

## **Fix homelessness in Scotland? Aye we can...**

### **Collaborating with People with Lived Experience**

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***Update to:***

Scottish Government Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group

**v.4 | Oct 2017 – DRAFT**

## 1. OUR STARTING POINT

- 1.1 The Action Group is committed to collaborating with people in Scotland who have current or recent experience of all forms of homelessness. Folding this unique insight into an already strong combination of political commitment, professional knowledge and new resources will create the best conditions for the right kind of change.
- 1.2 The benefits of *coproducing* change are increasingly demonstrated. And if our personal empowerment is driven by our belief in our own ability to influence events, then we accept that this includes ideas of challenging assumptions of power, sharing information and creating environments where people can act on the issues that they feel are important.
- 1.3 We recognise that people want involved in different ways, at different places, for different reasons and investing different amounts of time – as experts, advisors, commentators, critics, reality-checkers, innovators and problem-solvers. Where people do want involved in this programme, we will create an easy route and clear opportunity. We also recognise that many people will not want to collaborate with us at all.
- 1.4 Involving people meaningfully needs a strong purpose with a clear explanation on how intelligence and expertise will be used. The Ending Homelessness Together Programme and Fund provides the ideal base for a high profile participation project - getting as far and wide as possible, triggering debate and creating momentum for people to feel part of change.
- 1.5 Our experience of involving people at systems/policy level has shown 2 broad motivations: (i) those that assume personal responsibility (even self-blame) for their situation and want to help others have an easier time. And (ii) those that are angry with ‘the system’; likely to understand their homelessness as a consequence of broader structural and systemic issues and who understandably use initiatives like this as an outlet for blame and accountability.
- 1.6 The Action Group will want to ensure we collaborate with the fullest range of perspectives including creating space for hard experiences and motivations. This paper sets out a 6-month plan to kick-start this collaboration, with initial recommendations to sustain it over the 5 year Scottish Government Ending Homelessness Together Programme and Fund.

## **2. MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- 2.1 The participation activity proposed in section 5 will invite support from the broadest range of partners across the homelessness sector. There are very few people not engaged with public, third or independent sector services in some way, although many will frequent and favour a service or sector over others.
- 2.2 The Local Authority Housing Options Hubs will be a key point of reference and the Scottish Government's role to support this will be needed. The third sector - especially those with specialist, protected characteristic and/or high 'footfall' services - will be important allies, facilitators and hosts for this programme. Shelter Scotland has already committed their support; we will invite further pledges of support at the Stakeholder Event on 2 November.
- 2.3 The 'Aye We Can' strapline was adopted by the Poverty Alliance for Scotland's Challenge Poverty Week and comes from a larger 'talking about poverty' programme led by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and Frameworks Institute; international experts helping frame public discourse on social problems. The Institute and Crisis also researched and recommended reframing homelessness to counter the "fatalistic and defeatist view" that is widespread. With poverty the key driver of homelessness in Scotland, we propose to use this accessible strapline and make the right connections with national anti-poverty initiatives. Fix Homelessness in Scotland? Aye We Can...

## **3. OUR APPROACH**

- 3.1 We will make clear our reasons for inviting people's involvement and make sure we understand people's own reasons too. We will commit to feeding back all change, no matter how small, resulting from that involvement; this is important to reduce 'tokenism', increase satisfaction and ensure that there are clear benefits for the person offering their time.
- 3.2 We will adopt an asset-based approach that uses the strengths, skills and social connections that people already have. We will do this by creating and promoting accessible materials that invite participation in a number of different places and in different ways that are sensitive to people's time, skills and preferences (illustrated in *appx 1: Getting Involved*).

- 3.3 It helps to provide a ‘direction of travel’ so that people have a point of reference - this increases focus, encourages informed perspectives and reduces the risk of reactionary or ‘regressive’ solutions. The international evidence review conducted by Heriot-Watt for the JRF UK Anti-Poverty Strategy provides a great basis for this; recently adopted in Glasgow and coproduced into an easy-language version. This could be used along the lines of:

*Where homelessness has not been prevented, we want every single person affected to have an urgent response in Scotland that is:*

- **Local:** the choice to be supported in your *own* home as part of a local community so that we can all live, work and use services in ‘ordinary’ not homeless places.
- **Tailored:** support that is flexible, immediate and for as long as you need it. Respecting your ability to build your own life and making sure choice and control is in your hands.
- **Realistic:** helping you tackle the financial hardship that often causes homelessness is as important as providing other types of support.

#### 4. KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY

- 4.1 To allow for a basic comparison, we will shadow the lines of enquiry outlined in the Heriot-Watt University research commissioned by Social Bite: *“Eradicating Core Homelessness in Scotland’s Four Largest Cities”*. As this report is based on practitioners’ responses, this can highlight areas of similarity and difference in priorities and perspectives.
- 4.2 In addition, the Action Group wants to create a framework for the following change:
- Reduce rough sleeping this winter 2017-18
  - End rough sleeping in Scotland by 2022
  - Transform the use of temporary accommodation
  - End homelessness in Scotland
- 4.3 We worked with our existing ‘lived experience’ group to simplify these priorities into the following lines of enquiry. These will be consistently used across all participation activity and further broken down and simplified for survey formats:

## 1. Preventing Homelessness

<p><i>Thinking about your own most recent experience of homelessness...</i></p> <p><b>Q1a:</b> What are the 2 most important things that would have helped you to avoid it?</p>	<p><i>Can you remember:</i></p> <p><b>The things happening around you:</b> e.g. housing lists, options, rent arrears, benefit problems, jobs?</p> <p><b>The things happening to you personally:</b> maybe worries about your health, relationship breakdown?</p>
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## 2. Ending Rough Sleeping

<p><b>Q2a:</b> If we started today, what is the most important thing we can do to make sure no one has to sleep rough?</p> <p><b>Q2b:</b> Is there anything that needs to happen during winter? Or should there be the same response all year round?</p>	<p><i>Thinking about:</i></p> <p>Things we're not doing but need to start?  Things we do sometimes but not enough?  Things we try to do but need to get better at?</p>
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## 3. Tackling Homelessness

<p><i>There are people who are homeless in Scotland but haven't slept rough.</i></p> <p><b>Q3a:</b> When someone finds themselves having a housing crisis, what do you think is the very first thing they need?</p> <p><b>Q3b:</b> What else do people need – services or support?</p>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Maybe they sleep on friends/family's couches, have to leave home as they're not safe, or are in temporary accommodation.</p> <p><i>Thinking about</i></p> <p><b>The things happening around them:</b> e.g. housing lists, options, rent arrears, benefit problems, jobs</p> <p><b>The things happening to them personally:</b> maybe worries about your health, relationship breakdown</p>
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## 4. Temporary Accommodation

<p><i>Temporary Accommodation should protect people from rough sleeping and be a short term, safe solution until a home is secured.</i></p> <p><b>Q4a:</b> Have you seen (or had) temporary accommodation that was really good and really helped people? Tell us about that (or if never, what <i>should</i> it look like)?</p> <p><b>Q4b:</b> What would be your best bit of advice to those trying to make all TA as good as that?</p>	<p><i>Thinking about:</i></p> <p>Furnished Flats, B&amp;B, hostels, supported accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How quick to get a place</li> <li>• How easy to get a place</li> <li>• Length of stay</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Sense of safety and security</li> </ul>
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## 5. OUR METHOD

5.1 We will undertake (i) direct fieldwork, as outlined below; *and* (ii) a review of recent reports (< 6 months) from across the sector which have consulted or been coproduced with people experiencing homelessness. From the key lines of enquiry, we will use a range of participation methods, directly and in collaboration with key organisations across Scotland:

### **Survey:** Online

- Using LimeSurvey and email networks to disseminate the plain-language questions across our networks and the networks of other organisations across the Action Group;
- Creating social media and website versions of the survey questions; inviting key collaborators to promote and host online survey with data returned to GHN.

### **Survey:** Offline

- Paper copies of the survey produced and sent to key collaborating organisations with data returned to GHN for analysis and reporting;
- Existing volunteers with peer research training engaged; inviting and supporting people with lived experience to participate in conducting as well as responding to surveys.

### **Focus Groups:** Targeted

- A series of focus groups, hosted by key collaborators and targeting specific characteristics and experiences – including young people, older people, gender sensitive, LGBT, people sleeping rough, New Scots and people leaving prison;
- GHN will produce a template and guidance detailing the focus group process and disseminate to some target collaborating organisations to deliver in their own service. This increases our reach in the short time span available, while supporting the reliability of data being captured;
- Focus Groups will either be delivered by the host organisation, or the GHN team, as follows:
  - Between 8-12 participants with experience of homelessness at each session
  - Multiple sessions per target area, during the target timescale
  - Solutions focused, appreciative inquiry approach

### **Open Space Events: Appreciative Inquiry**

- We will hold one larger, open access and open space event in each of the 5 regional HUB areas; members of the Action Group invited to attend for first-hand accounts if useful;
- Appreciative inquiry is a practical technique for purposeful change that identifies the best of 'what is' to pursue 'what could be'. It embraces the principles that focusing on what's working achieves more and does it faster, and more sustainably, than solving deficits or problems.

### **Further Involvement:**

- During the early stages, we expect to connect with a smaller group of people who will want to stay involved or have more meaningful involvement. We will create further opportunities for:
  - Writing and editing for social media, including blogs and project updates;
  - Partnering staff in 'formal' meetings and events, including Housing Options Hub meetings, Action Group presentations and feedback;
  - Involved in planning, organising and facilitating focus groups within homelessness services and regional open space events;
  - Using other ideas and skills that people bring.

## **6. INCENTIVE TO GET INVOLVED**

6.1 We value people's time and participation, and this is best expressed in a cash or shopping voucher incentive where people have directly participated in focus groups, meetings or 1:1 targeted surveys. Lunch and travel expenses are also successful incentives.

6.2 It is important that people being involved can see where their involvement will influence or make an impact. Non-monetary incentives for this programme will be highlighted in all promotional material, and include:

- Advise and help us to fix homelessness in Scotland
- Influence how the new Scottish Government budget for homelessness is spent
- Help less people go through what you went through

## 7. DEMOGRAPHICS

7.1 In order to ensure demographic mix, we will collaborate with a range of services across the regional coverage of the Housing Options Hub areas. We'll aim to involve a target number of people that matches 1% of homeless applications made 16/17, around 340 people.

7.2 A target breakdown per Housing Options Hub regional area is shown below, combined with the key collaborators needed to host or deliver focus groups and support this work:

### PREPARATION:

Time	Collaboration	Lead
Oct/ Nov17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and consult on methodology</li> <li>• Coproduce lines of enquiry and branding with lived experience groups; create survey</li> <li>• Engage with target collaborating organisations</li> <li>• Publish a participation 'statement of intent' from the Action Group</li> <li>• Design format for focus group and open space events</li> <li>• Schedule calendar of events</li> <li>• Start review of existing consultation reports</li> </ul>	GHN

### DELIVERY:

	Regional Area (by HUB)	Targeted Focus	Target No	Lead
Nov 17	<b>North &amp; Islands</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Event</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping</li> <li>• Gender balance</li> </ul>	<b>43</b>	GHN/ Local Lead
Dec 17	<b>East</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Event</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping</li> <li>• Gender balance</li> <li>• People leaving prison</li> <li>• LGBT</li> </ul>	<b>78</b>	GHN/ Local Lead
Jan 18	<b>West Hub</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Event</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• New Scots</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping</li> <li>• Gender balance</li> <li>• People leaving prison</li> <li>• LGBT</li> </ul>	<b>127</b>	GHN/ Local Lead
Feb 18	<b>Ayrshire &amp; South</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Event</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping</li> <li>• Gender balance</li> </ul>	<b>31</b>	GHN/ Local Lead
Mar 18	<b>Tayside, Fife &amp; Central</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Space Event</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping</li> <li>• Gender balance</li> </ul>	<b>61</b>	GHN/ Local Lead
			<b>340</b>	

### REPORTING:

Time		Lead
Apr 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full report on 6-month activity to Action Group</li> <li>• Plain-language, accessible version for wide publication and dissemination</li> <li>• Feedback to participants and collaborating organisations</li> </ul>	GHN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed into Scot Gov Homelessness Advisory Group</li> </ul>	
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## 8. WHAT DO WE NEED?

8.1 There are resources we need to complete this 6-month programme of participation. The SHIEN project at GHN can lead this programme by refocusing existing Scottish Government grant funding. We'll also need offers of time and additional capacity from:

- **Facilitators & Organisers:** especially at focus groups and open space events
- **Collaborating Organisations:** host and/or deliver focus groups and promote widely

8.2 For direct costs, an approximate budget as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<b>Cost</b>
Venue hire, including lunch	5 regional events	5,000
£10 incentive	For direct participants, open space events and focus groups. Estimate 200 people	2,000
Travelling expenses, participants	For direct local participants, open space events and focus groups. Estimate 200 people x £4.30 all day ticket	860
Travelling expenses, staff	5 events, Scotland-wide x 2 staff – x5 events	200
	5 regions x 4 targeted focus groups across 2 days x 2 staff	600
Volunteering expenses	Longer-term involvement, supported as volunteers. Approx 15 people, average 2 days per week x ave 3 months @ lunch/travel	3600
Print & Production	Surveys, posters, leaflets, event materials	500
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£12,760</b>

## 9. INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2018-22

9.1 It is important that we keep coproducing change beyond the initial 6-months. This is when the early profile of the programme reduces, while the benefits of integrating lived experience remain to ensure enduring solutions to homelessness are found.

9.2 We can build on this momentum to create a national lived experience 'reference group' – facilitated by GHN/SHIEN, with a group member directly representing on the ongoing Homelessness Advisory Group once the Action Group disbands. That will provide a solid structure for ensuring new methods and targeted themes can continue to be developed.

