohol and Drug Partnership and related groups such as drug death monitoring. The review reflects the progress that has been made against the most challenging of backdrops, namely mitigating the impact of Covid-19. This has meant that the focus proposed within the RRTP and some of the outcomes to be achieved have been paused temporarily while the short-term focus has been to ensure effective mitigation during the public health emergency.

## 2.5 Links to other Strategies

The RRTP was developed to align closely with a broad range of partner strategies and plans being progressed in South Lanarkshire. Figure 1 below demonstrates the relationship between these and the National Housing and Regeneration Performance Framework.

Figure 1: Diagram showing RRTP Links to other plans and strategies



2.6 During 2020/21, further work continued to strengthen the above links, ensuring homelessness and its wider impact is appropriately reflected in each strategy/plan. Key developments included:-

- the inclusion of particular actions relating to homelessness within the Local Child Poverty Action Plan 2020/21;
- the inclusion of specific RRTP actions within the South Lanarkshire Community Plan;
- the inclusion of homelessness actions and monitoring within the Children's Services (Corporate Parenting) Action Plan;
- the progression of two Homelessness Directions within the Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Plan (2019-22);
- the inclusion of action on homeless prevention within the Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy 2020-23 (Priority 4 A public Health Approach) and overall emphasis on early intervention and prevention.

## 2.7 **Feedback**

The Scottish Government provided valuable feedback on the South Lanarkshire RRTP, highlighting a number of key strengths, in particular the strong partnership approach which is in place.

Similarly, a review of all 32 RRTP's in Scotland was carried out by Crisis in 2020. Positive feedback was received in relation to the South Lanarkshire RRTP, highlighting the inclusion of Partner Contribution Statements within the plan as useful in understanding prevention activities from a different perspective. Crisis found the approach of Partner Contribution Statements helpful in solidifying partners' contribution to the RRTP vision.

Positive feedback was also provided in relation to the Plan's focus on enhancing starter pack options for new tenants and on the extension of the personal housing planning approach.

## 2.8 **Governance**

The South Lanarkshire Homelessness Strategy Group is the partnership responsible for the prioritisation and delivery of actions set out within the RRTP, in addition to the range of actions routinely monitored across the range of partnership plans.

The group meets every eight weeks and have the following remit:-

- monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to the RRTP;
- reviewing and updating key actions and measures/indicators, considering new and emerging policy priorities and resources as required.

The RRTP was developed to ensure that its' priority objectives aligned with the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017/22 priority outcomes for addressing homelessness. The chairperson of the Homelessness Strategy Group is responsible for attending and providing regular progress updates in relation to the RRTP and homelessness to the South Lanarkshire Local Housing Strategy Steering Group.

Annual updates on progress against the actions within the LHS are reported to Executive Committee and the RRTP reported to Housing and Technical Resources Committee and the Community Planning Partnership Board.

## 2.9 Funding

In 2020/21, the second full year of the plan, £453,000 was allocated to South Lanarkshire with a further £282,000 received in March 2021 from the Scottish Government. Scottish Government funding can be carried forward into Year three of the RRTP, in addition to the confirmed allocation of £440,000 for Year three.

In total, the funding allocation to South Lanarkshire from the Ending Homelessness Together fund has been £1,741,000.

The level of funding allocated and secured since 2019 is less than the original calculations made to resource the delivery of the plan. While partners have continued to progress actions utilising all resources available, some actions within the plan have been limited as a result.

A summary of the key areas which have been progressed using funding received from the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund is detailed below:-

- Expansion of existing commissioned services delivering intensive/wrap around support based on a care management approach to meet more complex needs, in particular improving links across housing, health and addiction services.
- Introduction of specialist support services to meet a range of complex need including repeat homelessness, multiple needs in particular addiction and mental health, further supported by Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) funding.
- Scaling up of the Housing First approach and enhanced furniture starter pack provision offering service users greater choice and support in making their house a home.
- Recruitment of specialist officer to support the effective implementation of SHORE standards supporting individuals on release from prison.
- Recruitment of a specialist officer to support delivery and embed a revised pathway for young people moving on from care. The approach strengthens early interventions and ensures a person-centred pathway to support young people to transition to their own tenancy
- Recruitment of specialist officer to support delivery and embed a revised pathway to prevent homelessness for those affected by domestic abuse. This approach takes account of recent changes in legislation and good practice linked to the Chartered Institute of Housing, 'Make A Stand' pledge.
- Revision existing Rent Deposit Scheme to form a Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service which offers an alternative housing option for homeless applicants and widens prevention activities.
- Delivering 'Bringing IT Home', a digital inclusion programme, further supported via Connecting Scotland and Lintel Trust funding.

### **Other funding sources**

The Homelessness Strategy Group is clear on the need to actively consider other potential funding routes to take forward priority activities, and on the need to consider how mainstream services and budgets can be revised or re-focused to help deliver RRTP priorities.

In February 2021, £10,000 was allocated to South Lanarkshire Council from the Lintel Trust's Community Benefit Fund for the expansion of the 'Bringing IT Home', the digital inclusion project for distributing IT equipment and two years internet access to homeless families with children.

Opportunities will continue to be explored to maximise the potential for digital inclusion within the homeless population through the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland initiative which aims to distribute 50,000 pieces of digital equipment by the end of 2021.

For a second year the Alcohol and Drug Partnership supported delivery of specialist support to meet multiple and complex needs with the allocation of £40,000. This partnership approach led to a joint bid for additional funding to introduce a crisis response service. The bid was successful in securing £63,000 to be committed in Year three to deliver a 1-year programme in partnership with Turning Point Scotland. This service aims to address trends identified in the Hard Edges report published by Heriot-Watt University in 2019, surrounding the increase in deaths among the homeless population. The national trend identified in the report mirrors the position in South Lanarkshire where deaths have risen from 13 during 2018/19 to 15 during 2019/20.

### **3. Covid-19 and homelessness**

3.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has and continues to have a profound impact on society, in particular vulnerable groups, including those experiencing homelessness. Indeed, the updated findings and recommendations from HARSAG highlighted that Covid-19 had a disproportionate impact on some groups of people over others, including those experiencing homelessness and/or the socio-economic factors that contribute to homelessness.

3.2 In South Lanarkshire this can be evidenced by the 6.5% increase in homelessness presentations and the 28.1% increase in demand for temporary accommodation. During 2020/21, this trend mirrored that experienced across Scotland where between September 2019 and September 2020 there was a 24% increase in demand for temporary accommodation.

#### **3.3 Recovery planning**

Before the global pandemic, the Scottish Government had published an action plan in November 2018, 'Ending Homelessness Together' which provided a focus across Scotland to tackle homelessness. The onset of the pandemic fundamentally changed many aspects of service delivery and created new challenges and consequently HARSAG were reconvened in June 2020 and produced further recommendations. These recommendations were accepted by the Scottish Government who published a revised national action plan in October 2020.

The revised Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan included a number of key changes which reflected learning from the impact of the pandemic including:-

- Scale up Housing First approach more rapidly.
- Increase proportion of social homes allocated to homeless households for a limited period.
- Build on evidence base to understand the impact of Covid-19 on the risk of homelessness for particular groups.
- Support people to access digital equipment, data and training.

As national and local lockdown restrictions are eased and move through the recovery phases it is important to ensure people facing homelessness during the crisis are supported to move from emergency accommodation to settled housing. By implementing a robust planning approach to the supply of temporary accommodation, the council is in a good position to meet increased demand while at the same time taking a stepped approach to the long-term objective of reducing temporary units as rapid rehousing becomes embedded.

#### **3.4 Local Resilience**

The Homelessness Strategy Group continued to meet on an 8-weekly basis on a virtual platform throughout 2020/21 allowing monitoring of key objectives and planning to

continue. Flexibility and resilience became apparent as key learning points from the pandemic.

Housing Services senior managers also attended fortnightly meetings of the Housing Options West HUB meeting, benefiting from shared learning across authorities and Scottish Government updates, which was very helpful early in the pandemic.

The strong partnerships developed through the implementation of the RRTP resulted in close joint working to increase the stock of dispersed temporary accommodation throughout South Lanarkshire as a priority by sharing responsibility with RSL partners.

Community Planning Partners working together also ensured a range of needs were met. This included the provision of a hot evening meal for all individuals accommodated within homeless cluster projects throughout early lockdown periods and continued for as long as clients wished.

The scale of the pandemic meant that new approaches were required to ensure that the council's commitment to provide good quality temporary accommodation was maintained, ensuring resilience to the resulting challenges and increased demand.

This was achieved through the establishment of a unique and innovative partnership with University of West of Scotland to lease former student accommodation in Barrack Street, Hamilton to provide 54 units of First Stop/Rapid Access Accommodation, and 1 family unit as a short-term solution to increased demand for temporary accommodation as a result of the pandemic.

