
Report To:	Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel	Date:	29 August 2023
Report By:	Kate Rocks Chief Officer	Report No:	SWSCSP/23/2023/GK
Contact Officer:	Gail Kilbane Interim Head of Service, MH, ADRS, ADP, Homelessness Services	Contact No:	01475 715284
Subject:	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) Annual Review 2022/23		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting
- 1.2 To notify the Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel of Inverclyde's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) Annual Review 2022/23 submission to the Scottish Government on 31 July 2023.

**Kate Rocks
Chief Officer
Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership**

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 As part of the plan to transform homelessness services in Scotland and responding to recommendations made by The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group, local authorities were required to develop a five-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) for 2019 - 2024. Each local authority was granted SG funding to deliver on these plans, with annual reporting back to the Scottish Government in place.
- 3.2 Inverclyde's initial RRTP proposal outlined a full transformational change approach to service delivery. However initial expectations for SG funding were not realised and the plan was revised with a focus on key priorities around preventing homelessness through a full implementation of Housing Options; mainstreaming low level support for those who need it to sustain tenancies and delivery of a Housing First approach.
- 3.3 Inverclyde's vision was underpinned with 4 key high-level objectives:
- Reduce the need for temporary accommodation by preventing homelessness,
 - Enable service users with no/low support needs to access settled housing quickly,
 - Implement a Housing First model which enables excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment,
 - Enable service users who need specialist supported housing to access commissioned HSCP services.
- 3.4 A summary of key highlights from the past year of Inverclyde's RRTP include:
- Significant growth of the Housing First model with a total of 41 individuals currently being supported – 17 in Housing First tenancies and 3 with offers pending,
 - 21 temporary furnished flats flipped to permanent accommodation,
 - a 10% decrease in the number of homeless applications,
 - The number of people presenting as homeless on leaving an institution i.e., prison, hospital etc. reduced by 30%, and
 - a 27% reduction in repeat homelessness,
 - A 21% reduction in long-term homelessness with a management focus on cases open for more than 12 months, all of which were referred to the in-house support team
 - A 36% reduction in the use of Unsuitable Accommodation with zero instances of using hotels and B&B facilities over the past year,
 - 14% of all social housing lets in the area went to homeless households.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The rebranding of the service as a Housing Options and Homelessness Advice Service is a major milestone. The cross-sector partnership and early intervention involved in this approach will be fundamental to fulfilling objective 1 with prevention at the forefront of a Housing Options Hub.
- 4.2 In Year 5 of the RRTP, the service will become more data driven. This will support short, medium and long-term forecasting of service delivery and provide context where changes have made improvements. Forecasting of future needs is of particular importance as we further decommission rooms in the hostel and utilise more temporary furnished flats in the community as a replacement.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	X	
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X
		X

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no specific legal/risk implications arising from this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no specific human resources implications arising from this report.

5.5 Strategic

Delivering the four key priority RRTP objectives will only provide benefit to place based strategic improvement plans

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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x	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqlA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqlA is not necessary/screening statement.
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children’s rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

There are no specific environmental / climate change implications arising from this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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x

NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 As part of this activity, we have completed Homelessness Journey interviews with some clients and are currently working with Homeless Network Scotland to support those with lived experience in becoming directly involved in the change programme sub groups and decision making process.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Inverclyde RRTP 2019-2024



Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan - Annual Review 2022-23

INVERCLYDE
HSCP
Health and Social
Care Partnership

Inverclyde
council

Housing Options and Homelessness Advice

1. Summary of year four progress

1.1 A summary of key highlights from the past year of Inverclyde's RRTP include:

- Significant growth of the Housing First model with a total of 41 individuals being supported by 31st March 2023 – 17 in Housing First tenancies and 3 with offers pending,
- 21 temporary furnished flats flipped to permanent accommodation,
- a 10% decrease in the number of homeless applications,
- the number of people presenting as homeless on leaving an institution i.e., prison, hospital etc. reduced by 30%, and
- a 27% reduction in repeat homelessness,
- a 21% reduction in long-term homelessness with a management focus on cases open for more than 12 months, all of which were referred to the in-house support team
- a 36% reduction in the use of Unsuitable Accommodation with zero instances of using hotels and B&B facilities over the past year,
- 14% of all social housing lets in the area went to homeless households, up 3% since 2020.