## **10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ACTION GROUP**

*For the Action Group's consideration:*

- Can we adopt/adjust the 'direction of travel' suggested at 3.3 so that all participation activity can be positively framed;
- Will the 'key lines of enquiry' at 4.3 provide the information we need? And do the target numbers achieve sufficient feedback?
- Are the methods at 5.1 the right ones? Any others?
- Approve the outline budget for direct costs.

Following the Stakeholder Event, the Action Group could usefully publish and promote a 2-page 'statement of intent', based on this document, to collaborate with people with lived experience.

## Appendix 1: Getting Involved

About You	What's Involved		
<b>Like meeting people?</b>	Get along to a lively event and meet people in your area who want to get involved too. We'll let you know how many people we expect. Check the calendar here <link>.		  
<b>Prefer a 1:1 chat?</b>	Brilliant! We can do this in person or on the phone – contact us to arrange this. If you prefer having an advocate they are welcome to join you – we can also arrange one to help you.	 	 
<b>Like surveys - or not got much time?</b>	You can fill out our survey here <link> or contact us (below). We tried it; it takes around 10-15 minutes!		-
<b>Up for going to meetings or public speaking?</b>	We're looking for people to feedback directly to decision makers and professionals all over Scotland. Contact us for a chat!	   	 
<b>Want to help us gather other people's views?</b>	We need people with some extra time to get about Scotland speaking to people with experience of homelessness. Contact us for a chat!	   	 
<b>Enjoy writing or editing?</b>	We also need people who love writing or editing reports, blogs, websites etc. This can be in our office or your home. Contact us for a chat!	   	 
<b>Something else?</b>	If you have other ideas, please get in touch.		

### KEY TO SYMBOLS:

Time to Spare?		Thank You...	
	15 minutes!		Travelling Expenses
	Around half a day		Lunch Provided
 	Around a full day		£10 shopping voucher
  	More than 1-day		

**INTERNET?** Click the link or connect with us over:

Email: [ayewecan@ghn.org.uk](mailto:ayewecan@ghn.org.uk)

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# Temporary Accommodation in Scotland

*A Proposal to Social Bite on behalf of the Homelessness  
and Rough Sleeping Action Group*

**I-SPHERE, Heriot-Watt University**

**February 2018**



**I·SPHERE**

Institute for Social Policy, Housing and Equalities Research

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## Background and research aims

### Background

At the December 2017 meeting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG), the need was identified for a fast-turnaround study of temporary accommodation in Scotland. This is to support the HARSAG in tackling one of the key questions it was charged with addressing by the Scottish Government: ***"how to transform the use of temporary accommodation"***.

The Action Group agreed that the issue was complex and that there are wide geographical variations in the rules applied and the quality, nature and average length of stay in temporary accommodation. The Action Group agreed that the original concept of temporary accommodation as a short-term stop-gap should be the aspiration and that there was a need for further data to determine the nature of the current situation. The Action Group agreed that further research on the current landscape was required to enable an assessment of the nature of the change needed.

Temporary accommodation placements increased rapidly in Scotland in the years to 2010/11, linked to the broadening of entitlements under the homelessness legislation<sup>1</sup>. They have subsequently remained fairly steady, in the range 10-11,000 households at any one time, though there has been a sustained if gentle upward trajectory since 2013/14. The year to 2016/17 saw an increase of 3%<sup>2</sup>. Local authorities across Scotland have reported substantially lengthening periods of time spent in temporary accommodation<sup>3</sup>, and from April 2016 there has been mandatory data collection (HL3) on this (although no statistics are yet available, we have secured access to the data for this study, see below).

The recent Social-Bite funded I-SPHERE study on Eradicating 'Core Homelessness' in Scotland's Four Largest Cities<sup>4</sup> found important distinctions between the four core cities that should inform interventions, particularly with respect to temporary accommodation (TA). In Glasgow and Aberdeen, the great majority of households in TA are accommodated within ordinary social housing in 'temporary furnished flats' (TFFs). By contrast, there is much greater (and increasing) use of bed and breakfasts (B&B) in Edinburgh, while in Dundee there are proportionately far more homeless households accommodated in hostels than in the other three cities.

The Eradicating Core Homelessness study found that these divergent profiles bring a range of different challenges. In Glasgow and Aberdeen there is concern that people spend very long periods in TA as a result of difficulties in resettling households into longer-term tenancies (in Aberdeen this issue has been tackled to some extent by the conversion of TFFs into long-term lets). In Dundee, people often sleep rough because they are afraid to use the hostel provision. Glasgow, with its exceptionally large rough sleeping population, faces a major issue with those who have been barred from emergency accommodation provision, and fear of using the relevant congregate provision was also raised. In Edinburgh, the rising use of B&B reflects

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237059/the\\_homelessness\\_monitor\\_scotland\\_2012.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237059/the_homelessness_monitor_scotland_2012.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00521186.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236831/the\\_homelessness\\_monitor\\_scotland\\_2015.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236831/the_homelessness_monitor_scotland_2015.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> See

<https://www.sleepinthepark.co.uk/uploads/files/1509440950EradicatingCoreHomelessnessinScotlands4LargestCities.pdf>

sheer desperation on the part of the local authority who simply have nowhere else to put people.

Service providers who participated in the research generally voiced strong support for the Housing First model of rapid rehousing into mainstream tenancies with wrap-around support. This model has been very influential across the developed world in recent years. A separate study will consider the cultural/system shifts required to facilitate the move towards rapid rehousing.

It is likely that the experiences in other local authorities across Scotland will reflect some of the issues raised in the Eradicating Core Homelessness study, but will also include a range of other issues and concerns. Rural local authorities, in particular, may have different challenges in providing temporary accommodation across a larger geographically dispersed area. Recent work funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise also identified the higher prevalence of 'young and stuck' young people in remote, rural communities<sup>5</sup>. These are young adults in full-time work who are living with someone other than a spouse, who might be considered to be among the 'hidden homeless'.

The costs of temporary accommodation are considerable. Recent research published by the Chartered Institute for Housing in Scotland<sup>6</sup> estimated a cost of TA at just under £2.5m per week. The study reported very significant variation in the cost of TA, from an average of £197.50 a week for social sector provision (i.e. TFFs) to £393 a week for B&B.

	Social sector	Hostel	Bed & Breakfast	Other	Total
Total households in a typical week	6,679	1,733	1,052	1,091	10,555
Average cost per week across all local authorities	£197.50	£269.33	£393.00	£249.67	
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£1,319,103</b>	<b>£466,755</b>	<b>£413,436</b>	<b>£272,386</b>	<b>£2,471,680</b>
Average cost (all types)					£234.17

*Sources: Homelessness Statistics 2015-2016 (Table 20: Households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation); Average costs based on the costs across 18 local authorities (Scotland's Housing Network benchmarking data, 2015-2016).*

A report by Audit Scotland in 2013<sup>7</sup> also noted that the reporting of spending on homeless services is complicated, with some spending recorded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and some through the general fund (GF). The report noted that the costs of providing temporary accommodation in local authority accommodation is recorded in the HRA but money spent on preventing homelessness and providing other temporary accommodation, such as bed and breakfast, is recorded in the general fund. This is also done differently across local

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/economic-reports-and-research/archive/stimulating-housing-development-in-the-highlands-and-islands.html>

<sup>6</sup> See [http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Scotland%20Policy%20Pdfs/LHA/WEB%20LHA%20Scotland\\_research%20publication%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Scotland%20Policy%20Pdfs/LHA/WEB%20LHA%20Scotland_research%20publication%20FINAL.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See [http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2013/nr\\_130711\\_housing\\_overview.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2013/nr_130711_housing_overview.pdf)

authorities, making it difficult to compare spending on homelessness and assess value for money. The report recommended the need for greater clarity and transparency.

Research funded by Shelter, in 2016<sup>8</sup>, identified a number of trends in TA type and funding among participating local authorities, including an increased proportion of clients with complex needs; greater integration of services; increased use of specialised housing pathways and person centred approaches; use of smarter systems across housing providers; and increased private sector involvement (where it was cost effective). The report identified two key patterns in temporary accommodation levels: in some local authorities, demand for temporary accommodation had equalised, where in pressured housing markets demand for temporary accommodation was still increasing. Temporary accommodation restructuring and property repositioning were reported as an ongoing theme. More local authorities also reported a shift from funding through the HRA to GF, mainly due to the financial risk from Welfare Reform. The report also found that 'Full cost recovery' (FCR) was used by most local authorities consulted, where all the costs (property, staffing, management and support) were accounted for and charged as a unit cost on a daily or weekly basis for temporary accommodation. Evidence showed that these temporary accommodation charges were often used to fund homeless services beyond temporary accommodation provision.

Although this provides some insights into TA, the evidence base speaking to the challenges faced in providing appropriate, secure and safe temporary accommodation in Scotland is incomplete. This study will provide a comprehensive analysis of the current situation to inform future policy development in this area.

## Research aim and questions

The overall aim of the study is to provide detailed ('granular') understanding of the nature, purpose and use of temporary accommodation across Scotland.

- How is temporary accommodation currently **defined** in Scotland? How ought it to be defined? What is the relationship/overlap with definitions of supported accommodation?
- What is the intended **purpose/function** of temporary accommodation? How has this changed over time and why? What role, if any, have Housing Benefit and other aspects of funding arrangements had on how its use and purpose has evolved?
- What **types** of temporary accommodation are currently used in Scotland? Has this evolved over time? Does the profile of temporary accommodation vary between local authorities? What accounts for this variation? How does this variation impact on management/homelessness challenges at local level?
- What is known about the **quality** and appropriateness of temporary accommodation in Scotland? Does this vary between local authority areas/by homeless group?
- What is known about about the **costs** of temporary accommodation, and variations in this across Scotland?

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<sup>8</sup> See

[https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1274755/Funding\\_Homelessness\\_Services\\_in\\_Scotland\\_report.pdf/\\_nocache](https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1274755/Funding_Homelessness_Services_in_Scotland_report.pdf/_nocache)

- What is the **experience**, at individual household level, in terms of length and patterns of use of temporary accommodation? Can we discern anything about impacts of temporary accommodation on residents and their levels of satisfaction?
- What should the **future** shape, nature and function of temporary accommodation be in Scotland?

## Proposed methods

To explore these research questions, we propose four key research strands:

1. A review of existing literature, evidence and financial information on temporary accommodation in Scotland (focused on the post-devolution period).
2. An analysis of official temporary accommodation statistics (HL2 and HL3)
3. Interviews with key national stakeholders from the statutory and voluntary sector
4. Local case studies selected purposively to capture variation across Scotland (as evidenced in Stages 1-3 above). In each case study area, we would:
  - a) examine local statistics
  - b) interview key statutory and voluntary sector stakeholders
  - c) interview/focus groups temporary accommodation residents

## Review of literature

A desk-based rapid review of relevant policy documents, research papers and reports and academic literature on TA in Scotland will be undertaken. This review will focus on the post devolution (post-2000) period and primarily cover evidence specific to Scotland given the specific institutional and legal context. It will draw on wider (UK/international) research where relevant, for instance in exploring what is already known about experiences and outcomes associated with different forms of temporary accommodation (Blenkinsopp: 2 days, Watts: 3 days).

## Analysis of TA statistics

The main analysis of temporary accommodation statistics will be based on an analysis of a combination of HL1, HL2 and HL3 data. The last of these, HL3, is a newly provided set of data so is not complete for all 32 local authorities as yet. This is due to some ongoing data matching issues, with not every HL3 data form corresponding correctly to a completed HL1 form. Scottish Government statisticians are confident that the vast majority of local authorities have provided robust and useable data.

HL1 data provides information on the outcome of homelessness applications, including whether this is TA or another outcome. This will allow us to explore TA use as a proportion of all assessments and outcomes.

HL2 data allows us to examine longer-term trends (quarterly from 2002) in TA use by accommodation type but this provides a snap-shot for each quarter only. The HL3 data only

goes back to April 2016 and is not yet complete (and so remains unpublished) but provides richer information about the flow of TA residents.

The main questions to be explored using the HL2 and HL3 data are - *What types of temporary accommodation are currently used in Scotland? Has this evolved over time? Does the profile of temporary accommodation vary between local authorities?*

Using HL2 and HL3 data-sets, we can provide a breakdown of Temporary Accommodation by type of placement in each local authority. Further, we can look at whether temporary accommodation types have evolved over time.

The HL3 dates back to April 2016 and provides placement level info about the households in each type of temporary accommodation, either at a snapshot date or during each quarter. Using the HL3 data-set, we can explore household level information. This includes length of time spent in temporary accommodation and household characteristics (age, gender, reasons for homelessness etc.) by type of placement and local authority. As mentioned above, there are a small number of local authorities which we do not have reliable HL3 data for. That means that in the reporting of the results, we might use types of local authority (e.g. city, urban, rural/urban mix, rural, island) or key segments (heavy B&B users, areas with higher than average periods in TA). This avoids disclosing where data issues are ongoing.

HL3 analysis will allow us to consider the question - *What is the experience, at individual household level, in terms of length and patterns of use of temporary accommodation?*

The HL3 data is household level data, so its use raises issues of data protection and disclosure. For this reason, we have requested data aggregated to local authority level data tables from Scottish Government analysts, which I-SPHERE will analyse and report on.

Inevitably, the data analysis will be an iterative process, with further data requests made as required. The research team would allow Scottish Government analysts at least two weeks to provide requested data tables, to allow the work to be managed alongside current commitments (Littlewood: 10 days).

