
Report to: Place Committee

Date of Meeting: 21 March 2019

Subject: Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

Report by: Strategic Director (Place)

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This report seeks to update members on the progress being made in drafting the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24, due to be submitted by 31st March 2019.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes progress in completing our five year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to consider short and long term solutions to ending homelessness and rough sleeping in Scotland. The recommendations of the group have been accepted by the Scottish Government and £50 million made available to enable implementation.
- 3.2. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, and temporary accommodation is required, it should ideally be mainstream, furnished and located within the community.
- 3.3. A key plank of the HARSAG recommendations is the implementation of a "Rapid Rehousing", by default approach. In effect, homeless persons should be housed in suitable permanent accommodation as quickly as possible.
- 3.4. HARSAG further recommend that, for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages, a "Housing First" approach should be taken.
- 3.5. Housing First provides ordinary settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs. Wrap-around support should be put in place to ensure the tenancy succeeds.
- 3.6. "Rapid Rehousing" is about taking a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a

settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.”

- 3.7. Local Authorities are required to prepare a five year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP). The core purpose is to plan how to redress the current balance of housing options for homeless households and realign these to the preferred housing led approach.
- 3.8. Approximately £15 million will be made available for this phase of activity.
- 3.9. An interim report was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2019. We had expected feedback in February but have not, as yet, received any. The interim documentation is attached as appendices.
- 3.10. Our research indicates that Clackmannanshire is, in the most part, working to the principles set out by HARSAG.
 - Our temporary accommodation is, generally, of good quality
 - We transition people from temporary accommodation as quickly as stock availability permits
 - We operate a “housing first” approach with certain needs groups, e.g. looked after children
- 3.11. We also conclude that some of the mechanisms recommended by HARSAG to minimise the length of time homeless persons wait for permanent accommodation are not applicable to Clackmannanshire. They recommend, for example, increasing the percentage of our lets to homeless persons; we argue that almost all of our lets already go to persons in significant housing need whom, we believe, would be classed as homeless if they were lodge a homelessness application.
- 3.12. Our action plan is yet to be finalised but two main activities are highlighted:
 - 3.12.1 Grow the stock of temporary accommodation, as an interim measure, to ensure we are able to provide the highest quality accommodation to all applicants.
 - 3.12.2 Develop, with partners, an intensive, targeted, very early intervention service to divert individuals in need away from expensive public sector crisis intervention services. This, in turn, will reduce homeless presentations.
- 3.13. The Scottish Government are inviting us to submit costings along with our plan and will allocate monies from the Ending Homelessness Together Fund. We have made it clear that, without funding assistance, we will find progressing the action plan extremely challenging.
- 3.14. Attached as appendices, are the most current versions of the documents required in our submission. We will continue to work with our partners to amend and refine our plan prior to submission at the end of March 19.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

4.1. There are no sustainability implications.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. *Financial Details*

5.2. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.3. *Staffing*

5.4. Should the bid for additional resources be successful, to enable the setting up of a very early intervention service, there may be a requirement to recruit additional staffing.

6.0 Exempt Reports

6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses and people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families, children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1. Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes

No

9.0 Legality

9.1. It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

10.1. Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 - Rapid Rehousing – Interim return

Appendix 2 - Draft rapid Rehousing Action Plan

11.0 Background Papers

11.1. Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered).

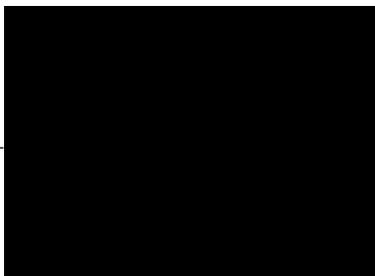
Yes No

(please list the documents below)

Author(s)

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
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Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 (Draft)

1. Introduction

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to consider short and long term solutions to ending homelessness and rough sleeping in Scotland. The full suite of recommendations made by the group have been accepted, in principle, by the Scottish Government and an “Ending Homelessness Together Fund” of £50 million has been made available by the Scottish Government to enable implementation.

The Scottish Government’s “Ending Homelessness Together: High Level Action Plan”, published in November 2018 sets out the following actions:

1. We will end homelessness by embedding a person-centred approach across public services
2. We will end homelessness by preventing it from happening to people in the first place
3. We will end homelessness by prioritising settled housing for all
4. We will end homelessness by responding quickly and effectively whenever it happens
5. We will end homelessness by joining up planning and resources

A key plank of the HARSAG recommendations is the implementation of a “Rapid Rehousing”, by default approach, whenever homelessness does occur.

“Rapid Rehousing” is about taking a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.”¹

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, and temporary accommodation is required, it should ideally be mainstream, furnished and located within the community. Prolonged stays in temporary accommodation, particularly if of poor quality with frequent transitions, can be damaging to the wellbeing of the homeless household and should be avoided.

¹ Rapid Rehousing transition Plans: Guidance for Local Authorities & Partners – June 2018

HARSAG further recommend that, for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages, a “Housing First” approach should be taken.

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”.²

On behalf of HARSAG and Social Bite, Indigo House were commissioned to create a planning and implementation framework to assist local authorities to work towards the implementation of rapid rehousing by default over the next 5 years.

Local Authorities are required to work with their partners to produce a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by the end of December 2018.

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is the new planning framework for local authorities and partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. The core purpose is to plan how to redress the current balance of housing options for homeless households and realign these to the preferred housing-led approach. The plan will be developed over a planned and costed phase of 5 years (2019 – 2023) and from 2019 will be an integral part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and will be reviewed annually as part of the SHIP process. The plan will align with the core principles and priorities of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and will be linked to the Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan through the Housing Contribution Statement.

This Plan will highlight the current level of homeless services provided by Clackmannanshire Council, including details of positive changes already implemented and further improvements proposed to evidence how we will meet the requirements of Rapid Rehousing and Housing First.