This service is delivered in partnership with The Salvation Army who were commissioned to provide 24/7 support to residents who spend on average 32 days there before moving to settled accommodation. The introduction of this project allowed for immediate and significant temporary accommodation needs to be met throughout the pandemic, limiting use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation and out of area placements. Customer feedback in relation to the accommodation and support provided has been very positive, a testament to the quality of the support provision.

***Barrack Street Emergency First Stop Accommodation – Service User***

***My safety and well-being are better. Staff have supported me through my mental health issues, and I know that I am safe. I was contemplating suicide the day before being placed here. I have been told many times that my support needs are too high for places, but Barrack Street took me in and have supported me through my mental health problems. I have been in hospital many times due to this but now is the first time that I actually feel safe and supported.***

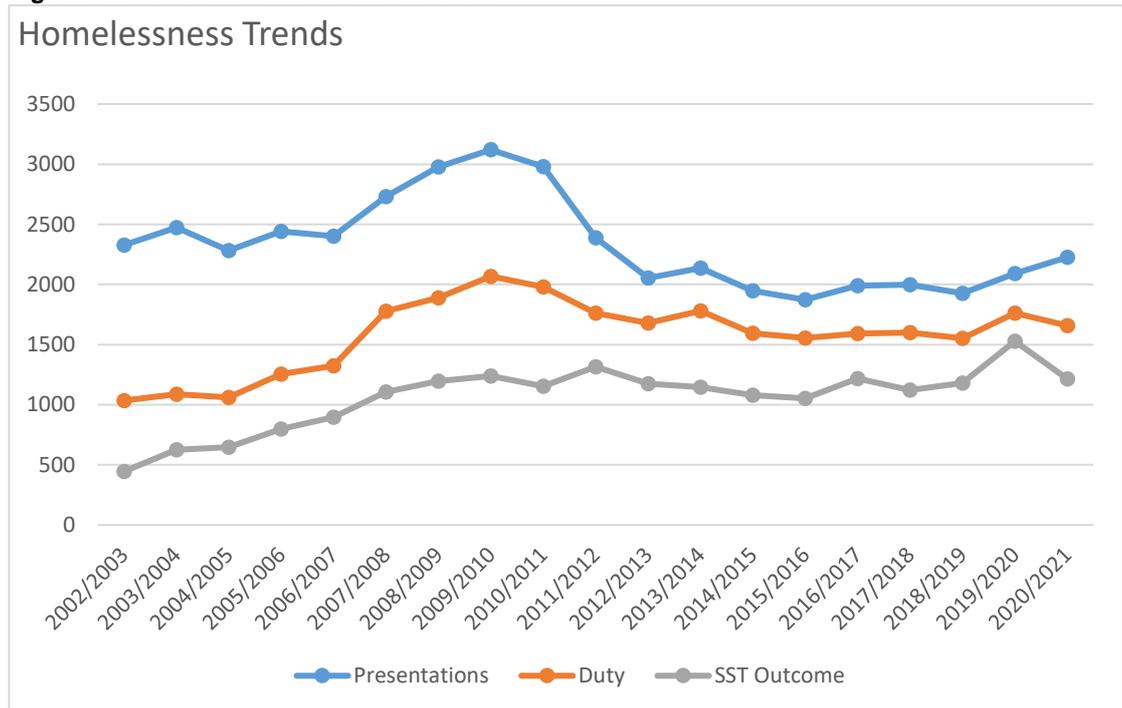
## 4. Homelessness Trends in South Lanarkshire

- 4.1 In line with national guidance the RRTP incorporates analysis of homelessness trends over the last 15 years. The annual review provides an opportunity to consider any significant changes against the baseline position and projections contained within the RRTP and the actual figures, as at the end of the second year.
- 4.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the trajectory of homelessness trends. Given the degree of uncertainty in relation to the pandemic, it is not possible to predict the longer-term implications for homelessness services. Locally partners will continue to work collaboratively to monitor and respond to emerging trends.

### 4.3 Homelessness demand

- 4.3.1 Figure 2 below demonstrates the trend in the number of homelessness presentations received between 2002/03 and 2020/21, measured against the number of cases where the council had a duty to house the applicant and the number of cases that resulted in a Scottish Secure Tenancy being allocated upon case closure.

**Figure 2 – Homelessness trends 2002-2021**



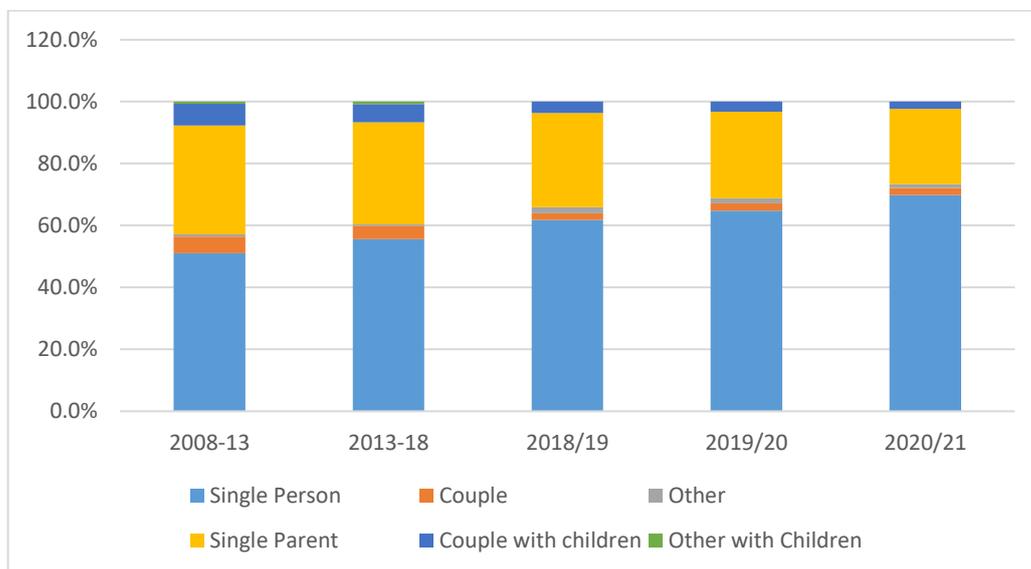
- There has been a 6.5% increase in the number of homeless presentations, from 2090 in 2019/20 to 2225 in 2020/21.
- Of the total number of presentations, the council had a duty to house 75%
- Positive outcomes remain proportionally high with 56% of statutory homeless households being provided with a Scottish Secure Tenancy either by the council or by RSL partners.

- Tenancy sustainment is also improving with 91% of homeless households sustaining their tenancy for over 12 months in 2020/21, compared with 88% in 2019/20.
- There has been a significant increase in the percentage of lets to homeless households in 2020/21 (61%) however the total number of lets has been impacted upon due to the pandemic and therefore the percentage of homeless households being allocated a Scottish Secure Tenancy as an outcome has reduced by 20% (from 1528 in 2019/20 to 1214 in 2020/21).

#### 4.3.2 Profile of homeless households

Figure 3 below provides the profile of homeless households between 2008/09 and 2020/21.

**Figure 3 – Profile of homeless households**

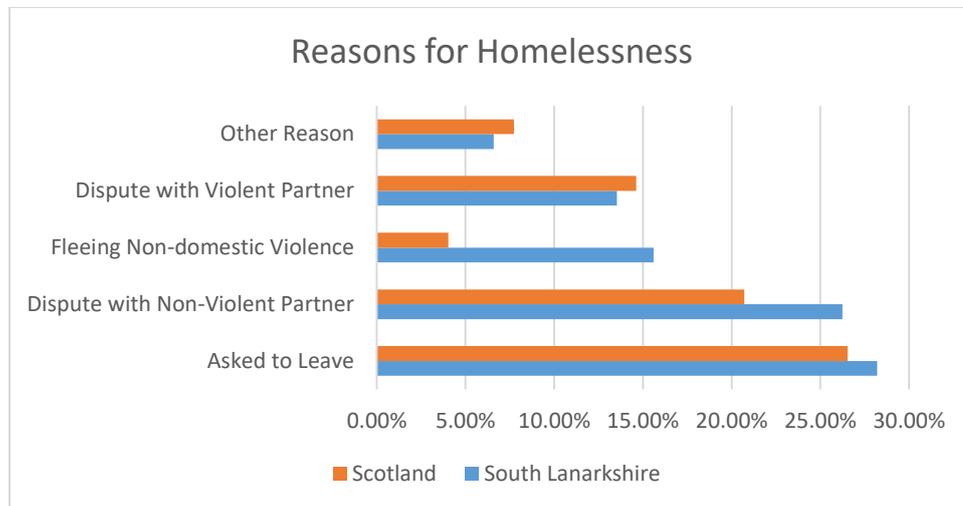


- The majority of homelessness presentations in 2020/21 were made by single people (69.8%). Since 2008 there has been a 19% increase in presentations from this group.
- During 2020/21, there were 672 single men who experienced homelessness and 310 single women.
- Households with children under 16 years accounted for 27% of the total number of homeless households in 2020/21. This is an 8% reduction on the position last year and contributes to a steady decline of 15% since 2008. As at 31 March 2021, there were 219 households with children experiencing homelessness.
- On average approximately 1,000 children in South Lanarkshire experience homelessness each year, although this figure reduced by 6% in 2019/20 and by a further 8% in 2020/21.

