

Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan
Annual report to Parliament: draft structure and outline

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This paper sets out the structure of the Annual Progress Report and highlights key information under each heading.

The document will be presented as a joint COSLA / Scottish Government report (reflecting the joint nature of the Action Plan) and the intention is that that document reflects the range of work being progressed by all members of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group – not only the work of the SG.

An earlier version of this paper was shared with HPSG in November for comment, and thank you to those who responded.

The intention to publish the Annual Report in mid-January, thereby avoiding the busy pre (and immediately post) election period. We intend to share a draft of the report with HPSG in the coming weeks.

DRAFT STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE

1. Foreword/s

The Foreword will be from the Cabinet Secretary with a joint introduction by the Minister and Cllr Whitham.

The Foreword builds on the key themes from the Action Plan, particularly:

- The importance of home and the SG commitment to end homelessness
- Reflection on learning gained from the first year of implementation, including the importance of embedding gendered approach to all the work we're taking forwards
- Restate the important work of HARSAG and leadership role of HPSG
- Recognition and celebration of the work going on across the sector to bring about sustainable change and improvement to the experience of homelessness
- Continued importance of listening to lived experience
- Continued importance of partnership between local and national government, housing providers and the 3rd sector; and of working across traditional boundaries with health, education, justice and so on
- Reflection on 2018-19 statistics – what is driving homelessness and how we are responding as well as demonstrating why our Action Plan for change is vital
- Continued ambition and determination to achieve change

2. Introduction

Policy background, including restating Scottish rights for homeless people but our desire to go beyond this alongside a recap on the HARSAG process, subsequent Action Plan, HPSG, and Homelessness Vision (attached at [Annex B](#)).

This section could include quotes from HPSG and/or other key stakeholders about the programme overall, the cultural shift and the pace of change.

3. Progress against actions

At a glance update on progress against all the actions in the Action Plan – as presented in the 2020 Priorities Paper.

Summary of spend to date and future plans.

4. Taking a truly person-centred approach

Summary of why a person-centred approach is needed, how people with lived experience were involved in the HARSAG process and brief overview of the Change Team.

A diagram showing our priorities under each outcome along with demonstrating which other organisations will be involved (Annex A for mock-up of this).

5. Structure of the remaining report

Currently structured around the outcomes in the 2019 Action Plan (and mirrored in the Homelessness Vision graphic at Annex B):-

- Understanding the context
- Embed a person-centred approach
- Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place
- Prioritise settled homes for all
- Respond quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens
- Join up planning and resources to tackle homelessness

We would also propose to highlight other areas of work which we are taking forward that are not in the Action Plan, and why; to include:

- A. Women in homelessness
- B. Improving outcomes for women experiencing domestic abuse
- C. Working with local authorities and others on effective implementation
Glasgow voluntary review
- E. Hard Edges
- F. SHORE implementation review
- G. Third Sector Bid Fund
- H. Homelessness Prevention Fund

6. Understanding the context

Content

- A. Set out key points from National statistics – homelessness trends overall (plus link to further published analysis for more details). These are from June 2019 publication (using data collected up until end March 2019) – the next publication is at the end of January 2020. Analysis by gender and age where available.

Update charts from High Level Action Plan:

Chart 1 – number of applications and assessments (2002/3 to 2018/19)

Table 1 – support needs of homeless households (2017/18 to 2018/19)

Chart 2 – reasons for failing to maintain accommodation (2017/18 to 2018/19)

Chart 3 – reasons for making homelessness applications (2017/18 to 2018/19)

Chart 4 – prior housing circumstances (2017/18 to 2018/19)

Chart 5 – households in temp accommodation (at end March 1995 to 2019)

Chart 6 – duration in temp by placement type (2018/19)

Chart 7 – duration in temp (2017/18 to 2018/19)

Chart 8 - rough sleeping the night before making an application (2002/3 to 2018/19)

Chart 9 – proportion securing settled accommodation (2002/3 to 2018/19)

Chart 10 – repeat homeless applications (2002/3 to 2018/19)

Chart 11 – repeat homeless applications by local authority (2018/19)