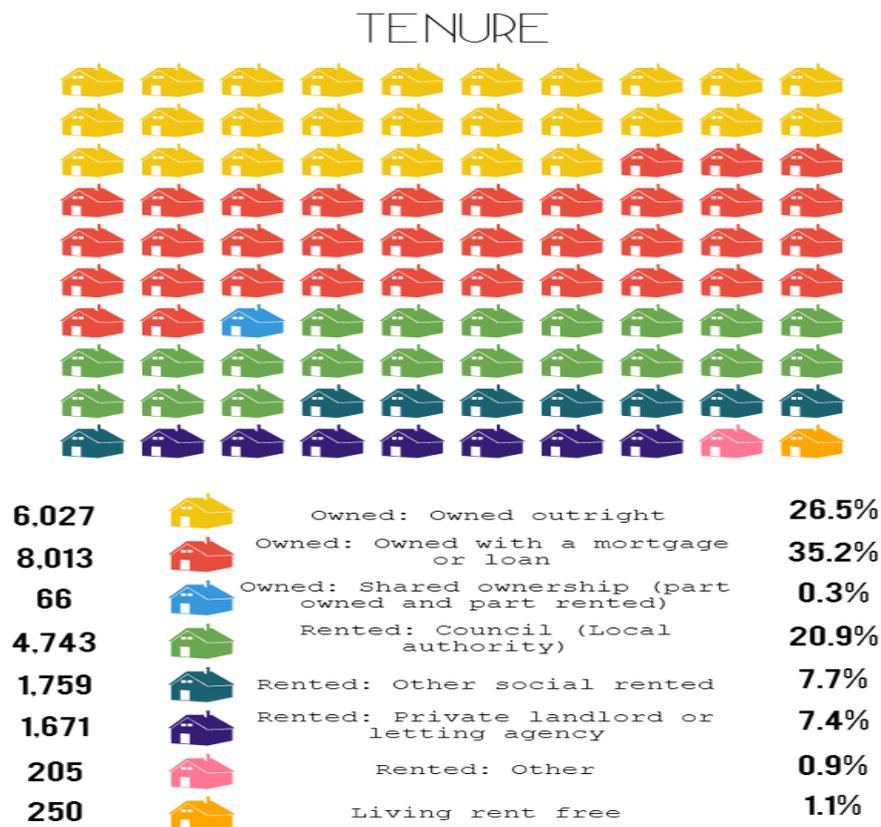
² Rapid Rehousing transition Plans: Guidance for Local Authorities & Partners – June 2018

2.0 The Local Housing Market Context

1.1 Overview of the Housing Market in Clackmannanshire

1.2 Stock Profile

According to the 2011 Census there are 22,734 households within Clackmannanshire, the illustration below shows these dwellings by tenure.



Source: Census 2011

The vast majority of properties in Clackmannanshire are owned, 61.7% (with a mortgage or owned outright). Almost 21% of homes are rented from the Council and 7.7% rent from other social landlords. The private rented sector is around 8.3% (private landlord or letting agency and rented) and 1.1% are living rent free.

Latest figures show that there are currently 4,941 Council properties and 1,919 RSL properties in Clackmannanshire.

In 2017/18 there were 424 Council re-lets and 130 RSL re-lets.

2.2 Supply and Demand for Social Housing

At 31 March 2018 there were 2,020 people on the waiting list for social housing, 185 of which registered as being homeless.

There are around 130 - 160 one bedroom council properties available to let each year. There are currently 541 people on the waiting list in need of a one bedroom property, 140 of those have been assessed as homeless.³

The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) cites:

Lack of small properties - especially for single, homeless people.

51% of all Council lets go to homeless applicants, the majority of which are single households. There are currently 558 people on the waiting list in need of a one bedroom property.

The majority of Council properties that become available each year have two bedrooms.

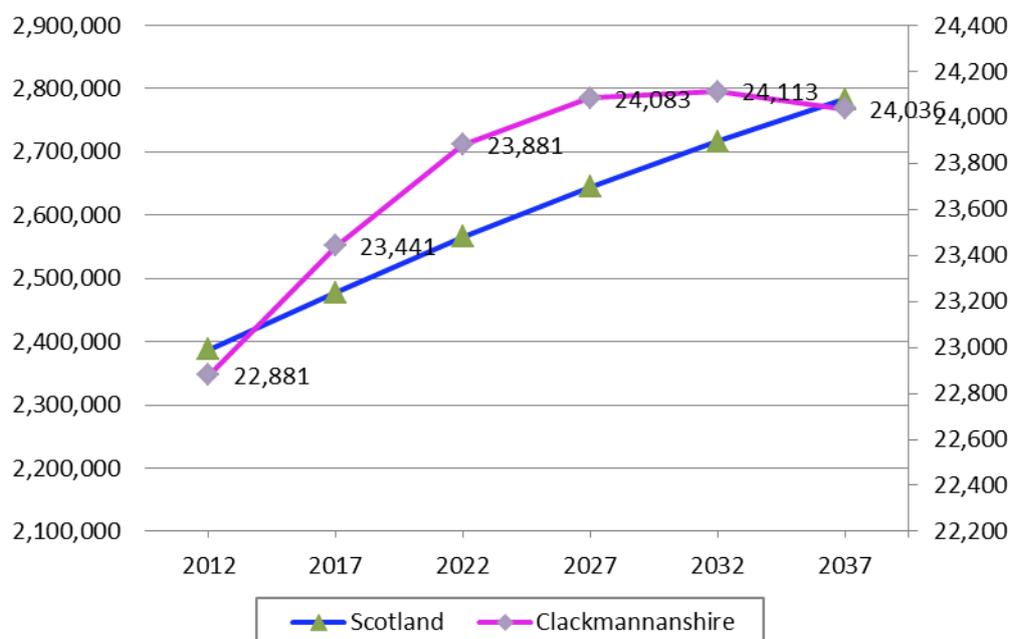
Overall, our stock profile consists of 27% 1 bed, 45% 2 bed, 25% 3 bed and 3% 4 bed. There are two 5 bedroom properties in the council's stock.

2.3 Household Projections

According to the 2012 household projections, the number of households is set to rise slowly from 22,881 in 2012 to 24,113 in 2037. This is a rise of just 5% in Clackmannanshire, compared to 17% rise across Scotland.

³ Council waiting list 10/12/18.

Household Projections 2012 -2037



Source: National Records of Scotland (NRS), Household projections 2012
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2.4 New Affordable housing as per housing supply target

The growth need for social rented housing is estimated at 53 per year until 2020 and then 15 new additional houses every year from 2021 until 2025. Based on the SHIP programme 2019 – 2024, this target should be achievable.

Annual Estimates of Future Affordable Housing Need and supply 2019 to 2024

	Annual estimates of future additional housing		
	Clackmannanshire		
	Supply Target	Proposed completions	% of Supply Target
2019/20	53	90	169%
2020/21	53	103	194%
2021/22	53	93	175%
2022/23	15	19	126%
2023/24	15	58	386%

The projected rate of completions exceeds the numbers estimated by the HNDA; that, coupled with a lower than average growth in households, suggests a potential oversupply issue in future years.

Future regeneration projects plan to take some of the older, unpopular Council stock (larger flats), out of circulation before replacing them with a fewer number of new, more suitable, homes. It is likely that around 60 properties will be taken out of social stock over this time frame.

We will review these plans to ensure compatibility with the rapid rehousing objective of reducing the time spent in temporary accommodation by homeless households.

The agreed position in Clackmannanshire is that the future provision of new affordable housing will be taken forward by our RSL partners; the Council has decided that no further provision will be made for council house building in its budget plans. Our RSL partners will therefore have an expanding role to play in offering settled accommodation to homeless households as their proportion of the high demand stock increases.

We will review, with our RSL partners, our allocations processes to ensure an increasing proportion of homeless households are housed by the RSLs.