### 4.3.3 Reasons for homelessness

Figure 4 below provides a comparison of reasons for homelessness between South Lanarkshire and Scotland in 2020/21.

**Figure 4 – Reasons for homelessness**



- Being asked to leave current accommodation continues to be the most common reason for presenting as homeless both in South Lanarkshire (28.2%) and Scotland wide (26.5%).
- Data on reasons for homelessness in South Lanarkshire broadly mirrors Scottish national data with the exception of fleeing non-domestic violence which accounts for 15% of presentations in South Lanarkshire against 4% of Scotland wide figures.
- Relationship breakdown, or disputes, either violent or non-violent, account for 39.7% of all homeless presentations in South Lanarkshire compared to 35.3% across Scotland.
- There is a slightly lower instance of dispute due to having a violent partner in South Lanarkshire, 13.5% compared to the national figure of 14.6%.
- The most common reason for homelessness among households with children during 2020/21 was due to domestic violence, and accounts for 23% of total presentations involving children.

4.3.4 By continuing to monitor RRTP data and its links to the Local Child Poverty Action Report it will be possible to shape support within our homelessness services to meet the needs of these households and attempt to shift the balance of probability of those children going on to experience poverty and homelessness in adulthood.

4.3.5 Where homelessness cannot be prevented the partnership is keen to ensure needs and vulnerabilities are understood at the earliest opportunity in order to mitigate the impact of homelessness on health and well-being.

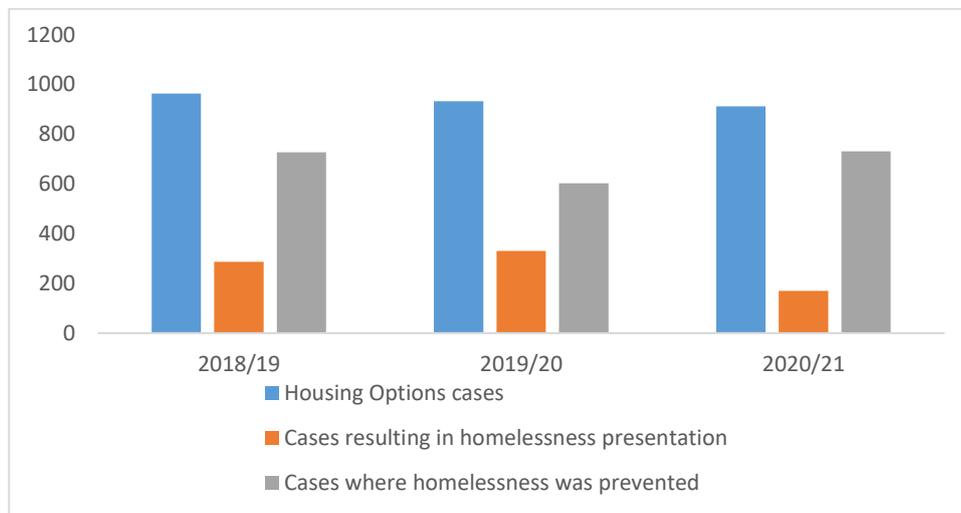
As such in March 2020, South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board approved two homelessness Directions: firstly, to prioritise access to health services for homeless households and establish routine enquiry about homelessness with service users. These Directions align with the particular and specific focus on homelessness within the Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Plan.

Effectively identifying needs will facilitate positive communication between Housing, Health and Social Care and Education. This will ensure the impact of homelessness as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) both independently and in conjunction with the collective impact of other ACEs which affect children and young people such as domestic abuse and addictions. The Directions will ensure priority access to required services.

#### 4.3.6 Prevention of Homelessness

Figure 5 illustrates the number of cases managed by the council’s Housing Options service between 2018/19 and 2020/21 and details of the outcome of advice provided.

**Figure 5 – Number of Housing Options cases and outcomes**



- In the three-year period between 2018/19 and 2020/21, the number of approaches for housing assistance to the council’s Housing Options services has slightly decreased by 5%, from 964 to 912, although as 2020/21 progressed numbers increased as national Covid-19 restrictions eased.
- There has been a 41% decrease in the number of cases progressing to a homelessness presentation from 287 in 2018/19 to 170 in 2020/21. This underlines the positive difference the Housing Options approach is having on preventing homelessness in South Lanarkshire.

There has been a significant focus on the development of prevention services over recent years, including during the period of the pandemic in preparation for an anticipated increased demand on this important first response to emerging housing need and risks.

#### 4.4 Affordable Housing Supply (Social Rented)

4.4.1 Figure 6 below, provides details of the increase in social rented stock (owned by the council and Registered Social Landlords) across each housing division over the last two years.

**Figure 6 – Total social-rented housing supply (non-sheltered)**

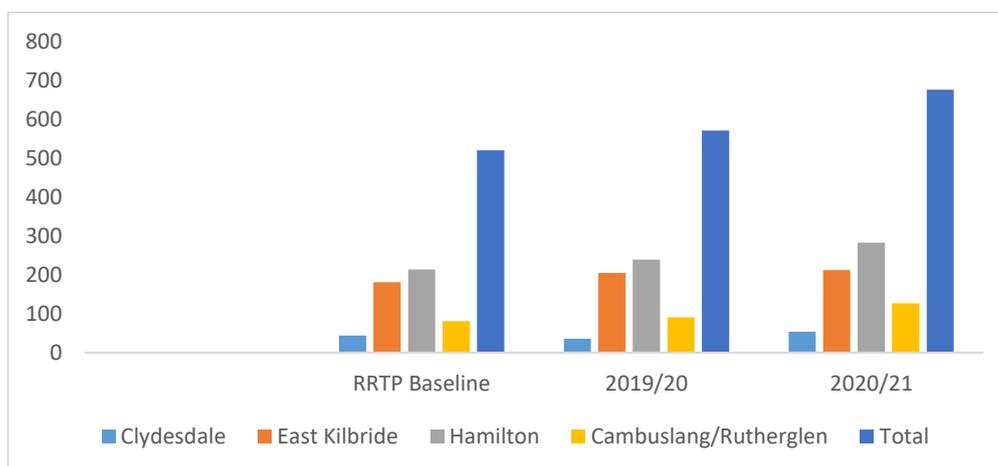
Description	Clydesdale	East Kilbride	Hamilton	Rutherglen/ Cambuslang	South Lanarkshire
<b>RRTP Baseline</b>	6,077	6,261	10,970	6,674	29,982
<b>2019/20 additions</b>	32	107	93	52	284
<b>2020/21 additions</b>	6	210	10	113	339
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,115</b>	<b>6,578</b>	<b>11,073</b>	<b>6,839</b>	<b>30,605</b>

- Throughout the second year of the RRTP and despite the challenges to the construction industry due to Covid-19, the council and its' Registered Social Landlord partners have continued to increase the number of affordable homes for social rent across South Lanarkshire.
- In the 2020/21, a total of 339 additional affordable homes were delivered with 31% (107 homes) designed to meet the needs of those with particular needs, including wheelchair users.

#### 4.4.2 Temporary Accommodation

Figure 7 below provides details of the supply of mainstream (self-contained furnished accommodation) by housing division between RRTP baseline in 2019 and 2020/21.

**Figure 7 – Breakdown of mainstream temporary accommodation units by Division.**



- During 2020/21, in response to Covid-19, a targeted approach was adopted to increase the supply of temporary accommodation in each division as an interim measure. Figure 7 above shows that over the course of the last year, across South Lanarkshire, there has been an 18% increase in the supply of self-contained furnished temporary accommodation properties (from 571 units in 2019/20 to 676 units in 2020/21).