### **Key stakeholder interviews**

Key informant interviews will be undertaken with 10-12 key stakeholders in Scotland. These will cover key informants at both the national and local level (e.g. representatives from Scottish Government, ALACHO, COSLA, key voluntary sector organisations and PRS/PSL providers, and representatives from the five Housing Options hubs). Participants will be purposively selected to provide insights on the research questions listed above. This stage of the research is anticipated to shed particular light on questions regarding the *definition, purpose and future* of TA in Scotland, and also to elicit expert views on the *types, quality and costs* of current TA use across the country. Interviews will primarily be conducted by phone, and will be recorded with the participant's permission and transcribed verbatim [REDACTED].

### **Local case studies**

We propose conducting six in-depth case studies to explore the current use and experience of temporary accommodation, from local administrative data, from the perspectives of accommodation providers, people living in temporary accommodation and other key stakeholders. The research will involve (a) examining local statistics (b) interviews with key statutory and voluntary sector staff and (c) interviews with temporary accommodation residents.

### *(a) Examining local statistics*

We would produce detailed analysis for each case study area, prior to the qualitative fieldwork. This will be used to frame the interviews and we will use interviews to 'sense check' what the data shows. For example: How does experience 'on the ground' compare with the statutory homelessness data? Do the local authority or local partners collect further local statistics or administrative data than the HL1, HL2 and HL3? [REDACTED]

### *(b) Local informant interviews*

In each case study area, we will undertake around 4 interviews with key statutory and voluntary sector representatives, from for example the local authority homelessness and commissioning teams (e.g. TA managers) and voluntary and other sector providers of TA (hostels/B&Bs/TFFs) and advice and support to those experiencing homelessness. Interviews will primarily be conducted face to face, and will be recorded with the participant's permission and transcribed verbatim.

### *(c) Interviews with temporary accommodation residents*

Due to the diverse range of experiences, the qualitative research with temporary accommodation residents needs to fit local circumstances. A sampling strategy will be developed in each case study area to capture the perspectives of those living in the commonly used forms of TA (e.g. hostels, TFFs and B&Bs). They will be sampled via key local contacts secured at the national and local key informant stages of the work and via existing contacts of the research team, with residents in dispersed TFF accommodation contacted via a 'opt in' mailout facilitated by local authorities and IBP. Where temporary accommodation is mainly dispersed flats one-to-one phone interview will primarily be used. Where hostels or other group accommodation is more commonly used we would be able to conduct small focus groups in person. In total, we will seek to speak to around 10 TA residents in each area. Participants will receive a £ [REDACTED] 'thank you' incentive in recognition of their time. With participants' permission, interviews/focus groups will be recorded and transcribed verbatim to aid analysis.

Case study set up [REDACTED] local informant [REDACTED] and resident interviews [REDACTED] will take 5 days each [REDACTED].

## **Analysis**

All qualitative fieldwork will be recorded with the permission of the participant and transcribed verbatim to aid analysis using Nvivo qualitative analysis software and write up [REDACTED].

## **Outputs**

The primary project output will be report detailing all aspects of the study, and drawing out implications for the possible future shape, nature and function of TA in Scotland. The final report will be published and fully accessible on the I-SPHERE website [REDACTED].

## **Study team**

**Dr Beth Watts** Principal Investigator (PI), is a Senior Research Fellow in the Institute for Social Policy, Housing and Equalities Research (I-SPHERE) at Heriot-Watt University.

She has over ten years experience in social policy research, with a specific focus on homelessness and housing. Project experience includes a review of UK youth homelessness policy and practice for The OVO Foundation, the longitudinal Crisis/JRF-funded

Homelessness Monitors research, a Supported Lodgings feasibility study with Shelter Scotland, a review of international evidence on 'what works' in responding to the needs of those with multiple and complex needs, and a review of international and academic perspectives on outcomes measurement in the youth homelessness sector for Depaul UK. She works on the ESRC-funded Welfare Conditionality research programme focussing specifically on the themes of housing and homelessness and the JRF-funded Destitution in the UK research study. She completed her PhD in 2013 at the University of York, which compared responses to homelessness in Scotland and Ireland, asking 'what difference do legal rights make?' She is an experienced qualitative researcher and principal investigator.

Beth would lead on the evidence review, key informant interviews, manage and oversee case study fieldwork and co-author the final report.

**Mandy Littlewood** has over 20 years of experience in housing policy research, with a specific focus on rent affordability, housing need and demand. She is a freelance consultant and an Honorary Research Fellow at Heriot-Watt University, a post that she has held for more than 5 years.

Mandy's current work includes a combination of quantitative research estimating extreme hardship and destitution, from various survey-based and administrative data sources and qualitative work with homeless service users and service providers. Recent projects include work for Social Bite on Eradicating Core Homelessness and the current evaluation of the City Ambition Network in Glasgow. Mandy is currently also involved in an I-SPHERE study to build a Profile of Severe and Multiple Disadvantage in Scotland (for the LankellyChase Foundation) looking at experiences of homelessness, substance misuse and offending, exploring links to poverty and mental ill-health. This latter study involves analysis of HL1 data and the Scottish Household Survey to examine severe and multiple deprivation.

Mandy has in the past helped design a wide range of innovative methodological approaches, including customer segmentation to help the Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) develop strategic and operational responses to rent arrears and tenancy sustainment. She was also involved in the GHA's rent re-structuring work between 2005 and 2008, modelling the impacts of rent changes on rent affordability and Housing Benefit. She has recently designed an affordability tool for RSLs to examine their rents, as part of the SFHA Guidance on Rent Setting and modelled the potential impact of the proposed cap of Housing Benefit at Local Housing Allowance rates on young tenants on Housing Benefits (for the Chartered Institute for Housing in Scotland and the Scottish Government).

Mandy would lead the data analysis, support case study fieldwork as required and co-author the final report.

**Dr Janice Blenkinsopp** is a Research Associate in the Institute for Social Policy, Housing and Equalities Research (I-SPHERE) at Heriot-Watt University. Janice is highly skilled in conducting interviews with vulnerable individuals. She has worked on a number of I-SPHERE projects, including an assessment of the scale and nature of destitution in the UK, and ethicality and effectiveness of welfare conditionality affecting social security recipients.

## **Budget and timetable**

### **Study budget**



## Timetable

The study timetable is outlined below. Fieldwork would be organised to avoid the Spring Break school holiday period.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Contract start date	19 February 2018
Development of research tools and fieldwork	February – End March
National level data analysis and write up	February – End March
National key informant interview and write up	February – End March
Interim findings to Social Bite/HARSAG	End March
Case study fieldwork and data analysis	April-May
Analysis and reporting	April-June
Submission of draft final report to Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group (HPSG) for comment	End June/mid July
Sign off final version of final report and executive summary by HPSG	July/mid August

The payment schedule would be as follows:

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Payment</b>
Interim findings report (end of March 2018)	50%
Submission and sign off of final outputs (mid August 2018)	50%

## Research ethics

### MRS code of conduct

All staff working on the project will follow the Social Research Association code of conduct at all times. The proposal is subject to ethical approval by a committee at Heriot-Watt University as it involves human subjects.

### Equalities

Every effort will be made to ensure that a wide range of participants from different circumstances can participate in the qualitative/focus group research.

**Data security** will be ensured as follows.

- All telephone interviews and focus groups will be recorded (with consent) and held on secure computers (i.e. with password protection).
- These will be held until 6 months after the acceptance of the Final Report and then destroyed.
- Written outputs, and quotes, will be anonymized.

We would to ensure that all personal data used for the purposes of sampling is held and processed according to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

## **LEARNING FROM WINTER INITIATIVE**

1. The Action Group asked SG Homelessness Team to initiate research work to capture learning from the front-line workers implementing short-term actions this winter, and to share results with the group.

### **Introduction - HRSAG Winter Recommendations**

2. The Action Group considered a wide range of potential responses for this Winter, but prioritised actions in the following areas on the basis of the ability to implement at speed; and the potential impact to minimise rough sleeping this Winter:

- increase capacity in temporary and emergency accommodation in Edinburgh by expanding the winter shelter capacity from 60 to 75 and deliver an additional 12 rapid-access beds (for the winter only, and only accessed via street outreach workers) – total additional cost £142,000 - £25,000 covered by Social Bite
- increase outreach capacity in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen and further explore any need for additional capacity in Dundee – total additional cost £106,000 - £11,000 covered by Simon Community and £15,000 covered by Govan Law Centre
- maximise use of Nightstop in Edinburgh and undertake discussion with statutory sector in Glasgow to agree how we implement Nightstop there by January 2018
- maximise effectiveness of existing and additional outreach capacity by boosting multi-agency partnership working; adopting 'by name lists' approach and empowering front line workers through direct access to services and dedicated accommodation
- making personal budgets and/or flexible emergency fund available for front line staff to employ where maximum flexibility is required to meet an individual's immediate housing needs, establishing trust and a basis on which further support can be provided towards a long term, sustainable successful outcome. This would only be the final resort, employed for those whom all other outreach and intervention fails. This would be treated as a pilot and the evidence gathered would inform development of thinking on the 'Housing First' approach – total additional cost £50,000
- at times of extreme weather, ensure flexible provision is available in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen for anyone who will not use winter night shelters, despite all efforts – total additional cost £15,000.
- engaging with people who are currently homeless and people who have experience of homelessness – total additional cost £15,000 to be covered by Crisis, with staffing contribution from Glasgow Homelessness Network.

3. To gather information for this report, I met with frontline staff in the three cities being targeted by the winter actions initiative (Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh) and gathered information from our reports of winter sit calls with front-line staff. Below are the main findings I gathered in each of the cities and some conclusions to highlight some of the main issues.

### **Aberdeen**

## Establishing outreach capacity

4. The Assertive Outreach Service was established in Aberdeen by Bethany Christian Trust, from 4 Dec, and has made good progress from a standing start with significant support from Aberdeen City Council. The service is engaging with 50 people of which 24 who were previously rough sleeping have been allocated temporary council accommodation, including one individual who was previously rough sleeping for 6 years. Staff report that resources this winter to provide assertive outreach has been a game-changer and additional staff has enabled outreach workers to develop better relationships and understanding of people's backgrounds, their particular circumstances and complex needs. This has helped build a picture and develop solutions to support people out of rough sleeping and into accommodation, benefits or employment. Staff are concerned, however, that the flexible approach which is helping to progress people to temporary accommodation will be undone at the end of the winter initiative and many of those being helped will be classed as intentionally homeless.

5. Within the 50 service-users, the outreach staff are working with 10 people who are not yet able to access council accommodation due to multiple complex needs (7 due to previous evictions, 2 alcohol/substance misuse issues and one fears local authority). Nine of the ten have no permanent sleeping arrangements and on a nightly basis are either rough sleeping or sofa surfing, and one of the nine is begging enough money for nightly B&B accommodation. The other person is sleeping in a tent.

6. 16 of the 50 service-users, who initially presented as rough sleeping, have now accessed private arrangements with family and friends.

7. All 50 of the service-users have no access to other paid support agencies due to either having no benefits in place or having no statutory rights. All are working only with the outreach service so outreach staff are concerned about long-term support needs once winter initiative stops.

8. Engagement with street alternative service and coordination with Aberdeen City Council (ACC) has been key to the success of the assertive outreach service. The outreach service is in operation 5 days out of 7 and with drop in services available the other 2 days a week. Initial focus has been on the city itself but there is an intention to look to expand into Aberdeenshire, recognising that some individuals move out to rural areas to avoid issues in the city centre. Many accessing the outreach service will have no recourse to public funds; no local connection; or will have had engagement with the council already and will have met conditions of 'discharging' the homelessness duty.

9. The type of assertive wraparound support provided includes:

- Access to temporary accommodation
- Food provisions (parcels and hot)
- Toiletries, showers and laundry facilities
- Obtain identification
- Find employment
- Register with and attend GP

- Access benefits and open credit union accounts (for benefit payments)
- Access mental health services
- Provide advice and information
- Referrals to domestic abuse and gender based violence agencies
- Liaise with solicitors regarding deportation proceedings
- Support and facilities to write up CVs

10. Extreme weather arrangements have been on standby, with a planned contingency to open Cyrenians' Summer Street facilities, but this has not been needed as yet. Extreme weather survival packs funded by donations from Aberdeen's big oil companies have been issued and helped outreach workers engage and build trust with people at risk.

11. In addition to reporting a positive partnership with Aberdeen City Council, the assertive outreach team have been working with the community safety partnership; Street Wardens; A&E and police custody service (where the Council is piloting an allocated Housing Officer) to ensure high awareness of the service and to capture everyone rough sleeping. This has included key discussions around 'what happens next' for individuals that outreach workers engage with in terms of securing settled accommodation and appropriate support. Exploring a range of options to allow rapid rehousing for those with multiple complex needs; linked with Aberdeen plans for Housing First. Exploring the development of by name lists approach with plans to link in to learn from experience in Glasgow and Edinburgh. An approach has also been made to Scottish Government with a joint Bethany/ACC bid for flexible emergency fund and the potential to develop a Nightstop service is being considered as part of ACC Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

## **Edinburgh**

### Winter care shelter

12. Capacity in the Winter Care Shelter run by Bethany Christian Trust has been increased (from 60 to 75) from 4 Dec and has been operating from a single fixed venue at Meadowbank Church since 8 Jan. The service will be available until 22 April and has enabled easier access and easier arrangements to get people to Streetworks Holyrood Hub in the morning. The shelter has engaged with 506 unique individuals (21 more than last year) and provided 4762 bed spaces so far and has not had to turn people away since the capacity was increased. This compares to 71 in turned away in the 4 – 5 week period prior to the increase in spaces and 350 over the winter period last year. 72% of people have accessed bed spaces for 7 nights or less (consistent with last year) and 51% of people have accessed bed spaces for 2 nights or less

13. Care shelter staff have noted an increase in presentations and a number of Council referrals due to a lack of available alternative accommodation. Referrals from Council are ongoing and date back to 2014. Staff feel that more people are falling through the net as a result of local connection & intentionality decisions, tightening of migrant rights, benefits sanctions. That said, there is a view that strong partnership working continues aimed at putting a plan in place which targets the particular needs of each individual.