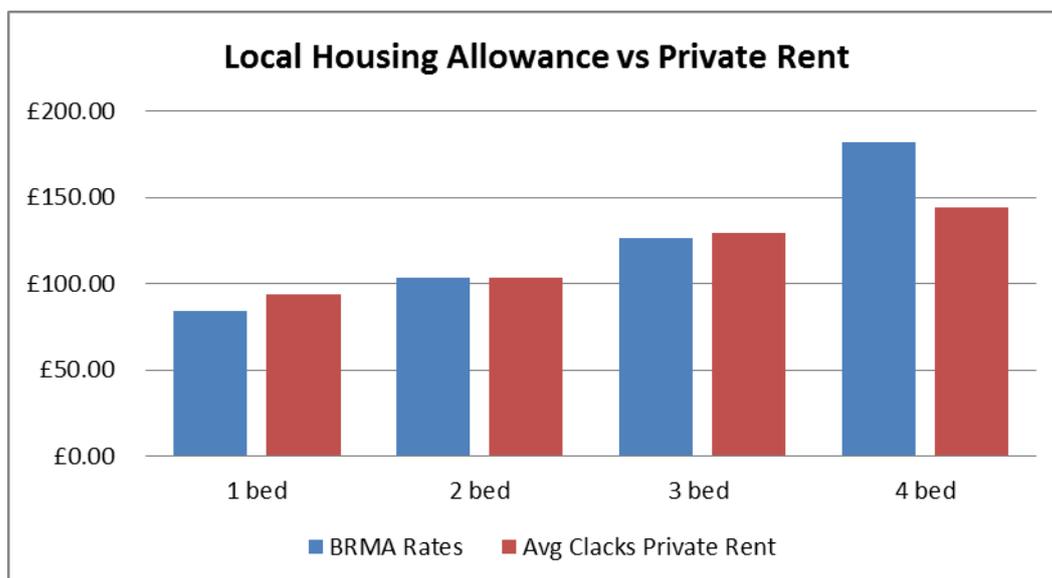
2.5 Private Rented Sector

Affordability of private sector rents in Clackmannanshire

The available evidence would suggest that affordability does not present as a significant barrier to accessing accommodation within the private rented sector. Average rental charges are broadly comparable to the local LHA rates for all sizes of flatted accommodation.

Beds	Private Rented LHA Rates December 2018	Private Rented (December 2018, Zoopla)	
	House/Flat	House	Flat
1	£83.91	£104.00	£83.00
2	£103.56	£107.00	£100.00
3	£126.58	£135.00	£124.00
4	£181.80	£150.00	£138.00
5+	£181.80		

The local housing allowance for two, three and four bedroom properties is £103, £126 and £181 respectively, making the private rented sector in Clackmannanshire affordable for a wide range of households.



Source: BRMA rates for Forth Valley and Zoopla, December 2018

2.6 Empty Homes

Our initial work suggests that there are relatively few empty properties within Clackmannanshire which could be brought into use to increase the supply to homeless household. Further work will be undertaken to explore this possibility however previous work brought just two properties back in to use.

3. **Homelessness Position**

3.1 Homeless Applications

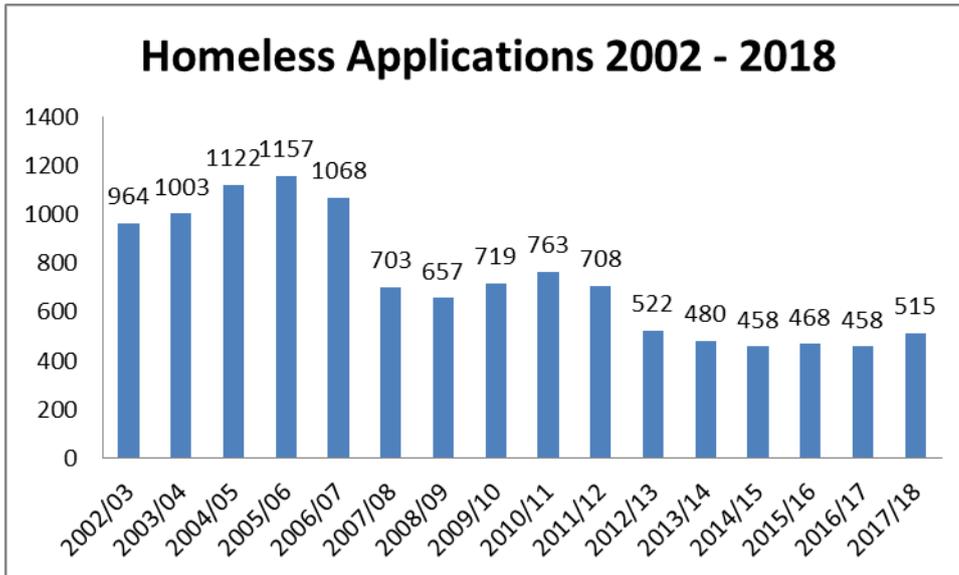
In line with national trends, homeless applications have, in the main, been reducing. From a peak application rate in 2005/6, of 1157, numbers have since fallen by approximately 60% to a low of 458 in 2016/17.

2017/18 saw a 12% increase to 515 application; the cause for this increase has yet to be identified and requires further exploration.

Clackmannanshire continues to have a very high, per capita, rate of homelessness. At 8.9/1000 it compares poorly to the national average of 6.6 and ranks as the third highest in Scotland. Clackmannanshire also fares poorly in relation to Severe and Multiple Disadvantage (SMD), again ranking as third highest.⁴

Graph: Homeless Applications

⁴ Developing a profile of Sever & Multiple Disadvantage in Scotland – Mandy Littlewood - Herriot Watt University – April 2018