- B. Set out what we know about the drivers of homelessness – what is the national context in terms of SG and UKG policy and available evidence: welfare reform, poverty, housing supply, private rented sector statistics.
- C. Set out links to National Performance Framework.
- D. Evidence Strategy

7. Activity and Progress towards meeting Action Plan Commitments

Person-centred approach

In 2019:-

- We developed an Ending Homelessness Together lived experience programme, combined with engagement with the frontline, by establishing the Participation Programme in partnership with Homeless Network Scotland, Cyrenians and other partners across the sector. A Change Team appointed in December 2019 will lead this work as a sub-group of the HPSG to ensure the voice of lived experience and the expertise of frontline practitioners are at the heart of driving implementation of our Action Plan. This will also inform development of support for frontline staff ensuring a person-centred approach.
- Shelter [will] have begun work on developing a Personal Housing Plan model which will build on the Housing Options approach and learn from tests of change going on in some local authority areas already. This work will report in early 2020.
- Scottish Government held an event to support LAs in sharing good practice and innovation in providing a range of move on options and pursuing choice-based letting approaches which enable choice and control to people in

homelessness. This will have the added value of highlighting best practice in widening people's choices of settled accommodation and include awareness raising about the benefits of community hosting in crisis situations

- We intend to shortly launch the first module of the Housing Options training toolkit
- We have formed a public perceptions collaboration to take forward key actions around reducing stigma and effective communication

Next few years:-

- We will continue to progress and implement the Participation Programme and actions to address stigma
- Scottish Government will incorporate a Personal Housing Plan model and encouragement to adopt choice-based letting into the Code of Guidance
- We will launch the remaining modules of the Housing Options training toolkit

Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

In 2019:-

- We published the prevention pathway for care experienced people on 12 November. We have appointed the joint chairs for the domestic abuse prevention pathway and parameters for the work which will begin in early 2020
- Scottish Government announced a Homelessness Prevention Fund to provide up to £1.5m over three years to increase and spread the work of social landlords in supporting low income families in social housing in ways that help to sustain tenancies, prevent crisis points and avoid homelessness. Working with SFHA and GWSF we will ensure this supports local authorities, housing providers and public bodies to work together to prevent homelessness
- Partners in ALACHO and SFHA are taking forward work with local authorities to make homelessness assessments more flexible
- Key principles have been adopted in the Housing to 2040 Vision around affordability of housing and that everyone should have a right to an adequate home
- Analysis of the impact of UK welfare system policy is planned for publication early in January 2020 as part of the refresh of the Housing and Social Security analysis
- In October 2019 Scottish Government announced the establishment of a working group to consider options for a new public sector homelessness prevention duty. The group is supported by Crisis and chaired by Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick

Next few years:-

- Through 2020-2023, the prevention pathways will be developed and implemented
- We will develop the parameters of the Homelessness Prevention Fund with the SFHA and other partners and Scottish Government will ensure it is available from 2020/2021
- In 2020-2021 Scottish Government will continue to invest in housing supply as we work towards 50k target

- The prevention duty group will make recommendations to the Scottish Government by summer 2020

Prioritising settled housing for all

In 2019:-

- Each local authority submitted a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, which was evaluated by SG and feedback provided. All local authorities have now developed a second iteration of their Plan.
- We have established a RRTP subgroup of HPSG which includes local authorities, COSLA, ALACHO and others to oversee the development of rapid rehousing and enable learning to be shared between local authorities. Scottish Government and wider partners are continuing to support local authorities as they develop and implement rapid rehousing, to ensure they have considered protected characteristics and include plans for Housing First
- Scottish Government are working with Social Bite, Corra and the Homelessness Network Scotland to support Housing First Pathfinders in 5 areas to secure tenancies for people with multiple and complex needs. As at end September, 132 people are in Housing First tenancies – with a 95% sustainment rate, no evictions or abandonment
- Joint investment from health to the Pathfinder programme demonstrates the importance of cross sector working to get the right support for people with multiple and complex needs
- Scottish Government are developing a joint response across housing, justice, health and others to respond to the Hard Edges report, focused on adults with severe and multiple disadvantage, and the Health and Homelessness data linkage work which demonstrated opportunities to promote health and prevent homelessness through better joint working
- COSLA and SG undertook robust analysis of data on the funding of temporary accommodation in Scotland to support discussions with local government and UK government. However, we were unable to draw robust conclusions that could be applied across local authority boundaries to inform a national picture of temporary accommodation funding. At the same time, discussions with UK Government about modifying existing funding through Housing Benefit have not been fruitful, amid continued uncertainty about DWP and MHCLG spending priorities.