### Dedicated rapid access temp accommodation

14. Edinburgh City Council has provided Direct Rapid Access Temporary Accommodation (at Hopetoun (an ex B&B)), since 11 Dec, which offers 12 rooms (including two double rooms for couples), which are allocated through Streetworks, to accommodate 14 people. All rooms were filled by noon on day 1. There has been 99% occupancy to date, with 44 people accommodated (which includes 6 couples). 34 people have moved on to new destinations (12 people moved on within 7 days): 14 moved to homeless accommodation with support; 2 to B&B; 2 to shared house; 5 advised to return to alternative Local Authority; 3 to police custody; 1 back to family; and 7 did not return/destination unknown.

15. The direct rapid access beds are a really important and successful part of the response to support people with multiple and complex needs out of rough sleeping. Front-line staff attribute their success to there being no curfew and to the ability of people to come and go, as well as there being no need to go through normal processing. The service provides 24 hour waking staff and a housing officer is allocated to the property to provide support and advice on site to residents under one roof. For the frontline staff, it offers a flexible solution which enables them to build a trusting relationship with the service users and helps move to a focus on progression via intensive work with individuals to secure sustainable solutions for them, which in turn frees up rapid access spaces again for others. The resource is being viewed very positively by service users, street outreach workers and there has been no issues with neighbours. Only 2 people have been asked to leave during the 10 weeks since opening the service. The Council reports that it is seeking continuation funding to ensure this continues, given such positive results so far.

### Nightstop

16. Key aims are to increase referrals and increase placements. The majority of spaces are used for 16/17 year olds. Have seen a recent increase in referrals sustained but remains unused capacity. Working with councils to increase confidence for referrals. Securing funding for next year has provided some stability. Discussions continue with Aberdeen over potential to open service later in 2018 as part of Aberdeen City Council's Housing & Homelessness Strategy.

### Extreme weather provision

17. Extreme weather arrangements have not been used. Streetworks are linking with the Bethany Care Van to provide extreme weather packs and ensure better coverage. Again, this helps increase engagement and build trust with those who receive packs.

### Flexible emergency fund

18. Flexible emergency fund/personalised budgets have now been accessed 15 times by staff in Edinburgh, averaging at £50 - £60 a time, mainly for travel costs and

replacing key documents. Not same need as in Glasgow for hotel accommodation. Availability of referral to rapid access beds at Hopetoun is a factor that is helping with identifying quick solutions. Approach to managing and distributing this funding is agreed locally, to ensure it is available for frontline staff to immediately access at point of need & capture learning.

19. Edinburgh's Interagency Street Networks group (ISN), chaired by Streetworks, met for the first time on 19/12 and is beginning to develop and mature, working on a named list of 13 or so individuals.

## **Glasgow**

20. Night Stop launched in Glasgow on 19 Jan and work is ongoing to generate referral routes including with British Transport Police and the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). Multiple alternative referral routes already agreed ahead of launch. Confident that capacity will be high from the outset.

### Winter Night Shelter

21. The winter night shelter is averaging around 30 per night (capacity is 40). Staff report that last year there appeared to be a better flow of people finding solutions quickly, although flow has been improving in recent weeks and seeing an average of 2-3 nights being spent at the shelter, with the exception of those with no recourse to public funds (see below). Strong partnership working with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), the availability of a nurse each morning and dedicated (Simon Community) homelessness care worker on site is benefiting users greatly. Outreach staff seeing numbers of people out on the street each night in single figures which is allowing for more intensive engagement where needed. Using by name list approach and highlighting key individuals to ensure they are using the Winter Night Shelter and working across services to identify issues and find solutions for people. Night Shelter staff are working with Glasgow City Council and the HSCP to ensure solutions are found to improve 'flow' and the interaction with statutory services.

22. There has been a group of European Economic Migrants using the shelter who did not appear to have a plan to move on and were not engaging. Staff from Shelter have now assisted and provided dedicated advice and support to find solutions which have allowed a number to move on. Key learning care shelter have noted from this is to engage early to get pathway information to migrant people right away so that they know their available options and rights as early as possible. Time is of the essence and the longer it is left the more issues and barriers migrants are likely to encounter.

23. City Mission considered opening up foyer of the shelter to accommodate people who turn up late but are mainly seeking a warm and safe place to rest. However, this has been postponed due to a couple of serious incidents (one violent involving a large number of police and one fatality) which had impacted on the confidence of staff. Might be something to consider here on early trauma-related training and support, particularly for staff on short-term contracts.

24. A number of extreme weather survival packs have been issued and again this service has enabled outreach staff to build trust and engage with those at risk of rough

sleeping. In one case, the pack was used to provide emergency life-saving support while paramedics were called.

### Flexible emergency fund/personalised budgets

25. The fund has now been used around 54 times in Glasgow, averaging at around £100 a time, and 50% used for short-term accommodation solutions. Frontline staff report that being able to step in with emergency fixes for people is proving very useful for ongoing engagement and building trust, particularly with those who are long-term entrenched rough sleepers. This has helped people progress out of rough sleeping and outreach staff report that city numbers are down as a result (noting that visibility does not necessarily equate to rough sleeping). Staff note that small amounts of flexible funding has been provided to cover things like bus/taxi fares, haircuts, clothing, birth certificates, passports, short-term accommodation solutions (e.g. hotel night(s), rent deposits etc.) has achieved very positive outcomes by getting people to interviews, into employment, through benefits process, returned to homes elsewhere in the UK and helped out of rough sleeping and into accommodation.

26. In terms of controls, the payments out of the fund is at discretion of front-line staff up to £200 to seek creative solutions to get people off the streets, with the street team service manager's approval required for sums up to £2,000 and the Inter Service Network collectively authorising any sums over £2,000. Feedback from staff is very positive with the free reign to try and get a positive outcome particularly welcomed. One thing that might be worth assessing is whether the relatively modest overall spend across Glasgow and Edinburgh of around £5,000 to date identifies a need to offer advice and guidance to staff on instances when the flexibility of this funding could be used.

27. Positive outcomes include accommodating a couple, who had been living in a tent long-term, in hotel accommodation over Christmas and providing a deposit and month's rent up front to move into rented accommodation. Both are progressing well and following rehab are clean from addictions for 6 weeks now. Another positive example, is that a young person the street outreach team had sought to engage with for over a year accepted an offer of hotel accommodation and then subsequently agreed to progress to hospital for important medical treatment.

28. Inter Service Agency group of key service partners is well established in Glasgow, meeting weekly on Tuesday mornings to share intel using a named list and strong online/telephone data sharing which is helping to keep people on radar, identify and provide appropriate support and accommodation options based on their individual needs and to reduce length of stay in night shelter. The City Mission is looking at the potential of developing a multi-agency partnership working out of a single site that delivers all of the support services users of the night shelter would require – to a one-stop shop type service.

### **Conclusions**

29. In conclusion, I have sought to pick out below some of the main issues highlighted to me as successes/barriers from the initiative this winter.

30. The importance and benefits of assertive outreach is highlighted consistently by front-line staff across all three cities as key to making intensive contact with those at risk and gradually build their trust, gain an understanding of the issues that have and are impacting upon them and to identify and discuss with other service partners to arrive at solutions appropriate to the individual. The resources made available to recruit additional staff this winter has made a big difference.

31. In Edinburgh, the extension of the care shelter capacity and success of the rapid access beds are recognised as a really important and successful part of response to support people with multiple and complex needs out of rough sleeping and into sustained accommodation. The increased capacity at the care shelter has meant they have not turned anyone away since the increase and the rapid access beds are opening up the opportunity to provide assertive outreach support, to build trust and provide a stepping stone to more sustained accommodation options for those who find it difficult to conform with the strict rules attributed to B&Bs etc. and who are not currently able to engage with a strict processing system.

32. Inter Service Network weekly meetings are well established in Glasgow and progressing well and maturing in Edinburgh. They provide an opportunity for different key services with different remits to share intel on people at risk of rough sleeping who pass through their systems. The sharing of intel using a named list and strong online/telephone data sharing is helping to keep people on the radar, identify and provide appropriate support and accommodation options based on their individual needs.

33. Personalised budgets/flexible funding has been identified by front-line staff in Glasgow and Edinburgh as a really positive step that allows them to seek creative solutions to support and encourage people out of rough sleeping. The consistent comment is that this is something that should be continued beyond the winter initiative as it provides a good return on relatively small amounts of money, enabling people to take positive steps to acquire accommodation, attend job interviews, obtain key docs etc. However, while funding is intended as a last resort, there is probably less than expected overall spend to date across Glasgow and Edinburgh (around £5,000) which might suggest perhaps that it could be utilised more. Should personalised budgets/flexible funding be considered for a future roll-out it might be worth considering guidance to front-line staff, based on learning from use this winter, on the type of instances when using the flexibility of the fund could be an option.

34. Local connection and intentionality was consistently raised by front-line outreach staff as a barrier to providing positive solutions and outcomes for those with multiple and complex needs. Views were expressed that an overly strict application of rules did not fit with the type of issues facing people in this group and that it didn't recognise the journeys people were on and improvements they make in their lifestyles along the way. It was highlighted that, all too often, people in this group are held to account for mistakes at difficult times in their lives from which they have moved on from, sometimes these were many years ago.

35. City Mission's decision not to open up its foyer area due to a couple of serious incidents (one violent involving a large number of police and one fatality) which had impacted on the confidence of staff (para 23 refers) perhaps highlights a potential need

for early trauma-related training and support, particularly for staff on short-term contracts.

[REDACTED]

SG Homelessness Team  
21 February 2018

## Rapid Rehousing Transition Programme

This project will help

- 1) **Understand the current scale and type** of supply of temporary accommodation
- 2) Define **what rapid rehousing means**
- 3) Outline the **optimum balance** of accommodation options across Scotland
- 4) Set out the **scale of the national gap** between 1) and 3) above
- 5) Create an **implementation framework** on how to get from 1) to 3) above.
- 6) Identify **national policy/system change** and acknowledge the **cultural and practice** change required to facilitate implementation of such a change in Scotland.

### HARSAG definition of Rapid Rehousing

The recommendation is built around a clear evidence base that better outcomes (housing sustainability, social, economic and health) are aligned with:

- Rapid rehousing: a minimum time spent in any form of temporary accommodation, with the fewer transitions the better;
- Mainstream temporary furnished flats within a community being the best *temporary* option, over B&B or ‘homeless’ accommodation (shared living in hostels or accommodation projects, usually provided/commissioned for single people);
- Mainstream housing with wraparound support being the best settled option, over ‘homeless’ shared or supported accommodation;
- The size and quality of shared accommodation: smaller and within a psychologically informed environment for any period where mainstream housing is not possible or preferable.
- The recommendation is about redressing the current balance of housing options and approaches for homeless households over a planned and costed phase.

### Progress

Objective	Methods	Progress
1) Understand the current scale and type of supply of temporary accommodation	Quantitative data from I-SPHERE Consultation with 32 LAs, Hubs Consultation with SFHA, GWSF, CIH	Provided Set up, complete by 30/3 To be set up March/April
2) Define what rapid rehousing means	HARSAG definition in LA questionnaire Consultation with LAs	Testing with LAs
3) Outline the optimum balance of accommodation options across Scotland	Review of LA documents Consultation with the LAs on the gaps by type of temporary if take rapid rehousing approach	Ongoing
4) Set out the scale of the national gap between 1) and 3) above	Analysis of findings in 1, 2 and 3 to outline the national gap, building up from the LA picture	April
5) Create an implementation framework on how to get from 1) to 3) above.	Development of the implementation framework Testing with the Hubs Consultation event	April to May
6) Identify national policy/system and the cultural and practice change required	Included in the Implementation framework	April to May

Anna Evans  
Indigo House Group

## Questionnaire to Local Authorities

### Rapid Rehousing Transitions Plans - Consultation with Local Authorities

The purpose of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) is to provide recommendations to Scottish Government Ministers on the actions and solutions needed to eradicate homelessness and rough sleeping and transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland for all people experiencing homelessness. The recommendations are being shaped around the following four questions: What can be done to reduce rough sleeping this winter? How can we end rough sleeping? How can we transform the use of temporary accommodation? What needs to be done to end homelessness? The First Minister has committed £50m over the next 5 years to support this programme from April 2018 and is regularly briefed on direction of developments from the Action Group.

This consultation is concerned with the Group's recommendation to the Ministers for how **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans** will be developed and implemented. The recommendation for **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans** cuts across all of the questions being considered by the Group and relates to **how Scotland provides temporary and settled accommodation** for all people experiencing homelessness. The recommendation is built around a clear evidence base that better outcomes (housing sustainability, social, economic and health) are aligned with:

- Rapid rehousing: a minimum time spent in any form of temporary accommodation, with the fewer transitions the better;
- Mainstream temporary furnished flats within a community being the best *temporary* option, over B&B or 'homeless' accommodation (shared living in hostels or accommodation projects, usually provided/commissioned for single people);
- Mainstream housing with wraparound support being the best settled option, over 'homeless' shared or supported accommodation;
- The size and quality of shared accommodation: smaller and within a psychologically informed environment for any period where mainstream housing is not possible or preferable.
- The recommendation is about **redressing the current balance** of housing options and approaches for homeless households over a planned and costed phase.

The recommendation is that each local authority will develop and cost a 5-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTPs) by December 2018. This plan will represent the core catalyst funding intended by the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund for LAs/RSLs to initiate and lead whole systems change in their area from 2019-2020.

RRTPs will set out local action and costings to (i) significantly upscale and transition to Housing First as default for people sleeping rough; (ii) ensure rapid rehousing in the context of Scotland's homelessness legislation for most other households; and (iii) by exception, options for shared accommodation. The overall aim is to speed up, simplify and declutter the homelessness system from the perspective of people experiencing it.