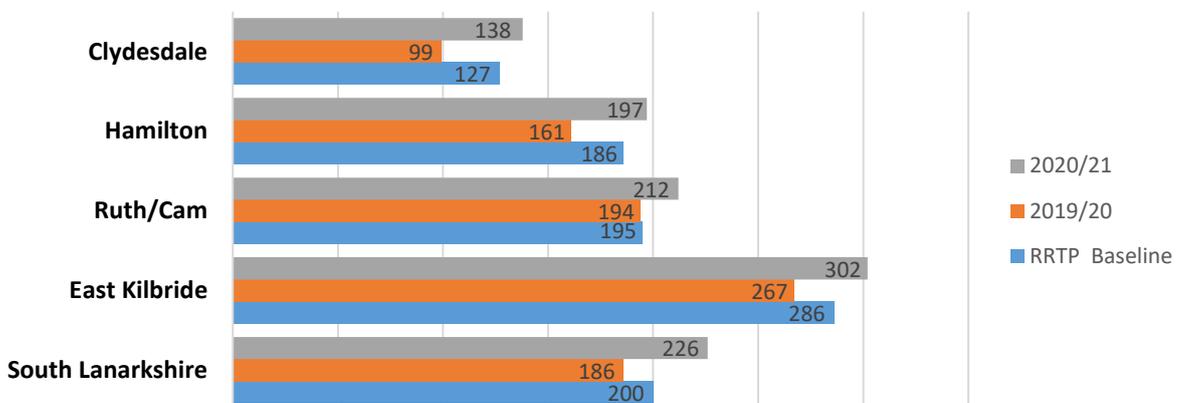
- In addition, there are also 137 units of First Stop/Rapid Access Accommodation, 49 units of supported accommodation and 26 units of refuge accommodation through Women's Aid.

4.4.3 The shift in focus of homelessness services to a rapid rehousing approach aims to ensure that all homeless households spend the shortest possible time in temporary accommodation before moving to settled accommodation. Reducing the need for temporary accommodation was an intended outcome of the RRTP and at the end of Year one there were early positive indications of this. This progress was reversed by the onset of Covid-19, which resulted in an increased demand for temporary accommodation, a reduction in turnover levels and consequently an increase in the time homeless households spent in temporary accommodation. It is however important to note that the increase in the supply of temporary accommodation is anticipated to be short-term measure.

4.4.4 While it has been necessary to increase the supply of temporary accommodation, work towards a rapid rehousing approach, in line with HARSAG recommendations has also continued. The process of “flipping” temporary units to Scottish Secure Tenancies has continued, with 54 units having been converted to a permanent home for homeless households since the implementation of the RRTP in 2019 with a focus on planning for longer term cases.

4.4.5 Figure 8 provides a comparison of the average number of days spent in temporary furnished accommodation (excluding First Stop, Supported or Bed & Breakfast) between 2019 (RRTP baseline position) and 2020/21.

**Figure 8 – Average number of days spent in temporary furnished accommodation by Division and SLC**



- In 2019 (RRTP baseline) the average time spent in temporary furnished accommodation varied significantly by area, from 127 days in Clydesdale to 286 days in East Kilbride. The South Lanarkshire average being 200 days.
- As a result of actions progressed through the RRTP, the South Lanarkshire average number of days spent in self-contained temporary furnished accommodation decreased by 6% to 187 days in 2019/20, although local variations continued.
- In 2020/21, due to the impact of Covid-19, the average number of days spent in temporary accommodation increased across all areas, with a South Lanarkshire average of 226 days, demonstrating a 20% increase on the 2019/20 position.

- 4.4.6 The increase in time spent in temporary accommodation can be attributed to the impact of Covid-19 which has resulted in significant disruption to movement in the housing market, reducing turnover and subsequently throughput from temporary to settled accommodation for homeless households.

Despite this, a specific focus on reducing long-term homelessness has resulted in a significant achievement in the year with a 41% reduction in homeless households living in temporary accommodation for more than 12 months, from 95 cases in 2019/20 to 56 cases in 2020/21.

- 4.4.7 During 2020/21 work to develop a Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan (TASP) was delayed as a result of the focus on meeting immediate needs related to the pandemic. The plan has now been developed setting out patterns and trends in relation to homeless demand; utilising this information to project forward understanding of need, taking account of RRTP progress, including for example, the impact of Housing First and flipping on temporary accommodation requirements.

The plan sets out the overall strategy covering short, medium and longer-term requirements to meet temporary accommodation needs and realise the partnership's vision of providing safe, secure, comfortable temporary accommodation whenever it's needed within a homely environment. This takes account of the known benefits of creating a psychologically informed environment and is closely linked to the vision set out in related partnership plans such as South Lanarkshire Community Plan and the Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Plan.

South Lanarkshire's TASP also takes account of key national developments including the Unsuitable Accommodation Order amendments and the development of associated guidance and introduction of Temporary Accommodation Advisory Standards within the Code of Guidance.

Developing the TASP involved a full review of the portfolio of temporary and supported accommodation in terms of scale, type of accommodation, and standards. From this it is clear the model of temporary accommodation is generally the right fit to meet the needs of South Lanarkshire's household provision.

Supply is largely a range of furnished properties across local communities (council and private sector leased properties).

An established approach to facilitate annual review and adjustment of the temporary furnished portfolio, has been strengthened with the introduction of Temporary Accommodation Standards related to community properties. Standards set out criteria to be considered ahead of use as temporary accommodation as well as review arrangements and maximum use timescales before return to a mainstream property, via flipping or otherwise.

TASP review also considered the council's smaller supply of congregate living temporary accommodation and confirmed a supply of First Stop/Rapid Access Accommodation, within each locality, is an ongoing requirement to meet immediate needs in the short/medium term and maintain the council's strong track record in minimising any use of unsuitable accommodation for this purpose.

Similarly, the ongoing requirement for a small supply of 24 hour supported accommodation was confirmed to meet a range of needs including those with multiple

and complex needs, to best support move onto independent living with appropriate support in place.

The TASP considered the quality of existing accommodation in addition to optimal scale and accommodation types, assessing existing supply against standards.

The review has highlighted that the standard of congregate living accommodation varies and the TASP recommends re-provisioning of 1 unit, a co-located First Stop/Rapid Access and supported accommodation unit to be replaced by smaller separate First Stop and supported units. Other First Stop and supported congregate living projects remain under review as the TASP is further developed, monitoring and assessment continues.

The TASP will be finalised during 2021 with an implementation plan established to deliver on key actions and highlight financial/funding implications.

#### **4.5 Repeat Homelessness**

- 4.5.1 During 2020/21, there has been a decrease in the proportion of repeat homelessness cases compared with the previous year. In 2019/20, 5.4% of all homeless presentations were repeated within 12 months compared with 4.6% in 2020/21. An increased focus on support, particularly for cases with complex needs, contributes to improvements in tenancy sustainment and prevention of repeat homelessness. Analysis of repeat homelessness cases is undertaken to inform future service development and to shape financial planning for future service development.

## **5. Year Two progress**

5.1 Tackling homelessness requires a shared commitment from a range of agencies and partners in the public, private and third sectors. As such the RRTP was co-produced with partners and stakeholders involved in the decision-making process for agreeing priority actions contained within the plan.

### **5.2 Reviewing the plan**

The Homelessness Strategy Group has responsibility for monitoring progress in relation to the RRTP and overseeing the annual review, including the evaluation of progress against actions and measures set out within the action plan and consideration of the appropriateness of the actions identified.

In reviewing the second year of the RRTP, it is recognised that progress has built upon the existing foundations of strong partnerships and this will ensure the continuation and further development of key areas of work, particularly around mitigating the impact of Covid-19. Consequently, it has been noted that while the expected progress in Year two has resulted in meeting key objectives whilst adapting to the impact of the public health emergency, a structure is now in place which will allow positive outcomes to be achieved as the country moves through recovery.

The group continues to:-

- Approve financial projections for staffing resources and commissioned services in the coming year.
- Monitor the progress of the action plan and approve amendments.
- Implement key actions to prevent homelessness from occurring and mitigate the impacts of homelessness on health and well-being.
- Initiate joint working approaches between partners to alleviate crisis and address inequalities in the homeless population.

### **5.3 Key Highlights in Year 2**

Detailed below are key highlights of the progress that has been made towards delivering against the actions and measures outlined against Year two for each of the five RRTP priority objectives. Some examples of service user feedback and case studies have also been provided to demonstrate the positive outcomes achieved.

A summary of progress made in Year two, in relation to all actions and measures detailed in the RRTP Action Plan is also attached as Appendix 1.