Key to the success over the past year has been:

- Design and implementation of a two-year Change Programme, with a designated Change Lead recruited to drive forward a full-service redesign.
- Engagement with previous and current households experiencing homelessness through joint working with local Community Care Forum, Your Voice, to better inform short term improvements and service redesign.
- Increasing focus on preventative work with the aim of rebranding as a Housing Options and Homelessness Advice Service.
- 'Introduction to Housing First' training has been provided to 64 individuals, with a further 20 undertaking Practitioners training and 10 senior officers attending Housing First Managers Training across the service and partner agencies.
- Commissioned CRISIS to complete a survey to map the Private Rented Sector in Inverclyde. This has assisted in building a closer relationship with the sector to increase opportunities to access the sector as part of our homeless prevention activities.
- Allocation of £56k of RRTP funding to aid with tenancy sustainment has been used for 12 households so far through the provision of essential items i.e. white goods and floor coverings and additional goods to help support residents of the Inverclyde Centre.
- Establishment of a Rapid Rehousing Support Team (RRST) to support and assist homeless households by providing intensive wrap around support for people with complex needs to plan, obtain and sustain their tenancy.

Within the hostel accommodation the team have introduced a support lounge providing ‘drop in’ activities including making contact with external community supports, provision of hot food and drinks and introduction of a Brunch Club. There has been improved digital inclusion of clients through free Wi-Fi, distribution of personal radios and TV’s, large screen TVs installed in the communal lounge areas and supporting residents with the skills to use online platforms i.e. switching people on Universal Credit to online accounts as opposed to telephone accounts, allowing access to their journals and upcoming payments etc.

2. Background

2.1 National Vision

As part of the plan to transform homelessness services in Scotland and responding to recommendations made by The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group, local authorities were required to develop a five-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) for 2019 – 2024. Each local authority was granted SG funding to deliver on these plans, with annual reporting back to the Scottish Government in place.

2.2 Inverclyde’s Vision

Inverclyde’s initial RRTP proposal outlined a full transformational change approach to service delivery. However initial expectations for SG funding were not realised. The plan was revised with a focus on key priorities around preventing homelessness through a full implementation of Housing Options; mainstreaming low level support for those who need it to sustain tenancies and delivery of a Housing First approach.

“To reduce the need for temporary accommodation by enabling homeless households to access settled accommodation quickly and with the right support to achieve housing sustainment”

Inverclyde’s vision was underpinned with 4 key high-level objectives:

- Reduce the need for temporary accommodation by preventing homelessness,
- Enable service users with no/low support needs to access settled housing quickly,
- Implement a Housing First model which enables excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment,
- Enable service users who need specialist supported housing to access commissioned HSCP services.

Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership are committed to ensuring that people who use the service receive the best possible care which meets their needs and that a person-centred approach is delivered for anyone experiencing the trauma of homelessness.

2.3 Governance

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Steering Group is the multi-agency group tasked with overseeing the two working groups responsible for delivering Inverclyde’s Rapid Rehousing model: the Housing Options Working Group and Housing First Working

Group. The purpose of both groups is to review service provision, practices, and processes in relation to working collaboratively to rapidly re-house homeless people and the active monitoring of progress achieved through these streams.

A Lead Officer for RRTP came into post in October 2020 and was vacated in March 2022. During this time, delivering on the RRTP has been led by the Change Lead with support from Graduate Interns. In future the RRTP objectives will be delivered by two Temporary FTE Project Assistant (RRTP) posts which will be dedicated role in delivering on RRTP objectives.

2.4 Funding

Inverclyde was allocated £30,000 to develop the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in 2018/19. Since then, the local authority has received the below funding:

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
£53,000	£44,000	£44,000*	£44,000

*Plus additional £28,000 Winter Support Fund

2.5 Inverclyde Context

2.5.1 The housing market in Inverclyde faces similar challenges to other local authorities in that there are substantial pressures on social housing, with demand on local housing associations far exceeding the current supply. This is further exacerbated in Inverclyde with the complete transfer of all council housing stock to local housing associations in 2007, as a result all social lets in the area are facilitated through registrations with River Clyde Homes and/or the Inverclyde Common Housing Register Housing Associations.