Next few years:-

- Focus on costings for the RRTPs, implementation of monitoring frameworks (including a focus on prevention) and delivery of a review
- We will develop a monitoring framework for Housing First across Scotland and ensure that learning is shared. We will engage in Connect events and support local authorities to access other funding so there is no 'cliff-edge' at the end of the current funding arrangement
- By November 2021, Scottish Government and COSLA aim to have developed and implemented changes to the existing funding model to tackle poverty by lowering rents in temporary accommodation. Through 2022-23 we will evaluate the impacts of the revised model and adjust and refine accordingly.

We will respond quickly and effectively when homelessness happens

In 2019:-

- We are supporting local winter planning, building on experiences last winter and Scottish Government announced additional funding for 2019-20 activities on 10 October. Further small projects may arise as the winter progresses
- Scottish Government officials are working with policy leads in Asylum and Refugee Integration policy to support their work on developing an anti-destitution strategy. This issue was raised as a key priority for winter actions by the practitioner working group and we are progressing a number of key interventions for this year including providing information in other languages and initiating a peer support worker model
- In May, the Centre for Homelessness Impact published an options appraisal for a new rough sleeping data collection. Scottish Government announced next steps towards development and implementation of this data collection at this time.
- Scottish Government consulted on changes to the intentionality and local connection legislation, and a narrowing of the intentionality definition, and subsequently announced the intention to commence the relevant Order on 7 November
- Scottish Government consulted on extending the Unsuitable Accommodation Order to all households and we intend to publish the analysis in December. Based on initial analysis of the responses, Scottish Government committed in the Programme for Government to introduce legislation to extend the Order this parliamentary year, to come into force this parliamentary term
- Scottish Government have included advisory standards for temporary accommodation in the updated Code of Guidance and consulted on the development a legally enforceable standards framework, with the full analysis of the results intended for publication in December.
- A meeting of key stakeholders was held in June 2019 to discuss the development of a national model of frontline outreach and identify areas for focused work. 2019 has seen the start of a national roll out of trauma informed training across the public sector.

Next few years:-

- Going forward, we will support tests of change for the frontline and will consider the most appropriate way to ensure a sustainable approach to winter planning is put in place
- Scottish Government and COSLA will continue to work across SG and with other partners to prevent homelessness and clarify the protection offered to people with no recourse to public funds. Scottish Government will update the Code of Guidance to reflect these clarifications
- Through 2020-2021 we will respond to work on widening available options to respond to crisis situations, and support the adoption and expansion of Nightstop throughout Scotland
- Scottish Government will announce plans for engaging and consulting with key stakeholders, including local authorities, in 2020 to develop the local connection Ministerial statement

- Scottish Government will continue to engage with lawyers about the mechanisms available to narrow the definition of intentionality. The overhaul of the Code of Guidance will also involve consideration of this action
- Scottish Government will develop and implement the extension of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order by 2021
- A Working Group will be set up in early 2020 to take forward the findings of the consultation and develop a new standards framework across all types and tenures of temporary accommodation
- Our understanding of how issues present at the frontline is contributing to emerging responses to the Hard Edges Scotland report, considering what an appropriate frontline response looks like for people with severe and multiple disadvantage. This work to support our principle of no wrong door and person-centred services, integrating learning and approaches from homelessness with other public services and vice versa.