A framework will be published to assist the development of local transition plans.

If you would like to discuss the work with the Action Group lead please email Margaret-Ann Brunjes on [REDACTED], or lead consultant Anna Evans on [REDACTED].

## 1. Consent and attribution

This work is being undertaken to consult on the HARSAG's recommendations around the development of local Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans, and how local authorities will move to a Rapid Rehousing position (as summarised on page 1).

The findings obtained from this consultation will not be reported on an individual local authority basis, nor attributed to the individual/s consulting with the consultancy team. The findings will be used to aggregate findings and to understand local authorities' opinion over how the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans will be implemented.

## 2. Context

### Trends in homelessness and temporary accommodation

- The following sets out the most recent trends on homelessness, rough sleeping and temporary accommodation.
- We would like to discuss the trends, and your projections on the level of homelessness, rough sleeping and requirements for temporary accommodation as per your HNDA, LHS and SHIP and practical experience of demand and supply and service delivery, in the context of your local housing market (at a high level – further detailed discussion on temporary accommodation below)

**Table 1 SG Homelessness in Scotland 2016/17 - Number of applications**

	2003/4	2010/11	2016/17	% Change 2003/4-2016/17	% Change 2010/11-2016/17	% Change 2015/16 - 2016/17
Scotland	56,605	55,642	34,100	-43%	-63%	-2%
X LA						

**Table 2 SG Homelessness in Scotland 2016/17 - Trends in rough sleeping**

	Applications for homelessness where applicant slept rough:							
	at least once during the last 3 months				the night before			
	2015-16	2016-17	Change 2015-16 to 2016-17		2015-16	2016-17	Change 2015-16 to 2016-17	
Number			%	Number			%	
Scotland	2425	2620	195	8%	1360	1500	140	10%
X LA								

**Table 17 SG Homelessness in Scotland 2016/17 - Households in temporary accommodation at 31 March**

	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2003	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017	% Change since 2003	% Change since 2010	% Change 2016 - 2017
Scotland	5,403	10,729	10,873	132%	1.34%	3%
X LA						

### 3. Current supply of temporary accommodation

- The following table sets out the latest public information on temporary accommodation supply, obtained through SG HL2 returns.
- We would like to discuss this temporary accommodation supply, drilling down on what it ‘looks and feels’ like on the ground.
- We would like to go through each of the categories shown in the HL2 table below (social, hostel, B&B, other) and understand the provision in your area in more detail. Aspects we would like to discuss for each are around:
  - Public / RSL / private sector
  - ‘Mainstream’, or purpose built as temporary accommodation
  - Shared accommodation or individual tenancies/occupancy
  - If shared or hostel, what size of blocks (number of bedspaces)
  - Supported accommodation / unsupported / floating / residential support
  - Furnished or unfurnished flats/houses
  - Client group most often accommodated by type of temporary
  - Geographic coverage – spread, concentrations, surpluses, gaps by location
  - Specific models e.g. Housing First, ‘flipping’ temporary to permanent, community hosting models, anything else for temporary accommodation?

Temporary accommodation supply HL2 data – Scottish Government

	31 March 2016					31 March 2017				
	Social sector	Hostel	Bed & Breakfast	Other	Total	Social sector accom	Hostel	Bed & Breakfast	Other	Total
Scotland	6,679	1,728	1,052	1,084	10,543	6,636	1,739	1,113	1,385	10,873
X LA										

### 4. Need for temporary accommodation and strategy

- Thinking about the profile we have discussed above, what is the need for temporary accommodation in your area compared to the supply – is there a different profile required?
- Volume and type
- If any shift in profile of temporary accommodation is required, is that shift resourced? What level of funding resource is required to make that shift? Over what timescale? What other actions are needed to make that shift?

## 5. HARSAG's definition of Rapid Rehousing and recommendation for Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans

- Considering the HARSAG's definition of rapid rehousing as set out below, how does this definition align with the Council's current strategy for temporary/ permanent accommodation, or not? How does it differ?
  - Rapid rehousing: a minimum time spent in any form of temporary accommodation, with the fewer transitions the better;
  - Mainstream temporary furnished flats within a community being the best *temporary* option, over B&B or 'homeless' accommodation (shared living in hostels or accommodation projects, usually provided/commissioned for single people);
  - Mainstream housing with wraparound support being the best settled option, over 'homeless' shared or supported accommodation;
  - The size and quality of shared accommodation: smaller and within a psychologically informed environment for any period where mainstream housing is not possible or preferable.
- More specifically recommendations suggest a range of solutions that could be embedded in Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans – these could include
  - Integrating an outreach/off-site aspect to local housing options approaches
  - Scaling up Housing First for people sleeping rough and/or with complex needs
  - Rebalancing temporary accommodation towards temporary furnished flats within a community and away from B&B and hostel-type accommodation
  - Flipping temporary flats to a Scottish Secure Tenancy, where this has the consent of the household
  - Planning for safe transition away from night shelter style provision
  - RSL partnerships, including community connector initiatives to help people resettle after a period of homelessness and to enable direct access to Housing First initiatives.
  - Ensuring there is independent advice and advocacy freely available for people in areas where there is Choice Based Letting/Bidding Schemes for social/council housing.
  - Consideration on the role or potential role and capacity of Social Letting Agents
  - Consideration on the role and capacity of Rent Deposit/Help to Rent Schemes.
- Which of these elements has your local authority already considered?  
Which are most helpful in your context?  
Which are less relevant and why?  
What are the key barriers to rapid rehousing / move on from temporary accommodation?  
If you have implemented Rapid Rehousing approaches, please could you share them and how this went / lessons learned?
- **How** will your LA get to a Rapid Rehousing position i.e. what would it take to get from your current position (A) to the recommended position of Rapid Rehousing in your area (B)?
- What level of funding is required to get from A to B for your local authority area? Revenue and capital?
- What other changes may be required to get from A to B?

6. Is there anything you would like to add?
  
7. Heriot Watt University is undertaking another study on the experience of temporary accommodation - would your local authority like to be involved as a potential case study?

Thank you for your participation in this work.

## Briefing on standards in temporary accommodation for HARSAG

April 2018

### Summary and recommendations

- With numbers in temporary accommodation rising and people's duration of stay increasing, it is important to ensure temporary accommodation is a stepping stone, rather than a hindrance, to a settled home in the future. Living in temporary accommodation should not worsen a household's situation or hold them in homelessness for longer, but rather should be an opportunity to prevent repeat homelessness and make sure a household moves on to a secure tenancy as soon as possible.
- Introducing standards is an opportunity to address these things and ensure that temporary accommodation in 21st century Scotland is good quality, safe, warm and affordable. It should also be a means through which people who are homeless and waiting for a settled home, are able to access the advice, support and signposting they need in order to move away from the immediate crisis of homelessness.
- When we refer to standards, we are not only considering the physical standards of the property, but rather all the factors that make for good quality temporary accommodation, including management, services and location. Standards in temporary accommodation are currently variable both across type and provider. Shelter Scotland works every week with clients who are in unsafe, sometimes dangerous and unsuitable accommodation.
- For many people, temporary accommodation is the first step away from the crisis of homelessness and is a vital part of the housing safety net. Demand for temporary accommodation is currently rising. Prevention strategies, rapid rehousing models and Housing First should, in time, reduce pressure on temporary accommodation. In the meantime, temporary accommodation is the most expensive element of the homelessness service, and there is a vital need for consistent standards in temporary accommodation to ensure good value for money.
- Across the housing and homelessness sector there is both a need and an appetite to improve standards and we must use that momentum to act swiftly to introduce legally enforceable standards. A legal standard should apply to all types of temporary accommodation and be enforceable.
- The best way to embed a legal standard for temporary accommodation is through a change to secondary legislation coupled with inclusion of comprehensive standards in the revised Code of Guidance which is already on a statutory footing.

- Any new legal standards should have appropriate reviews built in. Compliance and enforcement should also be set out to ensure standards make real difference on the front-line.
- Sustainable funding to provide sufficient and suitable temporary accommodation for anybody who requires it is a vital part of the equation. There should be an urgent review of the funding arrangements for temporary accommodation, linked to the provision of standards.

## Introduction

Temporary accommodation is provided, in a variety of circumstances, to households who apply under the homelessness legislation: during the initial period when assessment is being made; as a final outcome for households assessed as non-priority or intentionally homeless; and as a 'holding' solution for those who are owed a duty of permanent accommodation but are waiting for this to be made available. There are several different types of temporary accommodation provided by local authorities, housing associations, and the voluntary and private sectors. These include bed and breakfast hotels, hostels, furnished and unfurnished accommodation, and supported accommodation.

Shelter Scotland believes that temporary accommodation in 21st century Scotland should be good quality, safe, warm and affordable, regardless of who needs it and who supplies it. It should also be a conduit through which people who are homeless and waiting for a permanent home, are able to access the advice, support and signposting they need in order to move away from homelessness and interconnected issues. It must be affordable and represent a good return on investment and a good quality service for local authorities.

Annually the cost of providing temporary accommodation across Scotland is £100-150m a year<sup>1</sup> and we need a consistency and quality across all types of temporary accommodation which reflects this significant annual expenditure. For many people, temporary accommodation will be a short stop-gap while waiting for suitable permanent accommodation, but it remains an integral part of the homelessness system in Scotland and is a cornerstone of the housing safety net. It is therefore critical that as we recalibrate services to reflect prevention priorities, and while we increase the supply of affordable housing to meet housing need, the role of temporary accommodation is not diminished in the short term while demand remains high.

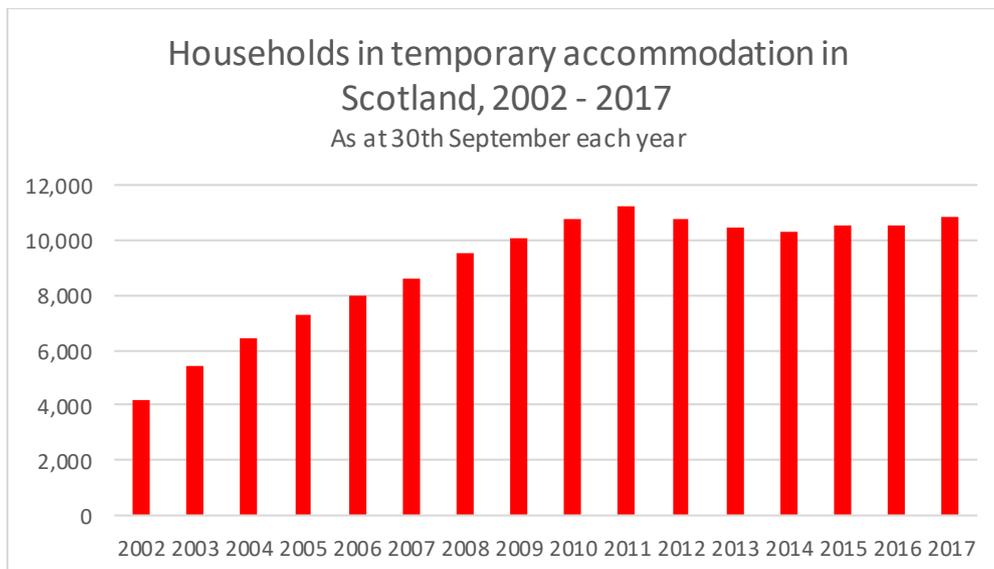
## Why do we need standards?

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<sup>1</sup> The exact figure is difficult to reference, but in 2016 Scottish Housing News reported a total spend of £750m in 5 years.

<http://www.scottishhousingnews.com/12495/scottish-councils-spent-750m-on-temporary-housing-in-last-five-years/>

Investment and strategic planning around the prevention of homelessness is a vital part of any long-term plan for temporary accommodation. Reducing the overall demand on temporary accommodation must be a strategic goal. Building on the housing options model which has prevention at its heart, further exploration of rapid rehousing and housing first should mean that in the future, the demand for temporary accommodation is reduced and that the average stay is reduced. However, the demand for temporary accommodation remains extremely high and rising. The most recent homelessness statistics<sup>2</sup> show that at 30 September 2017 there were nearly 11,000 (10,899) households in temporary accommodation, 3,426 of which were families, containing 6,581 children. These represent increases of 1%, 3% and 10% respectively compared to the same time in 2016. Shelter Scotland's own research<sup>3</sup> showed that the average time spent in temporary accommodation had increased from 18 weeks in 2014 and 23 weeks in 2015 to 24 weeks in 2016, indicating that **more people were spending longer periods of time in temporary accommodation.**



The success of rapid rehousing models and housing first will be largely dependent on the supply of good quality affordable housing so that people can move quickly into permanent, secure accommodation. Decades of undersupply have put intense pressure on social and affordable housing from homeless households and those on council and housing association waiting lists. Many of the households that are in temporary accommodation for a long time have specific requirements which means suitable properties are not frequently available, this includes large families, households who have disability access requirements and those will very specific location requirements i.e. specialist medical facilities or schools. This mismatch between supply and demand means that even with a more intense focus on housing

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government (2018); [Homelessness in Scotland: Update to 30 September 2017](#)

<sup>3</sup> Shelter Scotland (2017); [The use of temporary accommodation in Scotland - 2016](#)

homeless households more rapidly, **there will still be a significant residual need for temporary accommodation which must be strategically planned for .**

## **Funding**

Temporary accommodation can be very expensive and charges are significantly above the local housing allowance level in several local authority areas<sup>4</sup>. These costs are often unreasonable especially for working households who do not get help to pay for temporary accommodation through housing benefit entitlement. This in turn creates a perverse incentive for people to exit work in order to receive the housing benefit necessary to pay extortionate temporary accommodation costs. As part of the work being taken forward by HARSAG and then the HPSG, there should be examination of how a funding model could be introduced that recognises the real cost of temporary accommodation and can sustainably fund sufficient and suitable temporary accommodation provision for anybody who requires it. As a hugely expensive resource that local authorities are legally bound to provide and for which demand is rising, there needs to be increased investment in the provision of temporary accommodation. Given the forthcoming changes to the funding of temporary accommodation – potentially through a ring-fenced grant – then it makes sense to align this with the introduction of legal standards.