2.5.2 In 2020/21 Inverclyde was observed as having one of the lowest rates of housing completions across all tenures relative to population size, with 100% of new dwellings that year being private new builds indicating that Covid-19 had a major impact on the ability of housing associations to deliver an increased supply of affordable housing¹. There is also a significant presence of private landlords in the area, at approximately 2,000 landlords amounting to 13% of all housing stock in Inverclyde. This tenure however poses concerns for the local population in terms of affordability.

2.5.3 The economic context of Inverclyde presents challenges for the local population with the proportion of people earning less than the living wage in 2021/22 being higher than the national average at 20.3% compared to 14.4% in Scotland as a whole. The area also has a higher percentage of the working age population claiming out-of-work benefits at 4.4%, with Scotland showing 3.7%, in the same year.

2.5.4 Average income in Inverclyde is £31,165 per annum, 21% below the Scottish average of £37,767. More than half of the Inverclyde population (53%) earn less than £25,000 per annum with lower quartile incomes of £12,827. A household requires to earn up to £25,000 to be able to afford the average market rent and up to £23,450 to be able to afford the average PRS rent if they devote 30% of their income to housing costs.

¹ Housing Statistics 2020 & 2021: Key Trends Summary: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-statistics-2020-2021-key-trends-summary/documents/>

- 2.5.5 The Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020 determined Greenock town centre as Scotland's most deprived area and Inverclyde as the area with the largest local share of deprived areas, with 45% of data zones among the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. The SIMD reports on deprivation relative to the indicators: income, employment, health, education, access to services, crime, and housing.
- 2.5.6 Inverclyde's proportion of vacant housing stock is 4.8%, (1.4% classified as long-term empty) compared to the national level of 3.3% - amounting to just under 2,000 empty homes across the local authority. There is also a significant level of homes identified as 'low demand' properties, accounting for 20% of all social housing units in the area. Finding sustainable ways of transforming existing low demand housing assets to provide housing options that local people aspire to is an objective of the new Local Housing Strategy. The use of existing footprints as a viable housing option for those in urgent housing need is an ongoing goal of many local authorities, in Inverclyde this applies to increasing the uptake of both low demand social properties and those in the Private Rented Sector.
- 2.5.7 Inverclyde, despite having a comparatively small homeless population to the other Scottish Local Authorities, has a prevalence of complex and habitual clients to the homeless service. The Ever-Homeless Cohort identified Inverclyde as having one of the highest proportions of homeless populations with drug, alcohol, and mental health issues, ranked the 3rd highest out of all 32 Scottish Local Authorities.
- 2.5.8 This context provides the argument that the issue of homelessness in Inverclyde is not restricted to a need for more affordable housing but also a need to address some of the underlying issues that are leading to homelessness within the local population, exasperated by the strains on local housing stock.

2.6 Challenges

Like many local authorities, Inverclyde has faced several challenges since the inception of the plan. Listed in this section are some of the challenges the service has observed and the intended response.

- 2.6.1 Maintaining temporary accommodation supply – This will likely increase during the process of decommissioning the Inverclyde Centre which provided 30 units of hostel accommodation – now down to 23, with 7 room closures now complete. Converting temporary occupancy agreements to Scottish Secure Tenancies, or flipping, additionally requires a reliance of RSL partners to provide a replacement of temporary accommodation units. The widening use of existing housing options in the local area, including improved partnerships with the PRS could potentially solve some issues around maintaining a consistent and improved supply of temporary accommodation.
- 2.6.2 Access to settled housing – this factor is particularly challenging as a stock transfer authority, requiring an innovative approach to tackle stress on local housing.

Consideration is being given to implementing a similar approach to the Finnish Housing First model.²

- 2.6.3 Long term homelessness due to lack of appropriate housing is a particular challenge in Inverclyde. Several clients to the service have very complex needs where an independent tenancy may not be immediately suitable or desirable for the individual. There is a clear need for more specialist housing in the area which is where the innovative approaches such as those undertaken by the Nordic Homelessness Alliance are of particular interest.³ The service is considering the viability of these approaches for this local authority.
- 2.6.4 Staff shortages and service capacity – There have been significant staff shortages consistently throughout the service, impacting on void turnover times etc. Other local authorities have also pointed to issues around staff recruitment and retention.⁴ As part of the Change Programme, a re-structured staffing model within the Accommodation Team and revised working patterns to improve on staff wellbeing and working conditions is being developed.
- 2.6.5 In addition, the creation of the Rapid Rehousing Support Team has alleviated stress on other teams and provides opportunities for targeted, personalised support for people using the service, further allowing the Accommodation Team to focus more fully on specific property related issues.
- 2.6.6 Funding shortfalls – access to funding through grants (i.e., Scottish Welfare Fund and Crisis grants) is increasingly challenging. Funding for items such as carpets and washing machines are usually deemed unessential. In addition, those who have been repeatedly homeless, and who have accessed this funding in the past are often now no longer entitled to this funding. Inverclyde has allocated part of the RRTP funding to continue to support these items with the aim of improving tenancy sustainment.