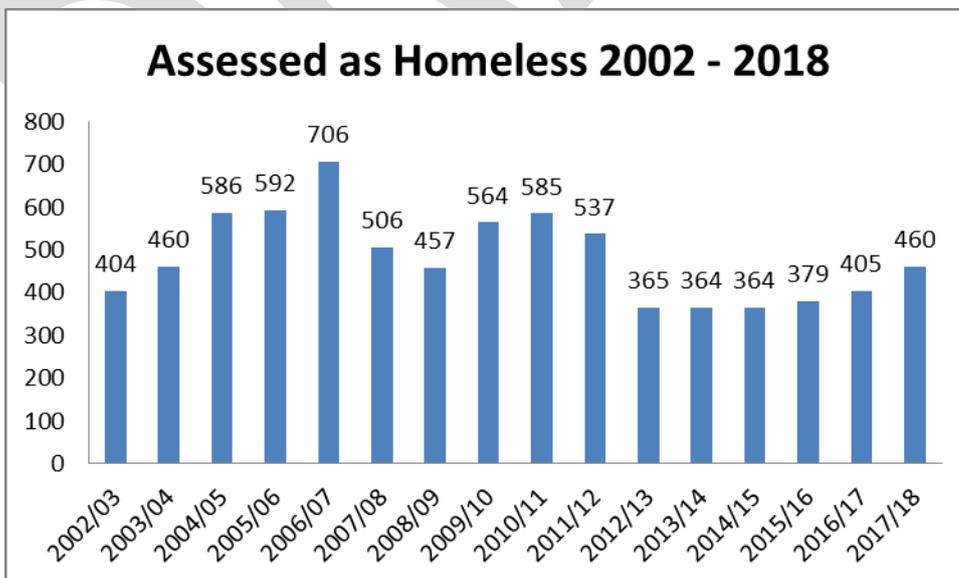


Source: Scottish Government HL1 data

3.2 Assessed as Homeless

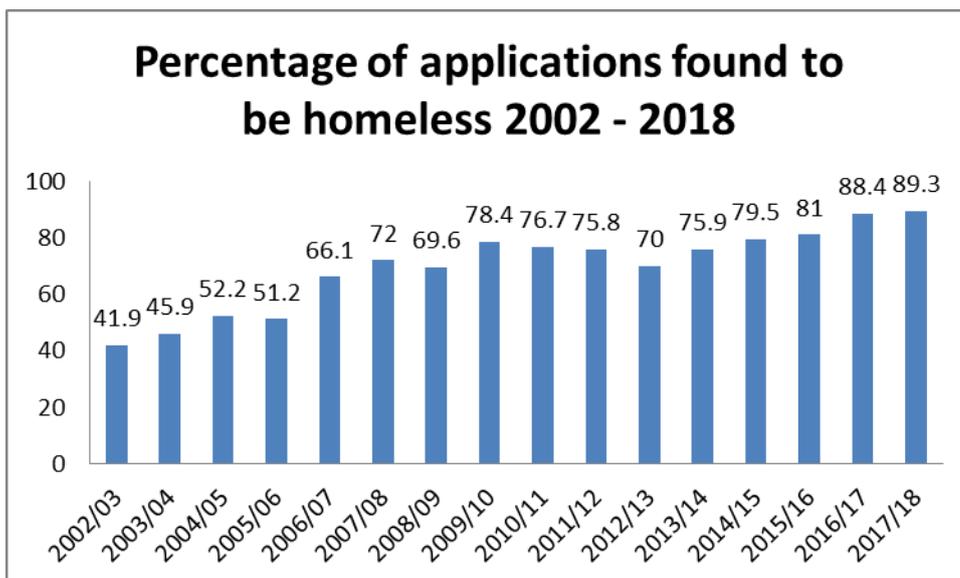
The chart below shows the number of applicants who, following the application of the statutory test, are found to be homeless or to be threatened with homelessness. The figures represent the number of households that the Council has a statutory duty to provide with suitable permanent accommodation.

The numbers remained fairly static during the period 2012/13 to 2015/16 but have risen over the last two years to 460 in 2017/18. This represents a 21% increase over the 2015/16 figure and is the same as in 2003/4. This situation will continue to be monitored.



Source: Scottish Government HL1 data

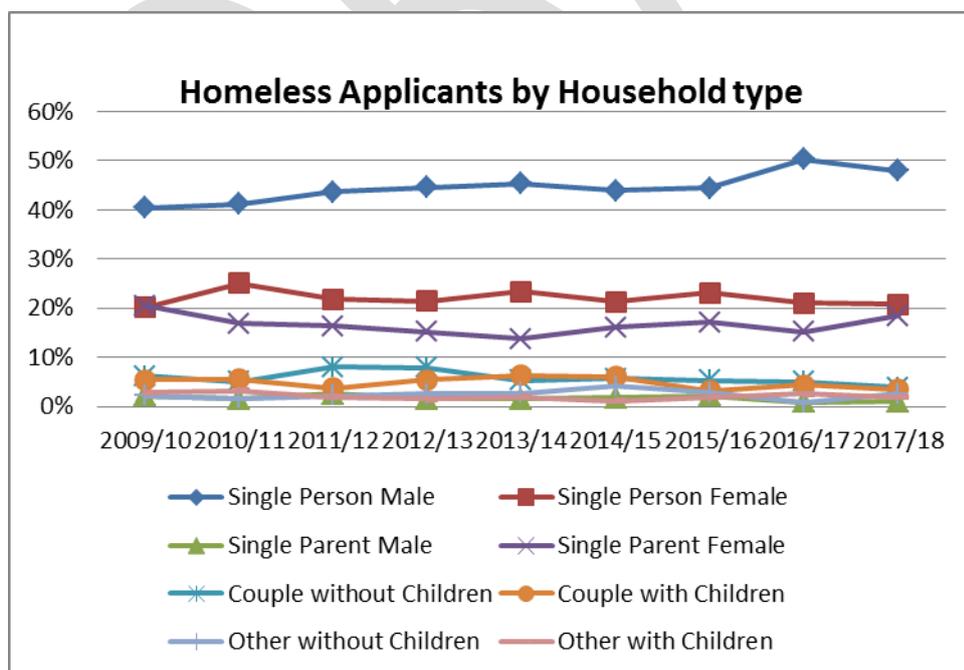
For the same period, the chart below shows the percentage of application found to be homeless or potentially homeless. The percentages have grown steadily over the years as presentations have fallen.



At 31/03/2018 there were 235 open homeless cases in Clackmannanshire.

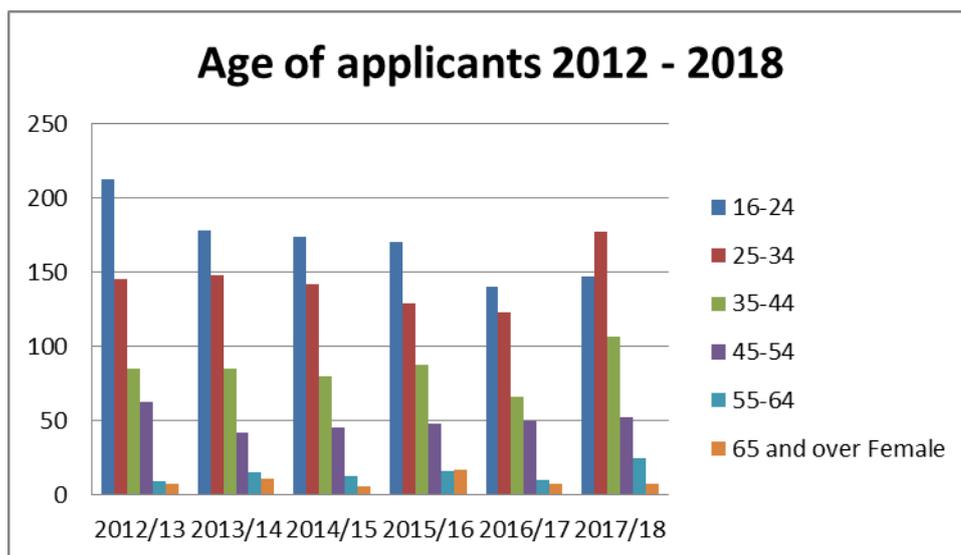
3.3 Profile of homeless applicants

69% of all homeless applicants are single people. 48% of all applicants are single males⁵. This is based on 2017/18 figures but the type of households applying has been consistent over the past 8 year period.