We will join up planning and resources

In 2019:-

- Following engagement with key partners Scottish Government published an updated, accurate Code of Guidance on 7 November which reflects the legislative changes since the Code was published in 2005. Scottish Government will set out our plans (in this Annual Report) for a more significant review and overhaul to the structure and content of the Code which we will progress in 2020
- A joint Ministerial letter was sent to Health & Social Care Partners regarding RRTPs. Additionally, Scottish Government has undertaken work to ensure there was a joint response to Hard Edges and the Health and Homelessness Data Linkage

Next few years:-

- In 2020 Scottish Government will commence work to review and overhaul the Code of Guidance. Crucial to this work will be collaboration with local authorities, COSLA, ALACHO, Shelter Scotland, Crisis and others. This work will include consideration of a Code of Practice addendum and a new process to ensure we can make regular updates to the Code as needed

Other actions in support of the Homelessness Vision

In 2019:-

- Scottish Government published equality breakdowns of our homelessness data in November
- We [will have] published an annual progress report to parliament [this report]
- Scottish Government have conducted equality impact assessments for the Unsuitable Accommodation Order and changes to intentionality legislation, and we are supporting local authorities to develop equality impact assessments as part of the development of their RRTPs

Next few years:-

- Scottish Government will review the homelessness data collection to ensure we are capturing equality data and will support local authorities to improve the quality of the equality data they collect. We will continue to publish equality breakdowns of our data biannually, as part of the regular homelessness statistics publications
- We will continue to report annually on our progress towards delivering the commitments we made in the Action Plan
- Scottish Government will conduct analysis of economic impacts of the actions and we will continue to conduct required impact assessments as our plans are developed