² Finland Housing First partner - [Home - Y-Säätiö \(ysaatio.fi\)](http://Home-Y-Säätiö(ysaatio.fi))

³ The Y Foundation co-ordinates this alliance [New Alliance Aims to end Homelessness in the Nordics - Y-Säätiö \(ysaatio.fi\)](#)

⁴ Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Making the case for the next five years [0362-rapid-rehousing-transition-plans-report-2-v3.pdf \(cih.org\)](#)

3. Inverclyde's Homeless Position

3.1

Summary of Inverclyde 2022/23 Homeless Position

292 Homeless applicants in Inverclyde this year

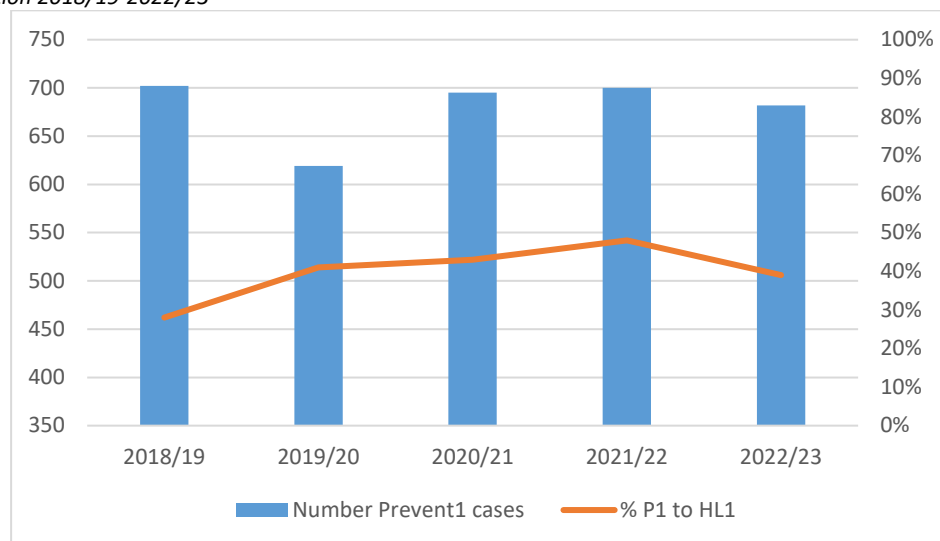
271 Households where Inverclyde Council had a duty to provide settled accommodation defined here as unintentionally homeless

113 open cases with a duty to provide settled accommodation as of 31st March 2023

3.2 The following section provides a breakdown and some analysis around key homelessness statistics to establish if the current position indicates an improvement at the end of year four of Inverclyde's RRTP. The statistics will be extracted from the baseline figure of 2018/19 of Inverclyde statistics prior to the implementation of RRTPs but additionally predating Covid-19 measures that may have caused an impact on homelessness trends.

3.3 Prevention cases

Graph 1: Number of Prevention cases and number of prevention cases which went on to make a homeless application 2018/19-2022/23