**Priority Objective 1: Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness**

- Improved the availability of affordable housing in South Lanarkshire, a total of 339 additional affordable homes for social rent were delivered in 2020/21. This included 142 new build homes by Registered Social Landlords, 197 additional council homes (including 53 purchased through the Council’s Framework for Open Market Purchase)
- Introduction of a Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service administered by YPeople, replacing the Rent Deposit Scheme and expanding the service to include a new Innovation Fund which provides financial assistance to sustain private sector tenancies and prevent homelessness.
- Continued to develop the Integrated Housing Options model with a focus on early detection of housing risk factors and interventions to prevent homelessness where possible. In 2020/21, 80% of advice cases were closed with support being provided to prevent homelessness from occurring. This represents an increase of 17% on the previous year.
- Continued partnership working through commissioned services with YPeople, The Salvation Army and Blue Triangle Housing Association, to deliver services to support homelessness prevention and tenancy sustainment, with a particular focus on households at risk of repeat homelessness.
- Improved pathways developed between the Integrated Housing Options Team and Adult Employability Services to support adults at risk of homelessness to access work education or training, particularly those facing redundancy due to Covid-19.
- Strengthening of pathway approaches to ensure a planned approach to meeting the needs of young people moving on from a care setting and those affected by domestic abuse with a view to preventing homelessness wherever possible
- Partnership approach to creating alternatives to homelessness for care experienced young people including additional support available via central Throughcare and aftercare team and work to introduce supported accommodation as an alternative to children’s house or independent living as the only options (working with Third Sector partner)

**Intensive support service user (Blue Triangle)**

*“This service has helped because it has given me that bit more help and stability to maintain a house. Also, this service has given me the chance to grow my confidence to socialise and mix with people. I have managed to build an excellent relationship with (support worker), he’s been there since day one and helped me through a lot. It’s not like any other service that I have had or been in and I couldn’t have done it without him.”*



**Priority objective 2: Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to a settled home**

- Over the course of the year a further 27 temporary tenancies were ‘flipped’ to a Scottish Secure Tenancy, providing the homeless household with a permanent home and avoiding the need for the disruption of further moves.
- Since the implementation of the RRTP, a total of 53 households have had their temporary tenancies converted. This has exceeded the original annual target set and has enabled a number of longer-term homeless households to secure permanent accommodation.
- The Council and its HomeFinder Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners agreed an increase to the percentage of lets to be directed to those on the Homeless List. In 2020/21, 61% of council properties were let to homeless applicants, an increase from 51% during 2019/20. HomeFinder RSLs collectively let 42% of vacant properties to homeless households, an increase from 36% in the previous year.
- There continues to be a low incidence of rough sleeping in South Lanarkshire. The provision of additional accommodation and access to alternative procurement methods enabled rapid use of hotel accommodation when required. This ensured there was no need for anyone to have no option but to sleep rough in South Lanarkshire.
- During the year there was a focus and partnership approach to meeting the housing needs of long-term homeless households. As at 31 March 2021, there has been a 41% reduction in the number of households who have spent more than 12 months in temporary accommodation.

**Case Study - “Flipped Tenancy”**

During the year we have worked with people living in temporary accommodation to identify where it would be appropriate for the person to be offered the temporary property on a permanent basis. Converting a temporary tenancy to a permanent home prevents further upheaval for the household.

In one instance a customer was very pleased with the offer as her son had become very settled in the property.

Her eight year old son had developed severe anxiety due to witnessing violence against his mum in her previous relationship. He would not let his mother out of his sight and had become very isolated and would not mix with other children.

When they were allocated their temporary accommodation the child became settled, started going to the park with other children and his schoolwork began to improve.

Identifying this was a positive move for this family the Housing Support Officer discussed the possibility of offering the property as a permanent settled home and a positive solution to their homelessness. The service user reports

*“This really worked in my benefit, I couldn’t believe my luck and I’m over the moon, my neighbours are pleased there is someone in the house permanently, I am a happy customer”.*



**Priority Objective 3: Improve and increase the provision of housing support for households to live independently within the communities**

- The HomeStart service continues to provide support and assistance to new council tenants in South Lanarkshire, including those at most risk of or who have experienced homelessness, to improve tenancy sustainment. This includes assistance to set up and sustain tenancies and providing starter packs where required. In the last year, the HomeStart team provided 217 starter packs to new tenants.
- Partnership work continues with Blue Triangle Housing Association and YPeople Pathways to provide innovative housing support projects across South Lanarkshire. Both Blue Triangle and YPeople provide quality, person centred support in a Psychologically Informed Environment. Support is designed to build personal resilience, strengthen social networks, and empower service users by increasing life skills to support tenancy sustainment. An Intensive Floating Support service is also provided to households with complex needs who have experienced repeat homelessness.
- Three specialist Housing Officer posts extended for 12 months to progress the further development of a Personal Housing Planning approach for vulnerable groups including women experiencing domestic abuse and care leavers and the continued implementation of SHORE standards for the prevention of homelessness on release from prison.
- Partnership work has continued with Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire to further develop responses to domestic abuse, including the development of a housing pathway aimed at preventing homelessness. This approach links to wider objectives of the South Lanarkshire Gender Based Violence Partnership and takes account of Chartered Institute of Housing and Women's Aid guidance and recent changes in legislation. The pathway will be fully implemented in the coming year.
- To address digital exclusion in the homeless population, the partnership continued to identify opportunities to improve connectivity for vulnerable groups. In 2020/21 through Connecting Scotland and utilising funding from the Lintel Trust and RRTP, digital equipment and internet access for 2 years was provided to 55 homeless families with children. This will enable the families to access online services such as employability, training advice, welfare supports and online education resources.
- The Complex Case Discussion Panel, involving a range of partners, has continued to review the most complex need homelessness cases. The panel considers the individual circumstances of each case and agrees next steps through the development of a housing and support plan. This approach ensures housing support is not withdrawn for any negative reason, that the service never gives up and every option is explored to meet support needs and secure permanent sustainable accommodation.

### **Emergency First Stop Accommodation Service User (Barrack Street, Hamilton)**

“This service has made a big impact on my life as a whole. I felt safe coming here as it brought me back to where I know. The service has given me a lot of support and I feel confident in myself. I have now linked in with a worker that I lost contact with, I have been meeting with my family as they live in this area too. I feel safe and this is the first time that I have been able to even talk about my trauma. The staff are amazing and if not for this place then I really do not know what I would have done.”

### **Case Study - Blue Triangle Intensive Floating Support Service**

As a child, the service user grew up in a very chaotic home, her mother lived with mental health issues and the service user witnessed drug abuse from an early age, she lost multiple family members through drug deaths and at 16 was introduced to heroin herself.

She is now 35 years of age and has been in the Criminal Justice system for most of her adult life, she has schizophrenia, a personality disorder, she is on a methadone programme and uses street drugs and alcohol.

Every relationship she has had has been extremely abusive and as a result she lost custody of her child 15 years ago and this has escalated into a cycle of failed tenancies and repeat homelessness.

She was identified as a candidate for Intensive Floating Support for moving into her new tenancy and was apprehensive at first however Blue Triangle worked closely with her for several months preparing for a move to a settled home, they discussed options for the most suitable property, advocating for her to ensure her housing and support needs were best met with a focus on the positive opportunities within the community and building trusting relationship.

This service user has been settled in her tenancy since March 2020, this is the longest period of settlement she has had in her adult life.

The intensive support she has been given includes a wide range of assistance to manage a tenancy from budgeting for utilities to purchasing food and items for making her home comfortable. The Service User has indicated that her confidence has grown.



**Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs**

- The Salvation Army has been commissioned to work in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council on the continued expansion of the Housing First approach, which is consistent with HARSAG revised recommendations. During 2020/21, permanent accommodation with wraparound intensive support was provided to 13 service users. The support provided is flexible and tailored to the needs and circumstances of the service user and includes a 2 week induction prior to moving in where advice is provided on budgeting, Benefit entitlement, managing utility bills as well as introducing the service user to community groups and facilities in the local area. This support has helped to ensure a 100% tenancy sustainment rate for the Housing First cases in 2020/21. Reduced availability of housing in the last year has impacted on timescales to secure settled accommodation however this will be a focus of the Housing First programme in the coming year.
- The extension of the specialist Housing Officer has allowed continuation of the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards, during 2020/21 203 individuals being detained were contacted to discuss housing circumstances and options before planned release. 52 requests were refused, 103 were advice cases with no further action required and 48 cases required intervention from the SHORE officer to assist with securing accommodation on release.

**Housing First Service User**

“I cannot believe that I have my own home. I never thought this would be happening to me, but this is all I ever wanted. I understand now that the support that I gain really helps me. I am now looking at volunteering”.