What else we have progressed in the first year, over and above the Action Plan

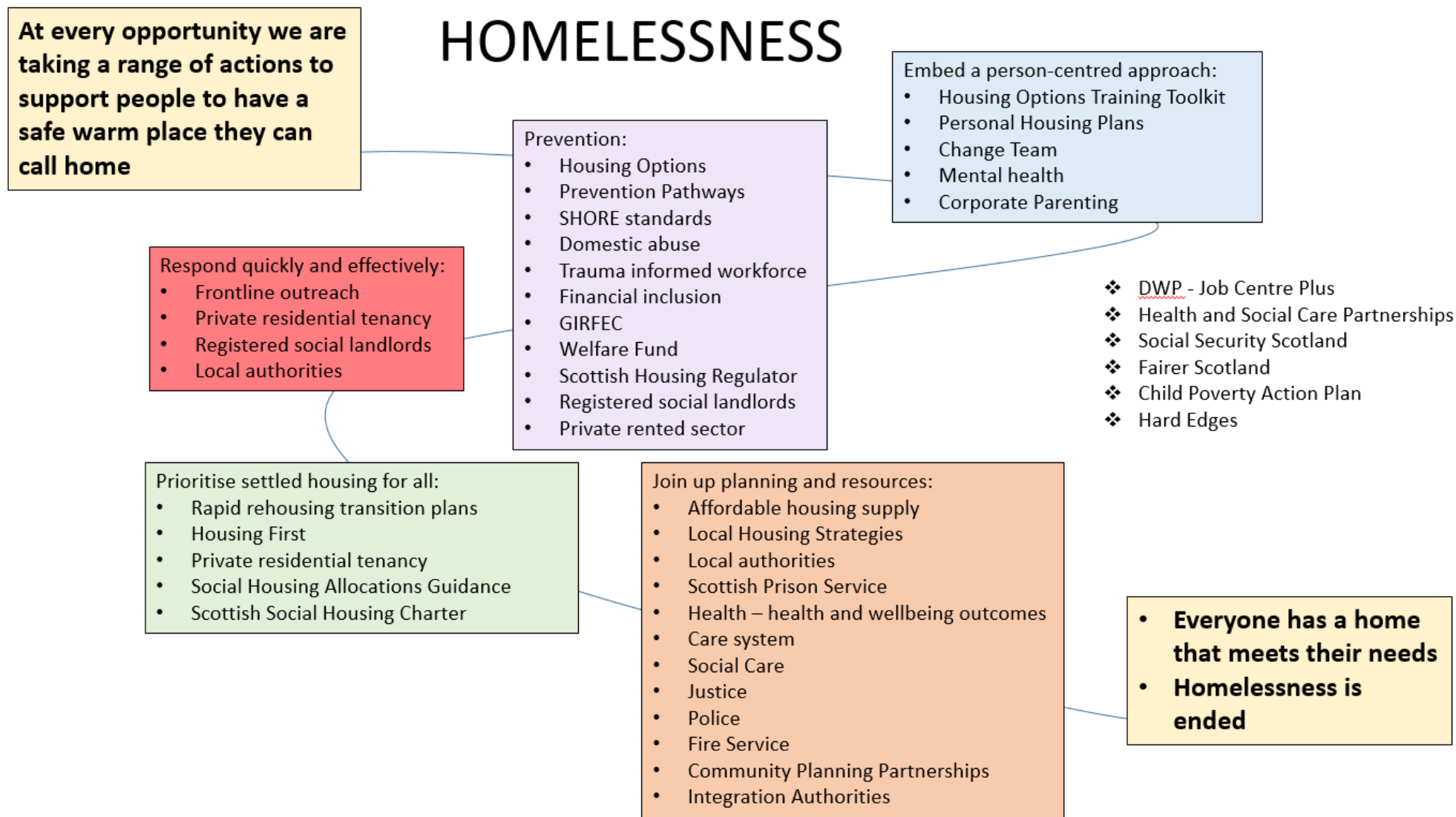
In 2019:-

- It was announced that legislation on emergency barring orders to exclude the perpetrators of domestic abuse from the home will be taken forward in year 5 of this Parliament. The lead for this work sits in the Justice portfolio, and Ministers and officials in Communities and Local Government are committed to working actively with Justice colleagues to take this forward and see it is implemented effectively.
- Scottish Government have conducted a review of the evidence on women in homelessness and have engaged widely with Scottish Government colleagues and a range of external organisations to discuss their experiences of working with women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to ensure our plans understand and respond to the particular needs of women
- Two funds have been announced – the Prevention Fund and the Third Sector Bid Fund which will be live next year
- The Voluntary Review with Glasgow City Council
- Implementation of SHORE standards and follow up from Hard Edges

Next few years:-

- The publication in the summer of guidance for social landlords on responding to domestic abuse takes us considerably further forward in what practical steps are needed to safeguard vulnerable women and children, and Scottish Government will work with the Chartered Institute of Housing, Scottish Women's Aid and others to ensure the relevant actions are progressed
- We will implement a programme of commitments to ensure that consideration of gender is an integral part of our work to end homelessness (see Annex C). The overhaul of the Code of Guidance, the Participation Programme, Rapid Rehousing and the Prevention Duty work are all key areas for taking this commitment forward.

Annex A: Homelessness policy pathway



Annex B: Homelessness Vision

Homelessness vision:

Everyone has a home that meets their needs
Homelessness is ended



National Performance Framework: Our Values

'We are a society which treats all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion.'

To end homelessness we will:

Embed a person-centred approach

- MY SUPPORT IS FLEXIBLE AND BUILDS ON MY STRENGTHS AND SUCCESSES
- I ALWAYS HAVE CHOICE AND CONTROL
- I AM LISTENED TO, VALUED AND TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

- I CAN FIND SUPPORT QUICKLY IF I NEED IT, BEFORE REACHING CRISIS POINT
- I AM HELPED TO KEEP MY HOME, WHICH HELPS ME FOCUS ON OTHER GOALS
- MY HOUSING OPTIONS ARE CONSIDERED WHEN MY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE

Join up planning and resources to tackle homelessness

- I KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP
- I EXPECT SERVICES TO WORK TOGETHER, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ME
- I TRUST THAT THE RIGHT PEOPLE ARE INFORMED ABOUT MY NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES

Respond quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens

- I EXPECT MY HOUSING CRISIS TO BE RESPONDED TO WITH URGENCY
- THE HELP I GET IS RIGHT FOR ME, AND REDUCES THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS HAPPENING AGAIN

Prioritise settled homes for all

- I CAN EXERCISE MY RIGHT TO ACCESS AND MAINTAIN A SAFE AND SECURE HOME
- I BUILD AND MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND AM PART OF THE COMMUNITY

ANNEX C: Women in homelessness

Introduction

This paper has been discussed and agreed with Ministers and we are now moving to specify and integrate the actions into the Annual Report of the Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan. A number of the actions below build on the commitments in the Action Plan, and some are new proposed commitments.