⁵ HL1 data 2017/18

3.4 Age of applicants 2017/18



29% of all homeless applicants are under 25, 34% 25-34, 20% 35-44, 10% 45-54 and only 7% of total applicants are 55 and over.

Applications by asylum seekers and immigrants account for less than 0.5% of applications in Clackmannanshire; this is not a significant issue. Similarly, “no recourse to public funds” cases are rare and previously, where there have been children involved, we have found our child protection powers adequate to enable us to offer some form of temporary housing solution.

In conclusion, the vast majority of homeless applicants being dealt with in Clackmannanshire are single and under the age of 35, with a significant proportion being under age 25. The size of permanent accommodation required to meet the housing needs of this group is in very high demand.

3.5 Temporary Accommodation

Homeless households in Clackmannanshire, if they require temporary accommodation, are housed in good quality, self-contained, furnished accommodation within the community. Moves between properties are minimised and occur only if a move is more suitable for the applicant e.g. closer to their family, schools etc or out of short term shared accommodation.

The Council does not operate any supported accommodation units, shelters or hostels and applicants transit through the allocations system as quickly as stock availability permits; there are no tenancy readiness barriers or tests operated by any social landlord within the area.

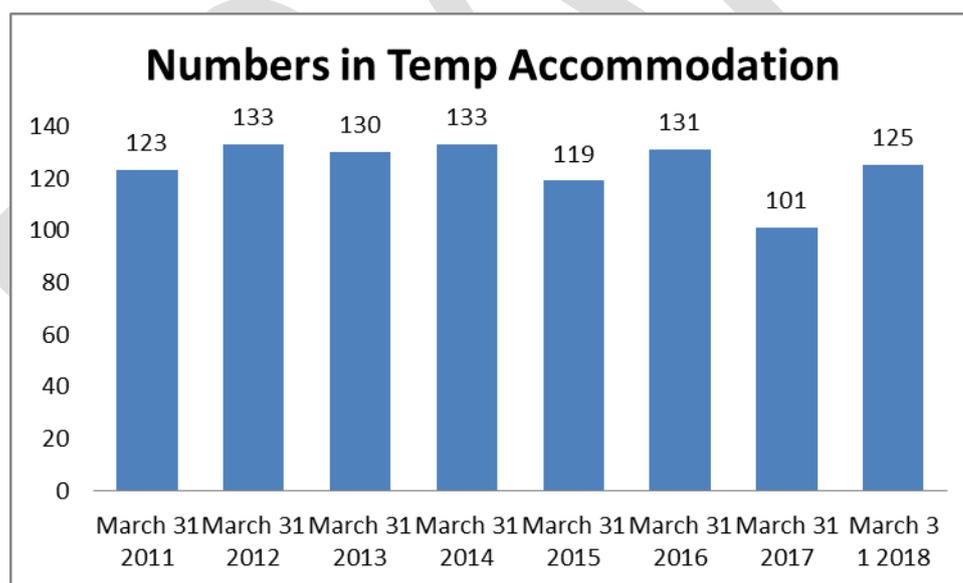
Concierge manned accommodation blocks provide added security and protection for vulnerable applicants e.g. those fleeing domestic abuse, but the concierge performs no other support function.

The number of people in temporary accommodation has remained fairly static over the past 8 years. In recent years Clackmannanshire Council has reduced the use of B & B rooms to virtually zero. However, a number of shared flats outwith the area are still used on occasion. Individuals have access to their own room but share facilities, this is charged at the same rate as B & B rooms.

Shared accommodation is typically used to deal with an immediate crisis situation and occupants will be moved to a more suitable location if this can be arranged to ensure they have easier access to support, family, etc.

Rising numbers of applications would suggest that demand for temporary accommodation may still be growing, though further analysis is required in this area. In any case, there is a need to grow the provision of temporary accommodation within the Council's boundaries so as to avoid the need for applicants to go to shared accommodation in Stirling. The shared accommodation is unpopular and is the type of temporary accommodation most likely to be declined by applicants. We will take steps to address this issue.

We will undertake further analysis to determine our current and short term needs.

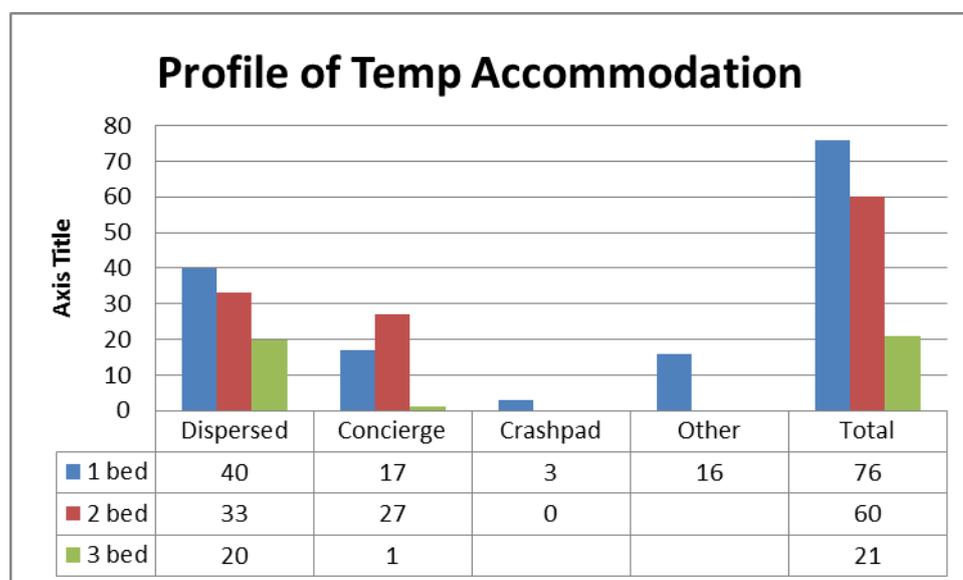


There are currently 155 properties available, the profile of current accommodation is:

- 93 dispersed lets, local authority furnished accommodation
- 47 self-contained, local authority furnished flats with concierge facilities
- Access to 15 furnished, shared, flats outwith the area. Note that these properties are used for a limited amount of time and are generally at the request of the applicant.

There are also 3 ‘Crash Pads’ available for emergency situations. These are intended to be used for a maximum of 1 night, until more suitable temporary accommodation can be arranged.

The size of property is shown on the graph below.



3.6 Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation

In November, 2018 the overall average length of stay in temporary accommodation was 90 days. This being broken down to an average of 106 days in LA furnished flats and 34 days in other accommodation (shared flats).

It should be noted that the average time in temporary accommodation figure can be heavily influenced by a small number of “exceptional” cases. For example, registered sex offenders can be exceptionally difficult to safely rehouse and can spend very significant times in temporary accommodation whilst we search for a permanent let which satisfies very specific and limiting specifications.