“I have been in and out of different homeless places and at that time I thought that this was just the process. My worker contacts me daily just to check in and see how I am doing. She knows me and has supported me to make better choices. I had such a great feeling ordering items for my house. Yes, it’s my own little house. I don’t feel embarrassed telling people where I live now and this time I am going to make a difference, as my worker says..... I can do this”



### **Priority Objective 5: Enhance integration and partnership working to embed RRTP through a whole systems approach**

- A key feature of the RRTP is the innovative development of Partner Contribution Statements (PCS). These are live documents, prepared by each partner and reviewed annually. They contain the progress of each partner's support to the RRTP by setting out details of specific contributions they will make, individually or in conjunction with other partners, towards ensuring delivery of the five priority objectives. The actions detailed within PCS's are wide and varied reflecting the different roles of partners and the services they deliver. Regular update on partner services is provided to the Homelessness Strategy Group which improves knowledge and understanding of the role of each partner and promotes best practice and consistency for governance of the plan.
- The Homelessness Strategy Group, a sub-group of the LHS Steering Group has collective responsibility for developing and delivering RRTP outcomes, taking account of the voice of lived experience. The group meet every eight weeks to monitor progress against the RRTP action plan and discuss any issues. The group reports quarterly to the LHS Steering Group.
- SLC Housing and Technical Resources continue to work closely with partners in the Health and Social Care Partnership to develop and progress specific 'Directions' within the Strategic Commissioning Plan 2019-22. These unique Directions aim to promote homelessness routine enquiry across frontline health services and prioritise access to services for homeless households, including the introduction of a health and wellbeing assessment for all children affected by homelessness, This is an opportunity to capitalise on existing pathways from health to housing and homelessness services and places South Lanarkshire in a good position to respond to the recommendations of the Prevention Review Group.
- The council is also engaging with the National Health Service on national data trend analysis to understand links between health and homelessness data with a view to aiding preventative activity.
- Supported by ADP, Housing Services were successful in securing funding to deliver an out of hours crisis response service focused on harm reduction and reducing deaths in the homeless population. A partnership implementation group was established which included Housing, Criminal Justice, Nursing, mental health and addiction services. This service, administered by Turning Point Scotland is now live and outcomes will be monitored through 2021/22 with the group continuing to support and inform delivery.
- Partnership bid to Health Improvement Scotland to participate in Homelessness Reducing Harm programme of work.

## 5.7 Review Scorecard

To monitor progress against each of the five priority objectives in the RRTP, a traffic light scoring system is used. Attached to the priorities are 52 indicators comprising of 32 actions and 20 measures. A further category of blue is an addition to the second annual review and highlights actions which have been completed.

Figure 7 – Traffic light scoring

Colour	Progress
Blue	Complete
Green	Achieved/on target
Amber	Minor slippage
Red	Significantly off target
Grey	Report Later/Contextual

Figure 8 below provides a summary of the position in relation to the progress made towards the achievement of the five priority objectives of the RRTP during 2020/21. Over 96% of indicators were either achieved or were close to target.

RRTP Scorecard 2020/21	Blue	Green	Amber	Red	Grey	Total
Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness	2	7	4	0	0	13
Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to settled homes	1	6	5	0	0	12
Improve and increase the provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities	0	6	6	0	0	12
Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs	1	7	0	1	1	10
Enhance integration and partnership working to embed RRTP through a whole systems approach	0	5	0	0	0	5
<b>All</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>52</b>

Those identified as amber measures and actions will be monitored throughout 2021/22 and those currently listed as “to be reported later” will be progressed or reviewed by the Homelessness Strategy Group during 2021/22.

5.8 The annual review provided the opportunity to assess and report on the progress made against each of the actions and measures contained within the plan it also allowed for a general re-examination of the RRTP, to ensure that the objectives, actions and measures identified, remain appropriate, relevant and measurable.

- 5.9 It is proposed that eight amendments are made to the RRTP action plan. These amendments relate to one new proposed action, four actions which completed in 2020/21 and three actions/measures that have been revised.
- 5.10 In terms of the four completed actions, new subsequent actions are proposed to reflect the ongoing progress to be made in these areas throughout the remaining period of the RRTP. In addition, it is proposed that one action be revised and two measures be replaced with new measures to be reported on in year 3 of the RRTP.
- 5.11 The tables below provide details of the revisions be made to the RRTP action plan. Table A details the proposed new action to be added to the RRTP action plan. Table B details the proposed revisions to the action plan and sets out the existing actions/measures to be removed and the proposed corresponding replacement actions/measures, where appropriate. Following approval, all revisions will be incorporated into the RRTP action plan for 2021/22.

**Table A: Proposed new action for inclusion in RRTP action plan**

RRTP Reference	Proposed new action	Context
A1.8	Continue to develop and implement approaches to support victims of domestic abuse and prevent homelessness	New action building upon the development of the housing pathway for victims of domestic abuse and taking into account legislative changes and good practise

**Table B: Proposed revisions to RRTP action plan**

RRTP Ref.	Current action/measure	Status	RRTP Ref.	Proposed replacement action/measure (where appropriate)
A1.5	Re-commission and expand Rent Deposit Scheme to support implementation of RRTP	Complete	A1.5A	Monitor progress of the expansion of the Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service administered by YPeople
A1.6	Explore option to provide financial support to private rented tenants to achieve affordability and prevent homelessness	Complete	A1.6A	Monitor the effectiveness of the Private Sector Innovation Fund administered by YPeople for providing financial support to private rented tenants to prevent homelessness
A1.7	Develop Housing Options Framework for young people	Revised	A.1.7A	Continue to develop and implement approaches to prevent youth homelessness, with a particular focus on pathway approach to meeting the needs of care experienced young people

<b>RRTP Ref.</b>	<b>Current action/measure</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>RRTP Ref.</b>	<b>Proposed replacement action/measure (where appropriate)</b>
A2.1	Develop procedure for converting temporary accommodation units to SST	Complete	A2.1A	Maximise the potential for converting temporary accommodation to a Scottish Secure Tenancy where the property meets the needs of the household
M3.2	Percentage of homeless households provided with Housing Support Officer assistance	Revised	M3.2A	Percentage of homeless households who require support, provided with Housing Support Officer assistance  Target 100%
M4.2	Number of discharge planning cases handled through multi-professional joint working arrangements in hospitals/prisons and the community	Revised	M4.2A	Number of Housing First planning cases handled by health professional led multi-agency care management approach
A4.3	Review provision of refuge accommodation for female victims of domestic abuse to ensure it is adequate across all divisions	Complete	A4.3A	Complete development of the Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan and progress implementation

## 6. Priorities for 2021/22 (Year 3)

- 6.1 A key aspect of the annual review was to consider the appropriateness of the actions identified in the RRTP with a particular focus on those to be progressed during the future years of the plan.
- 6.2 A sustained focus has been placed on priorities despite the continuing impact of Covid-19. Year three priorities will progress to ensure rapid rehousing is embedded and fully implemented into the projects and actions.
- 6.3 A summary of the key priorities to be progressed during 2021/22 are detailed below: -
- Responding to the continued impact of Covid-19 by recovery plan action management and resilient service provision, including ensuring the supply of temporary accommodation is optimised.
  - Focus on reducing homelessness presentations to pre-COVID-19 levels
  - Continue to focus on pathways and housing options for young people.
  - Continue to deliver affordable homes for social rent in South Lanarkshire in accordance with the Strategic Housing Investment Programme.
  - Ensuring the number of families with children presenting as homeless are further reduced through the range of prevention and partnership support interventions.
  - Continuing progress to reduce long term homelessness by continuing the ongoing programme of delivering affordable housing and converting or “flipping” temporary tenancies into SST’s.
  - Sustain or increase the proportion of social housing allocations to homeless households in line with local letting plans.
  - Remain consistent with the development and implementation of national policy on addressing homelessness and how that is delivered at an operational level.
  - Focus on prevention, early intervention and mitigating the disproportionate effect of homelessness on health and well-being.
  - Liaise with the H&SCP for further progressing the two Homelessness Directions contained in the Strategic Commissioning Plan.
  - Implementation of the actions set out in the Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan developed to meet strategic priorities relating to the provision of temporary and supported accommodation.
  - Implementation of the plan for a programme of homelessness and tackling poverty school lessons as part of education curriculum.
  - Progress the completion of a data sharing agreement with NHS Lanarkshire for identifying trends in HL1 data in relation to community mental health contact, psychiatric admission and non-elective admissions for substance misuse and self-harm.
  - Progress completion of individual information sharing arrangements to notify education or health as appropriate of a child experiencing homelessness.
  - Implementation of revised Housing/Social Work joint Throughcare protocol for care experienced young people in conjunction with service users and Third Sector partners.
  - Monitor the effectiveness of a newly commissioned out of hours crisis response service from Turning Point Scotland on reducing the number of homelessness deaths and providing harm reduction.

- Ensure continuing links to the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2021 are in place to support and improve outcomes for homeless households with children
- Continue to support victims of domestic abuse through the implementation of specific housing pathways.
- Implement specific housing pathways for individuals on release from prison to ensure SHORE standards are maintained.
- Continue to develop the council's Housing First approach by providing suitable secure accommodation and wraparound support to homeless households with complex needs.
- Continue to focus on provision of good quality trauma informed services to meet a range of needs, including review of overall support service provision and consideration of future procurement arrangements.
- Further develop/refresh service user engagement plan following disruption over last year ensuring plans and developments are progressed on basis of coproduction.
- Continue priorities for digital inclusion by sourcing opportunities for the provision of digital equipment, online access and start-up support to homeless households.