Proposed next steps

The following eight points were raised at the workshop we held on 28 August with external stakeholders. The actions we have proposed are a starting point to addressing these.

1. Women experiencing or at risk of homelessness are not represented in statistics

Action: add equalities monitoring questions to homelessness data collections to support Scottish Government (and local authorities) to meet their equalities duties and increase our understanding of the experiences of people with protected characteristics.

Action: conduct a review of the homelessness data collection questions to ensure we are collecting the information we need in order to understand the issues facing women and monitor impact of any changes.

Action: explore opportunities to improve the evidence base on women's homelessness seeking specifically to understand why women are not represented in our statistics, what kind of homelessness women experience, and seek expert advice about how to account for and respond to these women.

2. Women do not always engage with statutory services

Action: Use the next phase of RRTP development as a vehicle to actively work with local authorities encouraging them to take a gendered approach to their Homelessness plans and consequently respond to the needs of women in homelessness in their local area in accordance with their findings. As with other areas of RRTP development, this could include support, peer mentoring and sharing good practice. Over time, this should develop in response to findings emerging from the work set out at 1.

So far we have it recorded that 24 RRTPs have an EQIA associated – we are working with local authorities to ensure they all have a good quality EQIA which genuinely drives the content of plans.

3. The system doesn't respond appropriately to the shared needs and particular risks of trauma for mothers and children

Action: explore work with colleagues in Children & Families and in Health Improvement to identify how local authorities can respond better to mothers and children and incorporate this in:-

a) the work on RRTPs set out above;

b) the emerging work to support and empower the frontline including through psychologically informed approaches;

c) ensuring that the experiences of women facing severe and multiple disadvantage are reflected in the work emerging from Hard Edges – in particular considering the needs of women who have had multiple children removed and/or are at risk and more broadly seeking to understand whether the ways in which severe and multiple disadvantage impacts differently on women

4. Experience of violence and abuse, domestic, sexual, honour based or other, is extremely prevalent for women in homelessness

Action: legislation will be commenced on emergency barring orders to exclude perpetrators of domestic abuse from their homes.

Action: we are reviewing options for including the SWA domestic abuse guidance for social landlords in our Code of Guidance – or making it statutory guidance in another way.

Action: we have asked Callum Chomczuk (CIH) and Jo Ozga (SWA) to chair work to prevent homelessness being a consequence of domestic abuse. This will be rooted in a gendered approach and will have an explicit focus on women.

5. Issues around access to money, including benefits, particularly impact on women

Action: engage with social security colleagues to understand SG wide approach to this issue, including around splitting UC payments for couples and ensuring direct rent payment to landlords remain as option.

Action: include a gendered analysis as part of our upcoming report on social security and housing and respond to the findings

6. Relationships formed at the frontline are key, and the frontline needs support and training to particularly reflect the needs of women

Action: include gender sensitive training as part of the Housing First Training Academy which is supporting the Housing First Pathfinder programme and ensure that this training is made more widely available as Housing First develops throughout all areas of Scotland

Action: work with stakeholders to ensure the training and support being developed as part of our programme to support and empower frontline services is gender sensitive

7. The causes of homelessness for women are not well understood across the wider public sector and the public in general

Action: we will publish a gender (and age) breakdown of homelessness applications and housing options data in November 2019 and biannually from then.

Action: we will highlight this issue and set out our planned work on women and homelessness in our Action Plan Annual Report.

Action: we will consider the impact of the actions in our Action Plan for women and men – we will include analysis by gender in our statistics publications.

8. The system needs to be person-centred and sensitive to gender

Action: the prevention duty group analysis and recommendations will be informed by gender-specific experiences of homelessness and the prevention duties elsewhere.

Action: All applications to our bid funds will be required to assess the equality impact of their proposals and our approach to assessing bids to recommend projects to be funded will be gender sensitive.

Action: we will require Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans to be based on the results of equality impact assessments.

Action: we will work with partners to identify any gaps or improvements to be made in training around key equalities issues, and engage with homelessness and housing service providers in the public and third sectors to ensure that all staff have a robust and up to date grasp of the issues and how to handle them in a way which supports their clients.