When moving on from temporary accommodation, occupants are asked to complete a satisfaction survey. These surveys consistently return positive feedback of over 85% of occupants happy with the temporary accommodation provided. From 185 replies, 101 were very satisfied and 56 fairly satisfied.

We will carry out further work to determine how to set suitable targets for the maximum time homeless households stay in temporary accommodation. However, we would urge some caution in the usage of such a target as many households elect not to use our temporary accommodation, at least not in the short term. Many will only spend part of the time they spend being homeless in temporary accommodation.

A more useful target may be to work to a maximum time from presentation to the provision of a suitable permanent housing solution, though, even that target is not without its own issues.

We would ask for further guidance on this matter, to ensure consistency between authorities. Any simple target that does not take account of the quality and effectiveness of the applicant's final housing outcome may tend to encourage practices which are effective at reducing time spent but less effective at ensuring long term sustainability and customer wellbeing.

3.7 Weekly Rental Charge

Clackmannanshire Council currently operates a full cost recovery model to cover the costs of providing temporary accommodation and to pay for service development and improvements. The rental charge is the same for all temporary accommodation and is currently set at £383.00 per week. This charge is subject to annual review.

Although the overwhelming majority of homeless households are eligible for full Housing Benefit to cover these costs, it is recognised that the high rental charge could act as a barrier to accessing temporary accommodation for those in employment or as a barrier to accessing employment for those already living in temporary accommodation. The Council makes use of the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme to assist persons who find themselves in this situation.

DHP can be used to top-up the Housing Benefit (HB) payable for applicants when they are unable to cover the rental charge from their benefit. The individual must have an entitlement to a minimal amount of HB to be eligible for assistance but, given the high rental charge, our calculations suggest that a single person, under age 25, would have to have earnings in excess of £33,000 per annum before no help could be provided.

We will review our practices to ensure all parties are aware of the available assistance and that the process of accessing such assistance is simple and straightforward.

3.8 Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping has not been considered a major issue within Clackmannanshire, however, with 45 people (8.9% of applicants) reporting that they slept rough at some point in the 3 months preceding their application the problem is not insignificant. We also appreciate that we may not be aware of every such case of rough sleeping and that the impact upon individuals forced to sleep rough will be significant.

We will work closely with our partners across all sectors, including Police Scotland, to ensure that they are aware of the assistance we can provide and how to promptly access our services.

Officers are also aware that many homeless applicants will have spent a great deal of time 'sofa surfing' between family and friends. In order to fully address this issue, the available data requires to be examined in more detail to

establish how prevalent this 'hidden homeless' issue is locally. It is intended to carry out this action early in the transition period to develop a broader view of the extent of 'hidden homelessness' across Clackmannanshire.

3.9 Repeat Homelessness

The 2017/18 statistical data confirms a repeat presentation rate of 3.88% which is below the national average of 5.28%. However, it should be noted that the statistics, as presented, only represent repeat applications made within a one year time frame; frontline officers believe the issue is more significant than the statistics would at first glance suggest.

Our initial analysis would confirm that this view is accurate. In scrutinising the data for the period April 2016 to November 2018 we have found 151 cases where the applicant has presented more than once. Indeed, we have identified one applicant who has presented on 5 separate occasions during that period. The official measure would have predicted only around 40 repeat applications during that time frame.

This would support officers impressions that a large proportion of officer time is spent dealing with a small, but significant, number of disadvantaged clients who cycle around public sector crisis provision without ever really finding assistance to tackle the underlying issues they face.

Further work will be undertaken to better understand the reasons for these multiple presentations and to determine the measures that can be taken to prevent such occurrences.

4.0 **Housing Options**

4.1 Housing Options Shop

Clackmannanshire operates a dedicated Housing Options team and has a specific shop-front office to deal with persons requiring housing assistance. The PREVENT 1 data, however, tells us that in excess of 95% of approaches to this service result in a homeless application being lodged which is well above the national average of almost 45%.

Further work will be undertaken to better understand the reasons for this variance though it is clear, from discussions with frontline staff that they understand the requirement not to gatekeep and to continue to work with households after presentation to find alternate positive housing outcomes.

4.2 Allocations

With 216 allocations in 2017/18, 51% of Clackmannanshire Council's allocations are made to homeless households. A further 34, households are

housed in the RSL sector, 26% of allocations and 10 more find accommodation in the private rented sector.

The IndigoHouse market analysis report of June 2018 suggests that allocations to homeless households within the social rented sector should increase by 49% to 62% to tackle demand and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation. We will carry out an analysis of the data to more fully understand the effectiveness and implications of such an approach.

However, initial investigations would suggest that this approach may not prove to be fruitful.

Clackmannanshire Council operates a needs based allocations policy consisting of 4 separate bands of applicants. This policy was developed to help tackle the high levels of homeless presentations experienced some years ago, where applicants reported that the previous, unresponsive, policy forced households to lodge a homeless application if they were to have any chance of being housed.

- Band 1 – 1st Priority – Management issues (demolition, etc.)
- Band 2 – 2nd Priority – Homeless Households
- Band 3 – 3rd Priority – Applicant's with significant housing need
- Band 4 – No Priority – Applicant's without need

Almost all allocations are made to applicants from Band 2 or 3, with Band 1 rarely used and ordinarily reserved to move people between accommodation units so as to free up high demand properties.

The 424 Council allocations made in 2017/18 break down as follows:

Category	Band	Number	Note
Homeless	2	216	
Insecurity	3	85	Applicant has no right to accommodation and has been asked to leave
Medical	3	72	Current accommodation is unsuitable because of medical requirement – unreasonable to continue to occupy
Overcrowding	3	32	Current accommodation is overcrowded – unreasonable to continue to occupy
Syrian VPR Scheme	1	8	Direct let to meet housing obligations towards refugee families under resettlement program
Direct let	1	7	Approved to promote release of larger accommodation
Throughcare	1	2	Provided under corporate parenting responsibilities and to avoid young person needing to apply as homeless
Armed Forces	1	1	Allocated in fulfilment of our obligations under the Armed Forces Covenant
No Need	4	1	Technically no need – however potential overcrowding acting as a barrier to the family adopting a second child.

An examination of the Band 3 allocations reveals that the circumstances of virtually all of the households were such that they would have been considered as statutorily homeless, if they had so presented. In some

respects this validates the objectives of the needs based allocations policy, i.e. households in significant housing need can be confident their needs will be met, within a reasonable period, without the need to lodge a homeless application.

With virtually all allocations already going to households who are, or would be considered, homeless there appears little scope for change. Increasing the percentage of lets to those who have been found homeless may simply force others in significant need to present as homeless if they, once again, come to believe that, that, is the only way to have their needs met.

Officers work closely with homeless households to ensure that they are housed in accommodation which is best suited to their needs. The objective is to focus on tenancy sustainment. Households are, however, advised of all properties that they are matched to and are encouraged to discuss the suitability of the property. It is common for properties to be passed over, with the applicant's agreement, if it is believed a more suitable, and sustainable, offer can be made at a later date.