## **Temporary accommodation standards**

Standards in temporary accommodation are extremely variable both across different local authority areas and in terms of the types and provider of that accommodation. Shelter Scotland has carried out or commissioned several pieces of work in relation to temporary accommodation over recent years, and monitor the use of temporary accommodation on an annual basis. We work with clients every week who are in unsuitable accommodation in terms of the physical standard, facilities available or the service they are receiving. This includes very vulnerable clients being put in dangerous or totally unsuitable situations and families being placed in accommodation with no cooking or washing facilities. There is also some very good temporary accommodation across Scotland, but we need to close the gap and ensure all temporary accommodation, regardless of who is receiving and providing it, meets an acceptably high standard. In order to meet this vision of good quality, safe, warm and affordable temporary accommodation, there needs to be an agreed set of standards which all providers are legally required to comply with. These standards should be cross-tenure and legally enforceable.

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<sup>4</sup> Research carried out by Anna Evans for Shelter Scotland in 2016 showed that in some areas, temporary accommodation charges were as high as 262% above the relevant local housing allowance rate. Anna Evans (2016); [Funding Homelessness Services in Scotland](#)

In 2011, Shelter Scotland and CIH Scotland produced guidance on Temporary Accommodation standards<sup>5</sup> which set out a benchmark for quality, location and the management of temporary accommodation. This guidance was written in consultation with providers of temporary accommodation and those with experience of living in temporary accommodation. This guidance was written to cover the gaps in existing housing quality standards which some types of temporary accommodation were falling through (such as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) or the Unsuitable Accommodation Order), but also to look beyond the physical condition of the properties at the standard of management and service provided to people in temporary homes.

These standards are not limited to the physical standards of the property, but rather they cover all the factors that make for good quality temporary accommodation:

- **Physical standards**
  - The accommodation should be a sufficient safe and secure space, is suitable for any disability requirements, is clean, heated well, has adequate access to on site cooking, bathroom and washing facilities. Households are given notice when landlord needs to access the room
  - Has adequate communal living space which includes, for example, space for children to play or do homework
  - Has access to adequate cooking facilities
  - Has a suitable standard of furniture to meet the families' needs
- **Location and network standards**
  - The accommodation should be located close enough to services (supermarket, doctors etc.) so that they can be reasonably reached by foot or public transport, and to support networks and places of work.
  - It should meet cultural or religious needs as well as social and economic needs
- **Service standards**
  - An assessment of need should be carried out and referrals to appropriate agencies made, with periodical reviews. Flexible and needs-led support is provided and there are regular visits by allocated officers, all underpinned by good quality communication
  
- **Management standards**

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<sup>5</sup> Shelter Scotland and CIH (2011); [Guidance on Standards for Temporary Accommodation](#)

- Tenants should be provided with a written occupancy agreement, details of any accommodation rules and repairs and complaints procedures.
- There should be procedures in place in regards to moving in and out of the accommodation and how possessions will be protected.
- Residents should have the opportunity to be involved in discussions regarding their stay and their needs. There should be sufficient numbers of trained staff to realise these standards and understand the needs of the people using temporary accommodation

These standards were welcomed by some housing providers and have been used as a reference point by some local authorities, but they have no legal footing and are therefore unenforceable.

### **Legally enforceable standards**

There is both the need and the appetite from the sector to improve standards in temporary accommodation. In September 2017, the Scottish Government made the commitment in their Programme for Government<sup>6</sup> to develop guidance on standards of temporary accommodation for homeless households, although we don't yet know how this is to be implemented or monitored. Building on this commitment and the momentum from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and the recommendations being made to the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Group (HPSG) it is now the time to make standards legal.

The Scottish Government should take the CIH and Shelter Scotland standards as a framework and consult the sector including local authorities, housing providers, third sector partners and those who have experience of temporary accommodation to produce a set of agreed standards covering all types of temporary accommodation. It is vital that these cover both physical, location and service standards.

Shelter Scotland believes that better standards could be achieved through the introduction of legal mechanisms to improve practice:

#### **1. Secondary legislation.**

Section 29 of the Housing (Scotland) 1987 Act is the 'Interim duty to accommodate' compelling local authorities to accommodate all those they 'have reason to believe' are homeless. It is through this section of the Act that The Homeless Persons

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<sup>6</sup> "We will also develop guidance on standards in temporary accommodation for homeless households" (p105) Scottish Government, [A Nation with Ambition: the Government's Programme for Scotland 2017-18](#)

(Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 was introduced as a Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI).

Introducing an equivalent SSI that defines the suitability of the temporary accommodation as per the agreed standards the Scottish Government has consulted on would put new quality standards into legislation.

## 2. Statutory Guidance.

Given the recent HARSAG recommendation which has been accepted to revise the statutory Code of Guidance, it makes sense to also include new standards within a refreshed Code of Guidance. Section 37(1) of Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by the 2001 and 2003 Act) requires local authorities to have regard to Guidance issued by the Secretary of State in the exercise of their homelessness functions. The Code of Guidance provides such guidance. By including the agreed standards within a revised Code of Guidance, this would add detail and emphasis to the provision made through secondary legislation.

It is important that **both** these elements are taken forward. The introduction of secondary legislation would be the strongest legal expression but would, by necessity, be restricted by what is possible to put into an SSI and what can be expressed legally. The Code of Guidance on its own is not a sufficiently strong legal tool and there are many instances when the provisions are not adhered to. But by including a comprehensive set of standards within the revised Code of Guidance there is an opportunity to express the aspiration of the new standards fully.

### Enforcement and monitoring

Once introduced, it is critical that adherence to new standards is comprehensive. The Scottish Housing Regulator should have responsibility for monitoring compliance. This should be through thematic enquiry and risk based intervention as with other statutory housing duties. It will also need to be considered how Scottish Government homeless statistics data collection could be amended to reflect new/enhanced obligations. Nationally collected statistics would be an additional tool for monitoring compliance.



## HRSAG 3<sup>RD</sup> STAKEHOLDER EVENT – GLASGOW – 27 MARCH 2018

### Key feedback/points from discussions around tables:

#### Discussion 1: Hopes & Fears for the recommendations on rough sleeping

- **Principles good** – generally seen as positive/with keen surprise and disbelief/what needed to be said/opportunity to do things differently- **judgement reserved until implementation starts**
- **Good to see match up** with previous **feedback and Aye We Can** findings
- **Ministerial/political buy-in needed across national portfolios and locally** – senior management buy-in in LAs - top down messages - rough sleeping recommendations shouldn't just be for Housing Minister to sign off on but health and justice Ministers as well
- **Ring fenced budgets required** to ensure focus e.g. LA senior mgt
- Concern that **this will still not address the underlying issues, which arise from austerity and welfare reform**, although a recognition that this isn't necessarily in the SG's gift
- Need **clear message homelessness is everyone's issue to solve** - joined up thinking/communication/measurement/data sharing, partnership working (e.g. health, criminal justice) and link to other strategies (e.g. Social Isolation Strategy)
- Need a **named worker approach and right staff & attitudes** to avoid mixed messages
- **Retraining staff** to provide a **different kind of support**
- **Support for rapid rehousing** – but **challenge to actually deliver this given the stock available**
- concern **rapid rehousing** could cause an **increase in homelessness presentations**
- Need to **bring LAs together** for consistency on the planning/design principles on **the 5 year transition plans** - is **5 years enough?**
- **Housing supply a real issue** in relation to **smaller house sizes** (demand for one bedroomed houses)
- **Tenancy sustainment a real issue** – not just about getting a house
- **Terminology** for rapid rehousing v housing first needs to be clear and communicated to all parties
- Need **consistent approach** to identifying **priority need**
- **Housing Options** needs to be **done in entirety for everyone**, imbedded in system and serve rough sleepers as well
- **Care Review** covering similar ground – **seek symmetry** - hope Care Review would use the report as its starting point
- **Integrated joint boards** - need more support from Health and Social Care
- Links to **employment**
- **Hidden homelessness** needs to be further understood
- Implementation at risk due to **problem with current funding environment** - will SG resource implementation?
- **Support wraparound** is high cost – has to **remain with person @ risk** of rough sleeping
- **Fear politicians taking a short term approach** when a long term approach is needed

- **Fear we lose momentum and burn out** before achieve change
- **Awareness of the recommendations is important** e.g. local events in local authorities to spread message between local partners
- Fear that **public attitudes won't shift**
- Huge challenge to achieve **culture shift required** to deliver locally+ How will it be achieved?
- Third sector – need to look at **support services differently** to support rapid rehousing
- **NRPF** – need to change Home Office/UK Gov/SG – **huge issue** - catches even UK nationals if they've lived abroad for a period
- Use of SG funding to transition
- Some of what we are doing is addressing the symptoms – what about the **root causes?**
- Need to **plan transition** really well - **don't decommission existing provision too soon/leave people stuck**
- Heard this all before – will it be different this time? What happens next?
- Risk of 32 x LAs all doing different things – **all LASs need to be engaged in implementation** - need join up on shared commitments - work the networks that exist and ensure clear messaging
- Need to establish & maintain **community connections**
- Need to **get going as soon as possible** to maintain momentum
- Need to **communicate all this effectively, at all levels**, especially clarity of messaging and shared terminology
- **Risk of setting hares running** and missing opportunities for transformational change as a result
- How to get the **messages out to everyone e.g. RSLs/regulators/board members**
- **Money** to get it going and keep it going = **equally important**
- **How to mainstream funding** of new approaches **when money is tight** everywhere
- **Join up with others is key** – govt departments and locally as well
- Where is the **regulator** in all of this?
- **Proposals will require high cost support** which is probably the **most vulnerable to cuts**
- This **will take time, LAs can be slow to react**. Need to **capitalise on the winter successes**. Do we undertake other interventions in the short term?
- **What are the barriers to frontline staff working together?**
- **Third sector organisations** have to **compete for funding**, and are **bound to contracting periods**. This **impacts on staff wellbeing and efficiency** within organisations – they are uncertain about how long they'll have a job for

### Key points from Aye we can presentation

- People want **Housing First and Fast** and **less time in temporary places**, and to **stop using hostels and B&B**
- **Experience of time in TA** leading to losing contact with your children and the impact this can have on your mental health
- **Services need to be joined up** and not a maze for people
- Issues on **access to TA in rural areas** and having support locally

- Interactions with **benefits and DWP sanctions**
- Variation in experience people have with different members of staff – the **difference a good staff interaction can make** (or vice versa)
- Recognise **importance of ACES** and focus on young people and preventing child poverty
- Start prevention early e.g. **childhood experiences on release from institutions** e.g. prison, mental health, care
- **Numbers we have aren't right and need to get better** – information sharing doesn't work well; people telling their story over and over
- Need to **make sure** there are **no cracks for people to fall through**
- **Keep asking** those with **lived experience of homelessness**

### Feedback from discussion on Temporary accommodation

- Holistic, **trauma-informed support from day 1** is essential - Whose job is it anyway? (joined up working)
- Difficulties in definitions – **need to understand broad picture** – not all good and not all bad
- People access accommodation as – lack of PRS/council housing/financial crisis – **housing options more and more limited**
- **Scale of “problem” has vastly outstripped availability**
- Do we need more **radical commissioning/personal power for person** to drive their housing/support package/self-directed support
- How to change current homelessness system – **role of regs/SHR/Care Inspectorate** – process v outcomes
- **Rapid rehousing – mindset of people** in accommodation is to wait – **how do we change this** – more housing opportunities (LAs/RSLs)
- Choice? **Homelessness should be allocations priority**
- **TA** should be a **stop gap** and needs to be a **high standard**
- Current **commissioning for providers not conducive to person-centred support/outcomes**
- **Is communal living always bad?** Student living? Transient workloads
- **No capital funding** for TA units
- How do we **make sure reduction in TA not a funding/cost reduction**
- Different **landlord market (e.g. Edinburgh v Aberdeen)**
- **How does TA affect general housing market** – what part does each component play (Temp, PRS, Social Rented Owners)?
- **Housing First – is it the Helsinki** congregated living model?
- **Need tenant consultation** on changes from existing model to housing first
- **SG 2005 rough sleeping paper** – what can we use?
- **How affordable is affordable?**
- Need a **new style of temp where temp is the right approach** – tailored for specific support
- Tension of **quick placement v choice is tricky**
- **B&B is expensive and a poor option** for anyone - should be avoided and a last resort/only for absolute emergency
- Need to see a **scaling up of the ‘right’ support** to reduce use of the poor options
- **Prevention is key**

- Recognise the **role of partners in moving on from temp** e.g. health support
- Need **more guidance/framework on funding**
- Recognise we need to **change the whole system to get away from fire fighting**
- **Is temp actually required? Different in different areas**
- Recognise **challenge for LAs** in balancing needs on waiting lists
- **Increasing housing stock overall is crucial**
- **Service outcomes as a driver for commissioning? Self-directed support as a lever?**
- Commissioned services – **reality v actual requirements on ground**
- **Regulator needs to shift focus to outcomes**
- Open out to **look at all parts of the housing market** eg. PRS, RSLs, LAs
- Funding – **decommission; redesign; recommission = realistic?**
- **Understand why people are in TA** to inform how we can **prevent**
- **Lack of suitability of affordable housing options and lack of support**
- **Staff attitudes – too much variation** in approach among staff
- **Devolution of social security** and access to affordable housing
- **Necessary to have personalised and flexible support** which is reliable to help people move through temp and on.
- There is a **tension between quick housing and the right housing.**
- Like **idea of ‘floating’ TA, ‘flipping’ RSL properties from TA to a normal tenancy** where it makes sense for the resident
- There’s a **real problem in rural areas**, where there are so few properties – sometimes this makes it impossible to rehouse people near their support networks. When they turn down properties they can make themselves intentionally homeless in the eyes of the system. Options to use the PRS better? Or empty homes?
- **Rurality – moving people to towns might make housing sense, but it contributes to the decline of rural communities.** There is a choice about where and how to build houses, but this needs a holistic strategic approach bringing in transport and other services including health and education.
- Needs to be **more consideration or flexibility around this kind of ‘intentionally homeless’** – people’s reasons for rejecting a property could be regarded as valid, although this is a sliding scale.
- **Still need specialist and supported hostels**
- **PRS landlords wary of taking HB tenants** because of **initial delays**, which will be exacerbated by UC
- **What is ‘real time procurement’ of TA?**
- Recognition that **current system of TA is in crisis and flux...v hard to anticipate what changes are needed**
- **Can we build ‘flexible’ housing** that could be **converted relatively easily** if larger or smaller properties are needed?
- **Shared properties aren’t necessarily bad – but very hard for caseworkers to engineer effective shares** especially where people have complex needs.
- We do **know what good support looks like, but why aren’t be doing it everywhere?** Need **strategies for sharing good practice**, but really need to trigger good leadership everywhere. Role for SG yes, but needed at all levels.