#### 6.4 Funding the RRTP during 2021/22

##### **Scottish Government Funding**

During 2021/22, the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund confirmed a funding allocation of £440,000 for South Lanarkshire. Partners agreed that this would be used to further embed and progress the following RRTP actions: -

- The expansion of specialist support services currently provided by the Blue Triangle Housing Association for intensive floating support services to individuals with complex needs.
- Continuation of funding dedicated officer posts to support victims of domestic abuse.
- Implementation of the new Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service and expansion of the Innovation Fund administered by YPeople.
- Continuation of funding dedicated officer posts to support young care leavers
- Continuation of funding dedicated officer to support SHORE standards for individuals entering and leaving prison.
- The continuation of the Housing First programme.
- The further development of the digital inclusion project Bringing IT Home to improve digital connectivity for homeless families.

##### **Other Funding Sources**

The Homelessness Strategy Group is aware of the need to consider other potential funding routes in order to meet future resourcing requirements of the RRTP. Partners have committed to work collaboratively to identify funding opportunities in 2021/22.

- 6.5 The scale of the homelessness challenges facing local authorities from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic has required flexibility, resilience and innovation to ensure that staff remain focussed on the increased demand for services while at the same time retaining the strategic direction to ensuring homelessness becomes rare, brief and non-recurring. Prevention and sustainment remain core objectives for Housing and

Homelessness services in South Lanarkshire and its partners and will continue to be a key priority in the year ahead.

## Appendix 1: RRTP Action Plan

Priority Objective 1: Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness					
RRTP Measures		Target	RRTP Baseline	Progress 2020/21	Lead
M1.1	Number of homeless presentations	Reduce 10-20%	1928	2225	HTR
M1.2	Level of homeless households	Reduce 10-20%	892	969	HTR
M1.3	Number of affordable homes added to the housing supply (new and OMP)	Annual target will be set and detailed in the Strategic Local Programme Agreement, developed between SLC and the Scottish Government	RSL 283	RSL 142	HTR / RSL
			SLC 193	SLC 197	
M1.4	New supply affordable housing suitable to meet particular needs	Annual target will be set and detailed in the Strategic Local Programme Agreement, developed between SLC and the Scottish Government	170	107	HTR / RSL
M1.5	Increase the number of accredited landlord properties	+9% from LHS baseline	1068	952	HTR
M1.6	Number of homeless households whose housing needs are met in the private rented sector	Increase 2020/21	50	15	HTR

<b>Priority Objective 1: Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Target/Milestone</b>	<b>Progress in 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
A1.1	Set housing supply targets for new build properties and ensure contribution to meeting homelessness needs are considered in the planning process	Aligned with Strategic Housing Investment Plan. Annual target will be set and detailed in the Strategic Local Programme Agreement, developed between SLC and the Scottish Government.	New build programme progressing in accordance with South Lanarkshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021-26 approved by Housing and Technical Resources Committee in November 2020.	HTR/RSL
A1.2	Increase number of properties acquired through Open Market Purchase (OMP Scheme) to support conversion of temporary accommodation to secure tenancies and rehousing in pressure areas	Annual target to be agreed.	53 additional council homes were purchased through the council's framework for Open Market Purchase (OMP Scheme).	HTR
A1.3	Continue to develop and promote the landlord accreditation scheme	Deliver two private landlord forums per annum in partnership with landlord accreditation scheme	Due to Covid-19 restrictions private landlord forums were unable to take place. Engagement with private landlords took place through email distribution of Spring Newsletter to 10,800 landlords in February 2021. Preparations underway to host virtual landlord forums in 2021/22 as an alternative platform for engaging with landlords	HTR

A1.4	Provide funding to incentivise landlords to access accreditation and training from Landlord Accreditation Scotland		The council continues to fund and work in partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland who provide training to private landlords	HTR
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<b>Priority Objective 1: Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Target/Milestone</b>	<b>Progress in 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
A1.5	Re-commission and expand Rent Deposit Scheme to support implementation of RRTP	Incorporate expansion into service re-commissioning in September 2019	Complete – New Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service commissioned.  A new Private Sector Access and Sustainment Service was established during the year, replacing the Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS). Funding has been allocated to provide guarantee bonds in place of cash deposits for access to the private sector.  (Links to new action 1.5A)	HTR
A1.6	Explore option to provide financial support to private rented tenants to achieve affordability and prevent homelessness	Complete option appraisal. Implementation of preferred option.	Complete – Innovation Fund established to provide financial support to private tenants.  Through the Rent Deposit Scheme, an additional £2,500 was allocated to YPeople to establish an Innovation Fund providing financial assistance to tenants within the private rented sector to prevent homelessness and assist with tenancy sustainment.  (Links to new action 1.6A)	HTR
A1.7	Develop Housing Options Framework for young people	Building upon development of housing pathway plan for care	Following a delay due to the impact of Covid-19, a pathway tailored to the specific needs of young	HTR

		experienced young people and taking account of broader youth homelessness	people to assist in the prevention of homelessness is now being developed..	
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<b>Priority Objective 2: Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to settled homes</b>					
<b>RRTP Measures</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>RRTP Baseline</b>	<b>Progress 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
M2.1	Temporary Accommodation Supply	Maintain levels and reconfigure subject to review during 2019/20  Review options for rationalisation during 2020/21	530	874	HTR
M2.2	Percentage of social housing allocated to homeless households by all social housing providers in South Lanarkshire	50-60%  Set target subject to annual review	49.2% SLC 29.4% RSL	61% SLC 42% RSL	HTR/RSL
M2.3	Percentage of homeless households provided with a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)	Maintain/improve on LHS baseline of 61.2%	61.2%	56.4%	HTR
M2.4	Percentage of former homeless households provided with an SST that maintain their home for more than 12 months	Maintain/improve on LHS baseline of 88%	88%	91%	HTR
M2.5	Average time spent in temporary accommodation	Reduce from 192 days	192	223	HTR

**Priority Objective 2: Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to settled homes**

RRTP Measures		Target	RRTP Baseline	Progress 2020/21	Lead
M2.6	Number of temporary accommodation units converted to SST	Up to 100 units converted over 5-year period		27 units (53 in total)	HTR
M2.7	Percentage of all homeless presentations which are repeated (within 12 months)	Reduce to less than 3%	4.5%	4.6%	HTR
M2.8	Number of homeless households who spend more than 12 months in temporary accommodation	Reduce by 50% on baseline	120	56	HTR

**Priority Objective 2: Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to settled homes**

Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A2.1	Develop procedure for converting temporary accommodation units to SST	Review best practice and identify suitable households and units	<p>Complete- approach established and in operation</p> <p>In 2020/21 a further 27 units were 'flipped', reducing upheaval for the households concerned and providing a positive outcome and settled accommodation to homeless household, including some long-term homelessness cases and 20 cases with children in the household.</p> <p>Since the introduction of the RRTP a total of 53 units have been "flipped" to SSTs.</p> <p>(Links to new action 2.1A)</p>	HTR

A2.2	Increase percentage of allocations to homeless households as required for each housing division in accordance with annual Local Letting Plans	Aligned with Local Letting Plans. Tailor for HomeFinder and non-HomeFinder RSL partners	Each year, local letting targets are identified for and approved by Housing and Technical Resources Committee. In addition, discussions take place with HomeFinder RSL's to agree a letting target for homeless households, that they work towards during the year (see M2.2 above for 2019/20 targets and performance).	HTR
<b>Priority Objective 2: Significantly reduce time spent by households in temporary accommodation and minimise moves before moving to settled homes</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Target/Milestone</b>	<b>Progress in 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
A2.3	Review number of properties currently used as temporary accommodation in line with demand	Implement annual targets for reduction in temporary accommodation based on analysis of demand and supply	A review of temporary accommodation demand and supply was carried out during the year. A number of short, medium and long-term actions have been identified and will be progressed in the year ahead, in line with RRTP strategic priorities in relation to the provision of temporary and supported accommodation.	HTR
A2.4	Regularly review rent charges for temporary accommodation to ensure it remains a financially viable option for all homeless households	Aligned with Homelessness Business Plan	Ongoing review of charges in place, in line with the Homelessness Business Plan with aim to further reduce charges in future years.  Processes reviewed for rent charge debt relating to temporary accommodation with a focus on affordability and sustainment.	HTR

Priority Objective 3: Improve and increase provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities					
RRTP Measures		Target	RRTP Baseline	Progress 2020/21	Lead
M3.1	Number of people accessing Housing Options (prevention) services	1,000	964	912	HTR
M3.2	Percentage of homeless households provided with Housing Support Officer assistance	Maintain above 45%	38.3%	32.9%	HTR
M3.3	Percentage of looked after young people accessing and sustaining accommodation that meets their needs	Determine baseline Increase annually	95%	90%	HTR/HSCP