In these circumstances the applicant may elect to stay in temporary accommodation for a longer period, and have their homeless case open for longer, but the permanent accommodation they move into may, for example, be closer to their support networks increasing the likelihood that it will be successful.

The Council, in some situations, will also allocate larger properties than a person initially qualifies for. For example, a 2 bed property may be allocated a single person, especially if they have access to children. Also, if a person is happy to move into a low demand area, they could be allocated a larger property than they qualify for.

5.0 Tenancy Sustainment

It is the objective of, both, our homeless officers and our tenancy management officers to promote and work towards successful and sustainable tenancies. To that end we have some experience of converting temporary tenancies to permanent lets. Historically these conversions have occurred in more difficult and complex cases where disturbing the applicant's environment is thought likely to undo the work already done or underway.

We have found this to be an effective measure and will explore how we can make this a more common practice. There are practical difficulties involved, principally involving the cost and time to re-provision another temporary accommodation unit to replace the one being converted.

Similarly, we have previous experience of working to a "Housing First" model, though not, at the time, described as such. This is a model we already use in housing our "looked after" children who receive wrap around support from our Social Services colleagues. We will continue to work to this model whenever it is thought appropriate by our partner agencies.

6.0 Support Provision

6.1 Housing Support

Our Homeless officers are allocated to working with specific homeless applicants during their time within the homeless system and there is a smooth transition to our tenancy management teams when they are allocated a tenancy. Our tenancy management officers are allocated small “patches” to work in and are encouraged to know their tenants well, to react to their support needs and to identify and deal with issues at as early a point as possible, their goal is to maximise tenancy sustainment.

A small team of registered Housing Support Officers is available who work with a number of clients with higher needs during their time in temporary accommodation and into their new tenancy.

We estimate 75 cases annually are experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage (SMD).

6.2 Complex Support Needs

There are a small number of people who have complex needs and providing suitable support can prove challenging. In order to fully support the people who need it most the Council will carry out analysis of existing homeless data to establish the level of information currently collected regarding the range of needs to be addressed. This information will be crucial to ensure that the correct type and level of support is provided to vulnerable people, in a manner which is appropriate to their needs.

In addressing the support needs of victims of domestic support, it is important the response is ‘victim driven’. The needs and wants of the victim must be central to the support provided, this may include the support to remain in their tenancies, if a person chooses to do so and we will work with our partners to explore what can be done to make this achievable.

In drafting this document we have spoken in depth to our partners across the statutory and voluntary sector regarding the needs of our clients. This has included the strategic planning groups, or representatives of these groups, dealing with Community Justice, Adult Protection, Child Protection, Community Wellbeing, Community Safety and Employability. We acknowledge that we all work with the same small group of clients who present with the most complex problems. The partners all share a sense of frustration that we are resource bound and, mostly, only able to deal with the presenting crisis, patching the client up and sending them on their way in the certain knowledge that they will appear in crises elsewhere.

Most people in Clackmannanshire enjoy healthy and productive lives. However, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ranks Clackmannanshire as the 9th Scottish local authority out of 32, in terms of our

proportionate share of deprivation. However, the number of very vulnerable people in Clackmannanshire (per head of population) is among the highest rates in Scotland. Wide ranging proxy trauma indicators demonstrate that our rates of extreme vulnerability is more similar to Glasgow and Dundee than authorities with similar economic profiles to Clackmannanshire. This is evidenced by robust long term statistical trends in child protection, suicides, teenage pregnancies, reconvictions, domestic abuse etc.

Responding to adversity and trauma is an important part of our approach to resolving the cycles of suffering. These cycles of suffering are accelerated by exclusion, deprivation, stigma, misuse of alcohol & other substances, mental health problems, relational poverty, unhealthy gender constructs and low job density. Low job density creates stiff competition for local entry level employment and without real prospect of employment locks chaos and hopelessness into the lives of some people in Clackmannanshire. Transport costs and availability can also inhibit access to entry level employment outside the area.

We are working jointly to develop a proposal to work with these clients so as to create lasting solutions which will improve client, and community, wellbeing, reduce the need for crisis interventions, reduce public sector costs, free services up to offer earlier interventions, reduce homelessness and reduce the demand for temporary accommodation

Transition Plan

The current analysis, based upon the data available, suggests that Clackmannanshire Council is already working to many of the recommended principles. There are a number of areas, however, where we feel we can review our practice to improve the experience of service users and number of areas where our understanding of the issues are not as well formed as we would like.

Our initial findings, however, point to us having limited, immediate, levers to influence the time homeless persons stay in temporary accommodation or wait for a suitable allocation of permanent accommodation. We do, however, believe that there is scope for us to take earlier and more effective action to prevent persons entering the systems in the first place, and to prevent those with the greatest need experiencing repeated and numerous episodes of homelessness.

We believe that this action would, not only, have a significant impact upon homelessness but would also be of significant benefit to our community planning partners and to our communities in general.

Action 1: Develop a comprehensive, long term, support service designed to divert service users with significant need away from crisis.

We will develop an innovative support project designed to work, for as long as necessary, often with a very light touch, with service users who currently cycle around our various crisis intervention services. Sharing many operating principles of GIRFEC and the named person scheme it will provide service users a trusted contact whose role will be to ensure crisis triggers are identified and early preventative action taken.

Additionally, workers will identify and procure services from a range of sectors to enable the individual to move towards greater stability in their lives.

Potential clients of the service will be identified by our community planning partners with a view to focusing resources to those in greatest need regardless of where, and to which partner, they present.

The project will be designed to be agile, learning and adapting to successes and failures and identifying the interventions which provide the greatest benefit. Early discussions have taken place with Stirling University who are interested in helping us develop our “learning” toolkit and developing evaluation models.

The information gleaned will be shared with our partners to help develop our interventions and to focus third sector bidding activities to areas of proven demand.

The objective is to divert those current clients, who place a significant burden on existing statutory services, away from crisis, thus providing these services the breathing space required to review their activity so as to provide better value.

Ultimately, of course, the activity should benefit the individual service user, the community at large, statutory services and achieve a reduction in repeat homelessness.

In addition to the above, we plan to also focus a significant proportion of our activity on young people who, having left the school system, are at risk of becoming the next generation of high needs clients. Building on the successful trauma informed approach currently operating within Clackmannanshire’s schools and the CoSLA award winning Young Parents Project we will, again, work with clients over a longer period, taking action to prevent crisis’ from occurring and enabling young people to meet their potential rather than falling into damaging cycles of need.

Again, the service is designed to work alongside existing services with a view to minimising the occurrence of crisis, ameliorating the impact of crisis and ensuring the best outcomes for the client over the longer term. In addition to reducing crisis led demand we would hope to see reducing levels of offending, anti-social behaviour, drug related deaths and improving community wellbeing.