## **The funding of temporary and supported accommodation**

### **1. Context**

1.1 The funding available for temporary and supported accommodation is affected by the welfare reform programme of previous and current Westminster Governments.

1.2 The introduction of Universal Credit (UC) by the UK Government (UKG), first announced in 2010, will see it replace six existing means-tested benefits, including Housing Benefit.

1.3 For tenants renting their own home and on a low income, Housing Benefit helps them to the costs of their rent. However, Housing Benefit also provides the funding for the accommodation costs in temporary and supported housing, often paid to the landlord rather than the individual. The costs in this accommodation are normally met in full and because of the nature of the accommodation usually incur higher costs than mainstream accommodation.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

1.4 When an individual makes a homeless application to a local authority and has nowhere else to stay, **temporary accommodation (TA)** is provided until settled accommodation is available. If the individual is intentionally homeless, TA is provided for a period that will give them a reasonable opportunity to secure their own accommodation.

1.5. The UK Government had started to pay TA costs through Universal Credit but from April 2018 costs will revert to being funded through Housing Benefit in the short-term. A longer-term solution is currently under consideration. However, a Management Fee associated with administering of Temporary Accommodation was devolved to Scotland and has been distributed to local authorities since 2016-17. The total funding will be £23.5m in 2018-19.

### **Supported Accommodation**

1.6 **Supported accommodation (SA)** covers a wide range of housing based support services including group homes, hostels, refuges, sheltered housing, supported living complexes and adapted housing for those with disabilities. Those who benefit from the housing include the elderly, ex-homeless people, people with mental, physical and learning disabilities, people who have left care, prison or military service, those with a history of drug and alcohol problems, refugees and asylum seekers.

1.7 The UK Government has been working since 2011 to reform the use of Housing Benefit in relation to supported accommodation (SA) with the aims of reducing complexity of the system, controlling rising expenditure and to deal with the introduction of Universal Credit. It has put forward numerous proposals for change, each of which has been met by the housing sector, across the UK, with concern, resulting in the plans needing to be revised. This concern is even more pertinent in Scotland, with our focus on creating a fairer, more inclusive country and social security and housing policies that are person-centred.

1.8 The latest iteration, on which a consultation opened in October 2017, proposed to differentiate between three different types of SA. The proposal would see the funding of short-term SA devolved to Scotland in 2020 with the funding for sheltered housing and long term SA staying within the UK welfare system.

1.9 The proposed definition of short term-supported accommodation is set out in the consultation as:-

***Accommodation with support, accessed following a point of crisis or as part of a transition to living independently, and provided for a period of up to two years or until transition to suitable long-term stable accommodation is found, whichever occurs first.***

1.10. While the UK Government have already set out that funding in England will be given directly to local authorities by way of a ring-fenced grant, the Supported Accommodation Steering Group want to work with the sector to consider whether this is the best way to ensure continued provision of short term accommodation services in Scotland alongside a broader range of potential options. The outcome of this options appraisal exercise will be considered by the Steering Group in their recommendation to Ministers.

## **2. Issues with funding systems now and in the future**

2.1. There is a substantial overlap between temporary, short-term and longer term supported accommodation and indeed an individual may transition between all three. The exact contours of this overlap vary depending on local context.

2.2 With funding for temporary and longer term housing staying within the UK Welfare Budget and funding for short term housing being devolved, there is a risk that this would lead to further fragmentation of the system with the creation of artificial barriers to people being placed in the right accommodation due to funding frameworks and creating a more confusing environment for users of the accommodation.

2.3 The funding arrangements are already complex and further fragmentation will only add to that. There currently exists funding conflicts within local authorities with housing benefit teams upholding the DWP rules on accommodation costs and social care and homelessness teams, amongst others, commissioning services that provide the support to individuals.

2.4 When the funding for short term supported accommodation is devolved, an individual who is in temporary accommodation will still see funding of accommodation costs paid by the UK Government. If that individual were then to move into short-term supported accommodation, their costs would be met by the yet to be determined Scottish model. If that short term solution becomes a more permanent arrangement, then funding would revert to the UK Government. Further details on this are shown in Annex A.

2.5 This situation creates additional edges to the system and could lead to confusion amongst individuals, providers and local authorities about whether UK or

Scottish Government has policy, legislative and funding responsibilities in any particular case.

2.6 In addition, with only some of the funding being devolved, Scottish Ministers are restricted in their ability to deliver the transformative change that is required to build a system fully focussed on the individual.

### **Rapid Rehousing and Housing First**

2.7 The interim report from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) on Ending Rough Sleeping in Scotland contained a key recommendation to transition to a model of 'rapid rehousing' by default and to scale up a Housing First approach.

2.8 This approach will see local authorities plan and implement changes which will see far higher numbers of households making a homeless application being given permanent accommodation straight away, rather than going into temporary accommodation for a period of time by default.

2.9 There is substantial evidence to support this approach but a transition to this model has funding implications. A transition to a rapid rehousing model will reduce the amount of temporary accommodation needed and reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation where it is still required. As a result, less funding will be received from the UK Government through Housing Benefit due to restrictions on the amount of Housing Benefit available for general needs accommodation, in comparison to the whole costs available for temporary accommodation.

2.10 In addition, there is no possibility to repurpose those savings and reinvest in improved homelessness services or permanent accommodation options.

### **3. A joined-up approach**

3.1 With a desire to change approach as a result of the emerging HARSAG recommendations and the proposed devolution of funding for short-term supported accommodation, it is clear that uncertainty over existing funding systems as a result of the UK Government's on-going welfare reform programme presents barriers and risks.

3.2 Annex B sets out a series of estimates to the cost of providing temporary and accommodation and associated support in Scotland, totalling approximately £1 billion. At the moment, around £412.5 million of that is spent by local authorities, around half of which provides care and support for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

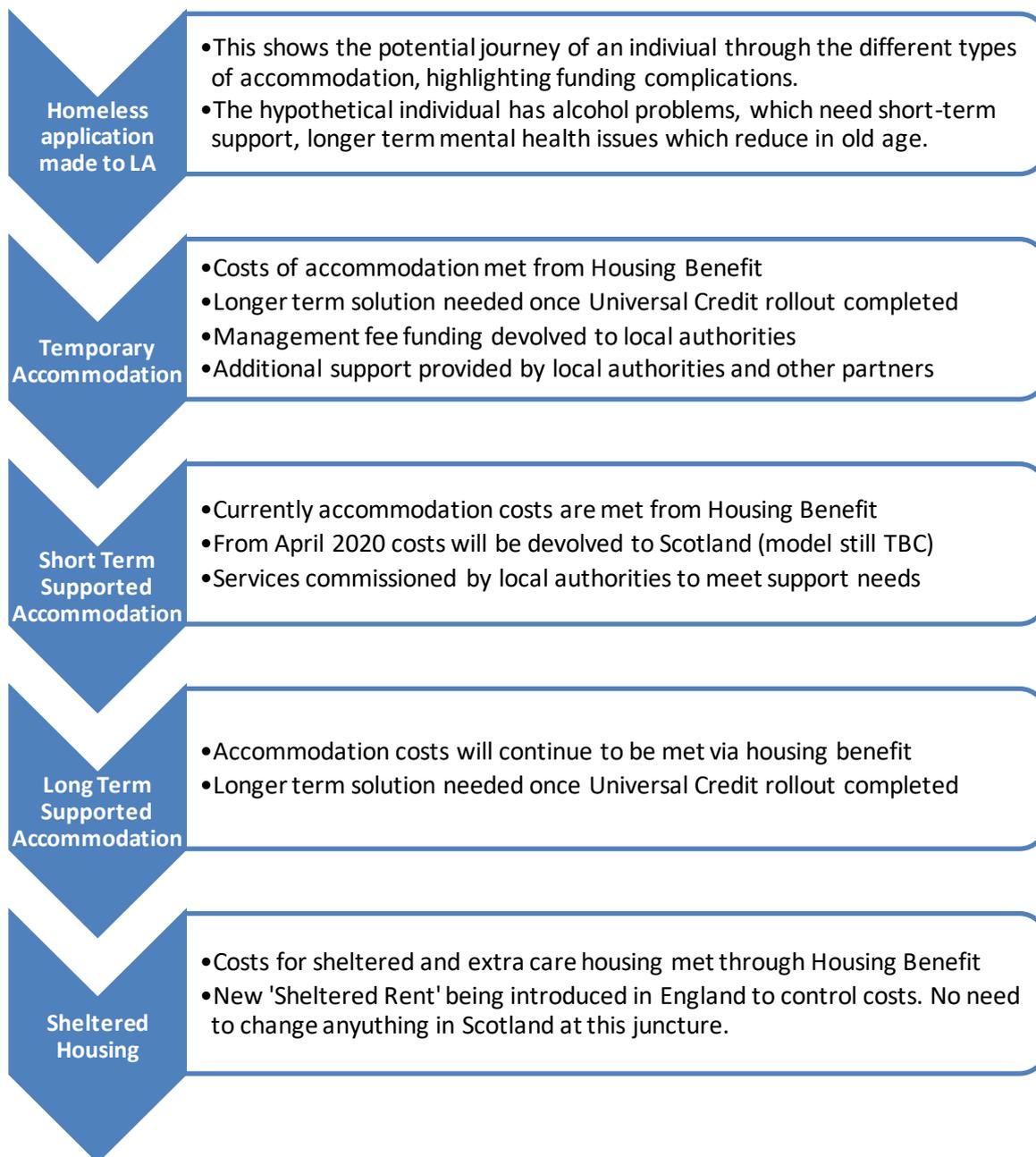
3.3 When funding for short-term supported accommodation is devolved in April 2020 the amount of funding within Scottish control will increase to approximately £500 million.

3.4 In order to allow us to take a whole systems approach in Scotland to housing and the support services that individuals in temporary and supported accommodation

require, further devolution of funding could be beneficial, creating a more cohesive system based on Scottish principles.

3.5 Devolving the funding of the temporary and supported accommodation elements of Housing Benefit could avoid the creation of barriers and allow some flexibility in system design that would allow for a focus on providing individuals with the support they need to help them achieve positive outcomes in both the short and long term.

3.6 The devolution of funding and powers all Housing Benefit (and the Housing Element of Universal Credit) could further provide the opportunity to adopt a range of transformational measures and act as a catalyst to consider different approaches to the provision of accommodation and support for individuals across housing tenure by reinvesting savings from a reduction in temporary accommodation in improved settled housing options and more responsive services for homeless households.



**Estimated spend on temporary and supported accommodation and associated support costs by Scottish local authorities (all figures in £million)**

	2018/19	2020/21	All T/SA funding	All funding
<b>SA Housing Benefit Spend<sup>i</sup></b>			<b>410</b>	
<b>TA Management Fee</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>23.5</b>
<b>TA Housing Benefit Spend<sup>ii</sup></b>			<b>125.0</b>	
<b>Spend on Housing Support &amp; Care in SA<sup>iii</sup></b>	<b>389.0</b>	<b>389.0</b>	<b>389.0</b>	<b>389.0</b>
<b>Short-term SA funding<sup>iv</sup></b>		<b>50-100<sup>v</sup></b>		
<b>All HB spend</b>				<b>1800.0<sup>vi</sup></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>412.5</b>	<b>462.5-512.5</b>	<b>947.5</b>	<b>2212.5</b>

<sup>i</sup> Estimate taken from 2016 Ipsos MORI [Supported Accommodation Review](#) carried out for UK Government

<sup>ii</sup> Estimate taken from CIH Research

<sup>iii</sup> Estimate taken from 2016 Ipsos MORI [Supported Accommodation Review](#) carried out for UK Government

<sup>iv</sup> Estimate of funding that will be devolved from April 2020 based on definition set out in UK Government's consultation. As this is a new definition, no data currently exists on the size and cost of funding short-term SA in Scotland. SA Steering Group undertaking work that will provide more accurate estimate going forward.

<sup>v</sup> An option appraisal process will determine how this money will be distributed once allocated to Scotland from April 2020.