Priority Objective 3: Improve and increase provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities				
Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A3.1	Increase housing support service provision to improve homelessness prevention and support tenancy sustainment	Review current service among all tenures	SLC support services and commissioned services with The Salvation Army, Blue Triangle and YPeople continue to deliver tailored packages of support to service users with multiple and complex needs. New provider Turning Point commissioned for Year 3 of RRTP	HTR
A3.2	Increase provision of support from all services to support new tenancies, including improvements to housing starter/furnishing packs and incentives to encourage uptake of offers.	Review and develop Implement and monitor effectiveness	The HomeStart service has now been established on a permanent basis. During the year, 217 starter packs were allocated to new tenants across South Lanarkshire. Since full roll out in September 2019, 464 starter packs have been provided to new tenants to help with sustainment and prevent repeat homelessness.	HTR

<b>Priority Objective 3: Improve and increase provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Target/Milestone</b>	<b>Progress in 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
A3.3	Monitor current Housing Options approach, and ensure adequate resourcing to meet any future increase in demand	Annually monitor resourcing requirements and report through annual review	A review of the Housing Options service was carried out in 2020/21 and a number of service improvements identified. The service improvements are being introduced on a phased basis with the first phase complete.	HTR
A3.4	Deliver Housing Options and homelessness awareness training to young people, targeting high schools in areas identified with high homelessness rates amongst young people	Monitor and report	Due to Covid-19 restrictions it was not possible to deliver Housing Options and Homelessness awareness training within secondary schools.  Plans agreed with Education services for the future delivery of training. The aim is to develop a film that will be incorporated into the school curriculum with active participation from homelessness service users.	HTR
A3.5	Review access to Scottish Welfare Fund with a view to ensuring effective and appropriate access for homeless households	Complete Review Implement any actions from review	Liaison continues between Scottish Welfare Fund team and Housing Support workers to prioritise, where possible, cases which have been highlighted as time critical. The review of the process of joint working will be undertaken in 2021/22.	HTR
A3.6	Review current provision and need for outreach housing support and agree future service arrangements	Complete review. Current services/contracts due to end and implement revised arrangements as a result of review	Review of current provision in progress with contracts confirmed to deliver support services up to 2023.  Longer term review of future service arrangements underway considering support needs, partnership emphasis and models to deliver quality support services	HTR

**Priority Objective 3: Improve and increase provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities**

Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A3.7	Ensure 'care experience' is identified as a support need for any young people presenting as homeless and directed towards appropriate case managed pathway	Monitor and report (annually)	Significant progress has been made in the year with the partnership development of a housing pathway within the wider Children's Services Plan. A Joint Housing and Social work protocol has been refreshed and will be presented to senior management teams during 2021 for approval.	HTR
A3.8	Complete a Wellbeing Assessment for all children and young people who are homeless	Monitor and report (annually)	Housing and Health and Social Care senior management teams approved during May 2021. Integrated Joint Board approval on 18 May 2021. Work now progressing to identify resources to progress areas of work and agree monitoring and reporting arrangements.	HTR
A3.9	Promote digital inclusion for households who are homeless		Following the success of the 'Bringing IT Home' pilot where 25 homeless households were provided with digital devices and online access, £26k of funding was provided in the year to further expand the project. 55 homeless families were identified and will be provided with devices and unlimited internet access for 2 years.	HTR

Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs					
RRTP Measures		Target	RRTP Baseline	Progress 2020/21	Lead
M4.1	Number of current households receiving Housing First Support	Phased increase to 40	3	13 (26 in total)	HTR
M4.2	Number of discharge planning cases handled through multi-professional joint working arrangements in hospitals/prisons and the community	Baseline to be established	-		HTR/HSCP

Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs				
Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A4.1	Expand Housing First across South Lanarkshire	Programme for expansion agreed  Framework and necessary resources in place	During the year, 13 households engaged with Housing First.  Since Housing First was introduced a total of 26 households are now included within the programme. Of those housed during 2020/21, there has been a 100% tenancy sustainment rate.	HTR
A4.2	Evaluate Housing First pathfinders and increase scale/scope of approach aligned to case conference criteria and pathways approach	Evaluation Report	To be reported later	HTR

**Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs**

Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A4.3	Review provision of refuge accommodation for female victims of domestic abuse to ensure it is adequate across all divisions	Review and consider extension to current contract with updated requirements	Action complete – initial review complete and agreement across Council and Women’s Aid supply is sufficient to meet requirements with slight reduction appropriate within Clydesdale (2 units).  Future provision will be considered in line with routine temporary accommodation review and planning and agreement on sufficient supply within the Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan. (Links to new action A4.3A)	
A4.4	Work with Scottish Prison Service and Addiewell prison to implement SHORE standards for people entering and exiting prison, including a priority focus for short-sentence prisoners on remand. Explore additional options for dedicated staff resources	Implementation plan agreed for implementation from 2020/21	SHORE standards continue to be implemented by the specialist Housing Officer who works closely with the Scottish Prison Service to provide housing advice to people entering and leaving prison and has made contact with 203 individuals detained to provide housing advice or direct intervention to secure housing on release.	HTR
A4.5	Increase awareness and increase training offered to front line services to support people impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) from being homeless	Evaluate requirement to raise awareness of partners in relation to ACEs.  Multi-agency training/communication programmes agreed	Relevant Housing/Support Officers included in ACE’s and PIE training delivered on a partnership approach across Housing, Health and Social Care delivered by YPeople. Managers participated in Trauma Informed Practice awareness.  Ongoing focus on training included within 2021/22 training plan.	HTR

**Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs**

Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
			<p>During 2021/22 a key area of focus will be to deliver training to relevant staff on Trauma Informed Practice.</p> <p>Ongoing priority for Health and Homeless Group to ensure programme of training and refreshing focus on further development of trauma informed service delivery across partnership building on training</p>	
A4.6	Identify requirements for intensive trauma informed and PIE residential supported accommodation to meet the needs of extremely vulnerable groups	Complete scoping report	Review of temporary and supported accommodation complete and Temporary Accommodation Strategic Plan being developed, setting out short, medium and long terms accommodation needs.	HTR
A4.7	Promote 'routine enquiry' across all health and care services, including visiting outreach, to identify housing provision and financial security	Monitor and report via Health and Homelessness Steering Group	<p>Homelessness Directions, incorporated within Strategic Commissioning Plan, progressed during the year.</p> <p>Promotion of routine enquiry established across RRTP partnership bodies, including the Community Link team who have included a housing specific question to triage assessment of patients referred by GP's for access to community services.</p> <p>Proposals to further support the implementation of homelessness Directions were reported to IJB on 18/5/21.</p>	HTR/HSCP

**Priority Objective 4: Expand the scope and capacity of our Housing First approach to be the first response for households with multiple complex needs**

Actions		Target/Milestone	Progress in 2020/21	Lead
A4.8	Prioritise access to general medical and universal health screening services for homeless people, including primary care (GP), prescribing, dentists, etc	Monitor and report via Health and Homelessness Steering Group	Referrals to the Health and Homelessness Nurse established. Aim is to meet the immediate health needs of individuals and families affected by homelessness, providing continuity of health care. Proposals to further support implementation of Homelessness Directions being reported to IJB 18/5/21	HTR/HSCP

**Priority Objective 5: Enhance integration and partnership working to embed RRTP through a whole systems approach**

RRTP Measures		Target	RRTP Baseline	Progress 2020/21	Lead
M5.1	Number of training and employment pathways for homeless households	To be agreed	To be agreed	4 cases (3-month pilot)	FCR

<b>Priority Objective 5: Enhance integration and partnership working to embed RRTP through a whole systems approach</b>				
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Target/Milestone</b>	<b>Progress in 2020/21</b>	<b>Lead</b>
A5.1	Work with DWP to further develop use of discretionary support funding for homeless households to undertake appropriate training to develop skills and resilience to improve access to employment	Agree target 2021/22	DWP continue to work with the council and a range of third sector organisations on a local level to ensure claimants who are homeless/at risk of homelessness are offered relevant and timely support.	HTR/DWP
A5.2	Explore options for improving digital connectivity for all homeless households, increasing engagement with services and enabling improved tenancy management	Explore options for expansion of project	Utilising Lintel Trust Community Wellbeing Funding, RRTP funding and Connecting Scotland discounts relating to internet access, the Bringing IT Home project was expanded. 55 homeless families have been identified and will be provided with devices and unlimited internet access for 2 years.	HTR
A5.3	Ensure effective training for staff is in place on awareness of third sector support available at a divisional level for at risk homelessness households	Implement improvements as required	VASLAN continue to be represented within the RRTP partnership for raising awareness of third sector support within South Lanarkshire.	TS
A5.4	Contribute to ongoing development and review of homelessness business plan to ensure sufficient resources available to continue to provide high quality services to homeless households	Implemented recommendations as required	Progress against Homelessness Business Plan is monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the year, through monthly performance report and at mid-year and year-end review. Spend within budget provision during 2020/21, with additional Covid-19 related spend separately funded.	HTR