Given so many of our homeless applicants are under age 25 we believe this project would also have a significant impact upon homelessness and the requirement to provide temporary accommodation.

It is not possible for us to set up this project without external assistance, the resources do not exist and the cost will be significant for a small area. However, we believe the impact will also be significant and that there will be much to learn from this shared approach which can be shared across the public services in Scotland.

Action 2 : Continue Housing Options approach to homeless prevention

The Housing Options approach to allocations and homelessness applications was implemented by Clackmannanshire Council in 2014. This approach has proven successful in addressing the needs of applicants and ensuring the most vulnerable applicants are prioritised. The intention is to continue with this approach.

Action 3: Maintain current 'person centred' letting approach to homeless applicants

Clackmannanshire Council's Allocation Policy is currently being reviewed to encompass the recent legislative changes introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2014 which cover. This policy supports the Housing Options approach and allows for a person-centred focus when allocating properties.

The level of LA allocations to statutory homeless applicants stands at 51% but our analysis suggests that many more people housed under the needs based allocations policy could also be considered to be homeless.

It may not be achievable, or desirable, to increase the percentage level of lets to homeless households, to that suggested in the Rapid Rehousing market analysis. Doing so could have an overall negative effect upon homelessness.

We will carry out further analysis on this topic.

Action 4: Maintain consistent quality/quantity of temporary accommodation

Feedback from occupants of the temporary accommodation highlights that the quality is regarded as being high. There are some properties which were highlighted by the Housing Regulator as in need of improvements. These properties are funded via the General Fund, therefore funding of repairs is not a priority at present. It is intended to review the use of these properties during the transition period, with a potential view of moving some into HRA responsibility or selling them.

Action 5: Review Temporary Accommodation

There are 159 properties available for temporary accommodation across Clackmannanshire. The majority of these properties are fit for purpose. However, there are some properties which need some improvements to bring them up to SHQS and some which could be ideal for recategorising in terms of the level of support they provide in order to help reduce the use of bed and breakfast for temporary accommodation.

It is intended to review the temporary accommodation to ensure it is;

- Fit for purpose,
- Meets the necessary repair standards,
- Addresses the needs of the client group in terms of support needs, and
- Is of the relevant property size.

It is also important to review the length of time occupants remain in temporary accommodation and the reasons for this. To establish this, information will need to be obtained in relation to;

- Length of time spent in temporary accommodation
- Type of temporary accommodation
- Scale of occupant's needs
- Length of time in relation to scale of needs

Action 6: Evaluate existing support services to establish gaps in provision

Housing support is offered to all homeless applicants who meet the criteria for assistance. Work is required to be carried out to establish the level of support required to be accessed for people who have more than one support need, particularly in relation to provide a 'Housing First' model.

To ensure that support services cover all tenures, the Council is keen to develop a robust method to identify accurate levels of antisocial behaviour in the private sector, particularly making effective use of the information shared through our Community Safety processes and information sharing.

At this time we are concerned that private landlords first reaction to allegations of difficult behaviours from their tenant might be to bring the tenancy to end. We will explore whether this is a correct assumption and methods to intervene.

Action 7: Develop effective intervention for 'high risk' young people & families

It is a generally accepted view that a majority of people who have a range of complex support needs as an adult, experienced difficult childhoods and may have been through the care system. Housing Services feel it is important to engage with young people who may be 'high risk' of developing negative behaviours resulting in the need for a complex support system due to their

childhood experiences as early as possible. This will involve working closely with Education Services, Child Care and Health to develop protocols for providing relevant support and guidance. Families and young people already known to the Council through the GIRFEC model will be the initial target but this approach should also enable other vulnerable individuals to be identified and supported.

Action 8: Explore Options for 'Housing First' support model

In order to fully scope and develop a 'Housing First' model of housing a cross organisational working group is required to be established to ensure all relevant bodies are involved in the discussion.

Further work will be required to identify people who currently have complex needs, and are willing to work with support workers, who would be suitable for a 'Housing First' support model.

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Clackmannanshire Council Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

Draft Action Plan December, 2018

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY/INVOLVEMENT	TIMESCALE	STATUS
1 Continue Housing Options approach to homeless prevention			
Continue to provide Housing Options to all applicants	Clackmannanshire Council – Housing Services	Ongoing	
Examine data to establish level of 'sofa surfing'	As above	2019/20	
Participate in Tayside, Central & Fife Housing Options HUB	As above	Ongoing	
Explore options of using SSST to discharge duty	As above	2019/20	
Establish levels of homeless / repeat homelessness due to people receiving a custodial sentence or recently been released from prison	As above	2019/20	
2 Maintain current 'person centred' letting approach to homeless/those in significant need			
Review policies and procedures to support 'person centred' approach	Clackmannanshire Council – Housing Services	Ongoing	Allocation policy currently being reviewed
3 Maintain consistent quality/quantity of temporary accommodation			
Ensure levels of temp are maintained if any are removed from available pool	Clackmannanshire Council – Housing Services	Ongoing	
Ensure cleaning/repairs standards continue to be maintained	As above	Ongoing	
Continue monitoring temp satisfaction levels	As above	Ongoing	
4 Review Temporary Accommodation			

Explore the option of providing concierge services to additional blocks	Clackmannanshire Council – Housing Services	March, 2020	
Explore reasons why people are remaining in temp for longer periods	As above	2019/20	
Explore options to recategorise selected temporary accommodation to supported accommodation	As above	March, 2020	
Review use of temporary accommodation funded by General Fund	As above	March, 2020	
Review use of Hallpark facility	As above	2019/20	
Minimise use of B&B accommodation	As above	Ongoing	
5 Evaluate existing support services to establish gaps in provision			
Quantify support services to fully meet current needs – covering all aspects of support such as housing support, mental health, criminal justice, etc	Clackmannanshire Council – Housing Services & Social Services	March, 2019	
Quantify support services to address ‘Housing First’ needs	As above	March, 2019	
Review support required to enable a person to move into mainstream accommodation	As above	March, 2019	
Explore the cost benefits on tenancy sustainment of furniture packs	As above	2019/20	
Review access to support services to ensure those in most need receive help in times of crisis	As above	2019/20	
Establish robust method to identify level of antisocial behaviour in the private sector	As above		
6 Develop effective intervention for ‘high risk’ young people & families			
Develop protocols in partnership with Education Services, Child Care and Health to provide support and guidance to families and young people already known to the Council	Clackmannanshire Council/RSLs/Clackmannanshire & Stirling Health & Social Care	2020/21	

through the GIRFEC	Partnership		
Develop procedures to enable other vulnerable individuals to be identified and supported	As above	2020/21	
7 Explore Options for 'Housing First' support model			
Establish cross organisational working group to explore the needs of 'high tariff' cases	Clackmannanshire Council/RSLs/Clackmannanshire & Stirling Health & Social Care Partnership	2019/20	
Develop procedures to ensure that support is provided appropriate to the person's needs, irrespective of which tenure they live in	As above	2019/20	

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