<sup>vi</sup> Last available full year (2013/14) before introduction of Universal Credit

## Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) Meeting

9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – HMP Saughton

### Transforming the financing of temporary accommodation in Scotland

1. The financing of temporary accommodation is complex and is based on a system of high rental charges where the full cost of the accommodation and housing management services are borne by the homeless household.
2. The majority of households claim housing benefit to cover the rent charges, funding ultimately provided through the UK Government Treasury. If a household's eligibility to claim full or partial housing benefit is changed through access to employment, training or further education, the household cannot continue to pay the rent and arrears quickly accrue. This ultimately acts as a disincentive for the household to do anything to alter their housing benefit status, and acts as a so-called poverty trap while in temporary accommodation.
3. Tackling poverty and moving households out of homelessness into more sustainable and life-enriching activities lies at the heart of Local Authority Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPS). Removing the financial barriers to access and to exit temporary accommodation and out of homelessness must be a priority for Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.
4. The transformation and simplification of temporary accommodation is an imperative for HARSAG if it is to recommend ways to transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland.

***Recommendation #1*** - HARSAG recognises the complexity of temporary accommodation finance in Scotland. If we are to transform the use of temporary accommodation, there should be a transformation in the way temporary accommodation is funded to make it more financially accessible for homeless households. The high rents charged for accommodation creates a "poverty-trap" for households resident in temporary accommodation. This must be mitigated as this prevents homeless people accessing employment, training or further education, and ultimately moving out of homelessness.

5. The debate should be about how the costs of homelessness are currently met and who they fall on? Most homelessness services in Scotland are funded

through the Local Authorities' General Funds from a mix of council tax contributions, and general taxation through Scottish Government Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE). This is the case for all prevention, homelessness assessment, and housing support services provided to homeless households.

6. However, this is not the case for temporary accommodation. There is no support from the Local Authority General Fund as the rent charges must cover the expenditure on services. This is the current policy in all but a very small number of Local Authorities.
  
7. As a matter of principle, HARSAG believes that the financial responsibility of providing good quality temporary accommodation should not fall solely on the shoulders of the homeless household. Homelessness is not the fault of the homeless household and can affect anyone living in our society. As with Homelessness Services in Local Authorities, temporary accommodation should also be funded by a contribution of more reasonable rent charges and contributions from the Local Authority General Fund. In effect, the costs are shared between the homeless household and the citizens in each Local Authority area.

***Recommendation #2 - We recognise that the entire cost of temporary accommodation currently falls on the homeless household and is funded mainly through Housing Benefit Support from the Treasury. We do not believe that this is fair and equitable in the context of Local Authority Local Outcome Improvement Plans based on reducing poverty in their local areas. The costs of homelessness and temporary accommodation should be a citizen-funded service, supported by Local Authority General Fund finance, and by Scottish Government Grant Aided Expenditure.***

8. Since the abolition of priority need in 2012 and the implementation of welfare reforms in Scotland, Local Authorities have been engaged in the modernisation of temporary accommodation, characterised by:
  - Reducing or eradicating the use of B&B as a main form of temporary accommodation
  - Reviewing the number of temporary accommodation units required
  - Modelling the potential implementation of a Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Cap (UK Government proposal removed in November 2017)
  - Achieving cost efficiencies to reduce rent charges with the LHA as a target

9. As stated in 6, a small number of Local Authorities have taken a policy decision to reduce temporary accommodation rents to lower levels, to reduce the gap between Housing Revenue Account rent charges to secure tenancies and to enhanced rents charged to homeless households on the General Fund. HARSAG recognises that the leadership shown by these councils offers a positive way forward to lift the financial burden to a great extent from homeless households to a more equitable, shared basis.

*Recommendation #3 - The Social Bite/I-Sphere temporary accommodation research project currently underway, has highlighted that a small number of councils have reduced their rents to approaching a Local Housing Allowance level. We believe that this is the most equitable way forward for all homeless people in a local area.*

10. The securing of efficiencies in the costs of providing temporary accommodation services is the duty of Local Authorities to achieve Best Value. However, this should not compromise the quality of the accommodation and support provided to homeless households. Research by the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland and Shelter (Scotland) has proposed a series of qualitative and location-based standards. HARSAG supports the implementation of these standards to ensure that every homeless household who needs temporary accommodation lives in good quality and locationally-sensitive accommodation for as little time as possible.
11. The move to reduce enhanced rents in temporary accommodation must be underpinned by a recognition that Local Authorities will need funding support to continue to operate temporary accommodation and support services for homeless households. If the funding support is not provided by the General Fund, the risk is that Local Authorities will reduce the extent and quality of accommodation to keep within budget.

*Recommendation~4 - HARSAG suggests that the Scottish Government and CoSLA need to discuss how the current UK Government's funding support through housing benefit can be devolved to the Scottish Government. This is already the intention for the housing benefit funding for supported accommodation in Scotland by April 2020. Local Authorities will need financial support to bridge the funding gap created by moving to a LHA equivalent rent. The Scottish Government should address this as part of the transformation of the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland.*

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) Recommendations

### Transforming the financing of temporary accommodation in Scotland

1. The financing of temporary accommodation is complex and is based on a system of high rental charges where the full cost of the accommodation and housing management services are borne by the homeless household.
2. The debate should be about how the costs of homelessness are currently met and who they fall on? Most homelessness services in Scotland are funded through the Local Authorities' General Funds from a mix of council tax contributions, and general taxation through Scottish Government Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE). This is the case for all prevention, homelessness assessment, and housing support services provided to homeless households.
3. However, this is not the case for temporary accommodation. There is no support from the Local Authority General Fund as the rent charges must cover the expenditure on services. This is the current policy in all but 2-3 Local Authorities.
4. The majority of households claim housing benefit to cover the rent charges, funding ultimately provided through the UK Government Treasury. If a household's eligibility to claim full or partial housing benefit is changed through access to employment, training or further education, the household cannot continue to pay the rent and arrears quickly accrue. This ultimately acts as a disincentive for the household to do anything to alter their housing benefit status, and acts as a so-called poverty trap while in temporary accommodation.
5. We do not believe that this is fair and equitable in the context of Community Plan Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) based on reducing poverty in their local areas.
6. As a matter of principle, HARSAG believes that the financial responsibility of providing good quality temporary accommodation should not fall solely on the shoulders of the homeless household.
7. Homelessness is not the fault of the homeless household and can affect anyone living in our society. As with Homelessness Services in Local Authorities, temporary accommodation should also be funded by a contribution of more reasonable rent charges and contributions from the Local Authority General Fund. In effect, the costs should be shared between the homeless household and the citizens in each Local Authority area.

***Recommendation #1 - The costs of homelessness and temporary accommodation should be a citizen-funded service, supported by Local Authority General Fund finance, and by Scottish Government Grant Aided Expenditure.***

8. HARSAG's interim report on Ending Rough Sleeping contained a key recommendation to transition to a model of 'rapid rehousing' by default . This approach over a 5-year transitional period will result in far higher proportion of households making a homelessness application being given permanent accommodation straight away, rather than going into temporary accommodation for a period of time.
9. As a direct result, less funding would be received from the UK Government through Housing Benefit due to restrictions on the amount of Housing Benefit available for general needs accommodation, in comparison to the whole costs currently available for temporary accommodation.
10. The funding of short-term supported accommodation is due to be devolved to local authorities in England and to the devolved administrations in April 2020. The decision is yet to be made on the Scottish funding model for short term supported accommodation.
11. The recent decision from the UK Government which sees Universal Credit claimants in temporary accommodation having the housing part of their payment sent directly to the provider is a short term measure that requires a permanent solution. The devolution of funding alongside devolved funding for short-term supported accommodation in April 2020 would be one such solution.

***Recommendation #2 - The Scottish Government and COSLA should present a strong case to the UK Government for temporary accommodation funding support through housing benefit to be devolved to Scotland.***

12. Tackling poverty and moving households out of homelessness into more sustainable and life-enriching activities lies at the heart of LOIPS. Removing the financial barriers to access and to exit temporary accommodation and out of homelessness must be a priority for Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.
13. HARSAG recognises the complexity of temporary accommodation finance in Scotland. If we are to transform the use of temporary accommodation, there should be a transformation in the way temporary accommodation is funded to make it more financially affordable for homeless households. The high rents charged for accommodation creates a "poverty-trap" for households resident in temporary accommodation. This prevents homeless people accessing employment, training or further education, and ultimately moving out of homelessness.

***Recommendation #3 – In order to tackle poverty and give people an opportunity to access employment, training or further education and to move onto more settled accommodation, support for homelessness services should be given via a flexible grant system.***

14. The Social Bite/I-Sphere temporary accommodation research project currently underway, has highlighted that a small number of councils have reduced their rents to a level approaching a Local Housing Allowance rate.
15. These Local Authorities have sought to reduce the gap between Housing Revenue Account rent charges to secure tenancies and to enhanced rents charged to homeless households on the General Fund. HARSAG recognises that the leadership shown by these councils offers a positive way forward to lift the financial burden to a great extent from homeless households to a more equitable, shared basis.
16. Local authorities' efforts to reform and remodel temporary accommodation have been hampered in recent years by regular changes to the benefit subsidy regime and uncertainty as to the proposals and impact arising from welfare reform. In 2016 ALACHO estimated the loss income from reducing temporary accommodation rents to the LHA level would be at least £50m across Scotland.

***Recommendation #4 – Rents should be set at a level similar to the Local Housing Allowance rate in order to provide a more equitable system and provide a clearer path for people to move on from TA.***

17. The securing of efficiencies in the costs of providing temporary accommodation services is the duty of Local Authorities to achieve Best Value. However, this should not compromise the quality of the accommodation and support provided to homeless households.
18. Research by the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland and Shelter Scotland has proposed a series of qualitative and location-based standards. HARSAG supports a consultation on the implementation of these standards to ensure that every homeless household who needs temporary accommodation lives in good quality and location-sensitive accommodation for as little time as possible.
19. The move to reduce enhanced rents in temporary accommodation must be underpinned by a recognition that Local Authorities will need funding support to continue to operate temporary accommodation and housing management support services for homeless households.
20. HARSAG recognises that devolution of funding from the UK Government, provides the best solution to generating the level of funding required to provide additional funding support to local authorities via the General Fund. Without enhancement to the General Fund, the risk is that Local Authorities will need to reduce the extent and quality of accommodation to keep within budget.
21. HARSAG has heard of instances where the former temporary accommodation management fee which has been distributed to Scottish local authorities has not been spent on temporary accommodation or homelessness services. It is clear that if additional funding were to be devolved that this budget should be directed to homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation transformational change initiatives.





## Coproduction and Ending Homelessness in Scotland

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***Outline Proposal to:***

Scottish Government Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group

May 2018 - DRAFT

## **1. INTRO**

- 1.1 Recommendations for a transformational change programme to tackle homelessness have been accepted in principle by Scottish Ministers. The nature and cost of public service reform required to underpin this change will be clarified at local level over the coming months.
- 1.2 While there are emerging leaders across all sectors who will carry this ambition forward, embedding policy and practice change of this nature and scale can only be achieved in collaboration with frontline services, the people who use them and those who opt out.
- 1.3 Coproduction has been described as the ‘golden thread’ running through Scottish public policy, following the conclusion that “...*unless Scotland embraces a radical new collaborative culture throughout our public services, both budgets and provision will buckle under the strain*” (Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services: 2011).

## **2. WHO WE ARE**

- 2.1 The Scottish Coproduction Network is supported by Scottish Government (*Local Government & Communities Directorate*) and hosted by Scottish Community Development Centre. SCDC supports best practice in community development and is recognised as the national lead body for community development.
- 2.2 SHIEN is the national lived experience network supported by Scottish Government (*Housing & Social Justice Directorate*) and hosted by the Homeless Network (GHN).

## **3. HOMELESSNESS IN SCOTLAND: CHANGE IS COMING**

- 3.1 The HRSAG has made significant *practice, legal, culture and systems change* recommendations to tackle homelessness, which will now be implemented over the next phase.
- 3.2 This includes more consistent and trauma informed front-line delivery, new emphasis on public and third sector collaboration, a new prevention framework and a planned, costed transition to rapid rehousing, including Housing First by default for those that need it most.

## **4. COPRODUCING THIS CHANGE**

- 4.1 We have the best conditions to *coproduce* change over the next phase. A 5-year time frame, cross-party political commitment, political leadership, social imperative, calls from the frontline, collaboration with lived experience and a realistic level of new resources.
- 4.2 Coproduction balances ‘top down’ expertise and blends the many forms of expertise and insight among people working and living with homelessness. It is a mechanism to help make recommendations ‘stick’ and ensure they reach and improve the lives of people affected.

4.3 The New Economics Foundation describes the impact as:

*'Where activities are co-produced in this way [in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours], both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change.'*

4.4 Embarking on this 5-year ending homelessness programme will need the collaboration of many organisations and individuals across the public, housing, health, academic, third and community sectors. And at every level too; a connection to the Frontline Network facilitated by Cyrenians in Scotland will be an important component.

4.5 While there is consensus on the urgency to tackle homelessness and a new framework based on HRSAG recommendations, there remains plenty of nuanced debate, 'path dependency' and different ideas about what works best. Implementing recommendations will need the strongest communication and collaboration between all parts that seeks to understand difference, but not let it hold progress back.

## 5. FACILITATED APPROACH

5.1 A planned programme to facilitate cross-sector dialogue and resolution, which recognises policy and strategy expertise and puts lived and frontline experience at the core of the conversation. Nationally and locally, this can work to help:

- Define and rationalise change
- Identify who is needed to create change
- Build support for that change
- Effectively communicate change
- Support change on the ground

5.2 Participatory Action Research – *learning through doing* – is the ideal approach for coproducing change of this scale. By applying an action learning component to a coproduction programme, we can simultaneously learn and share learning about:

- (i) Housing & Homelessness: transforming responses to homelessness in a UK and international context;
- (ii) Health & Social Care Integration: scaling up a tightly integrated package of health and social care for multiply excluded people alongside the housing contribution;
- (iii) Coproduction: grounding current theory and knowledge in an urgent social problem; collaborating to achieve a significant policy objective and facilitate systems change.