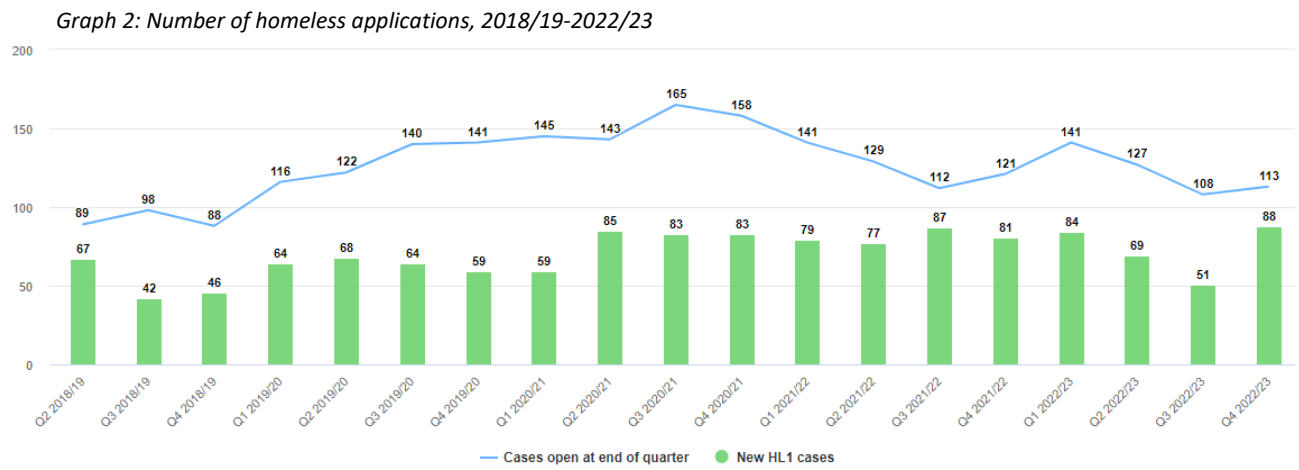


The number of approaches to the service is expected to increase as we move away from being seen as a homeless service providing accommodation and rebranding as a Housing Options and Homelessness Advice service. This will focus on more general housing advice, tenancy rights and homeless prevention activity.

In the past year:

- The service saw 682 approaches to the service in 2022/23, a 3% decrease from the previous year.
- The number of prevention cases progressing into a full homeless application decreased from 48% in 2021/22 to 39% in 2022/23 – with a stronger focus on prevention activities.

3.4 No. of homeless applications and no. of homeless/threatened with homelessness

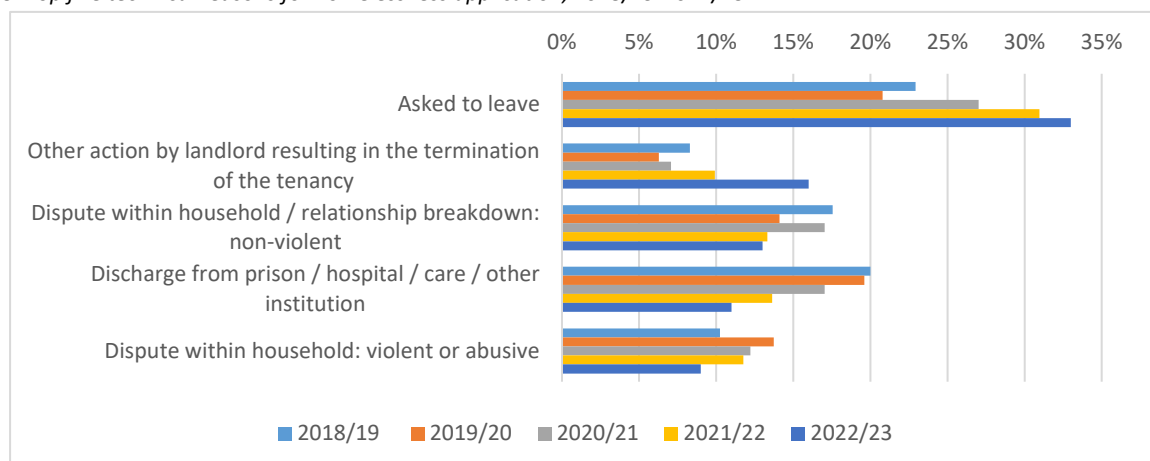


It was anticipated that that there would be a national increase in the number of homeless applications this year, however Inverclyde has not aligned with the predicted national picture.⁵

- There has been a 10% decrease in the number of homelessness applications from 324 in 2021/22 to 292 recorded between April 1st 2022 and March 31st 2023 in Inverclyde.
- The reduced number of prevention cases going on to make a homeless application and long-term support being offered for the most complex and habitually homeless clients reducing the number of households re-entering the service can help account for the decreased numbers.
- The number of those assessed as homeless/threatened with homelessness has declined by 2% - from 277 to 271.

3.5 Reason for homeless application

Graph 3: Top five technical reasons for homelessness application, 2018/19-2022/23



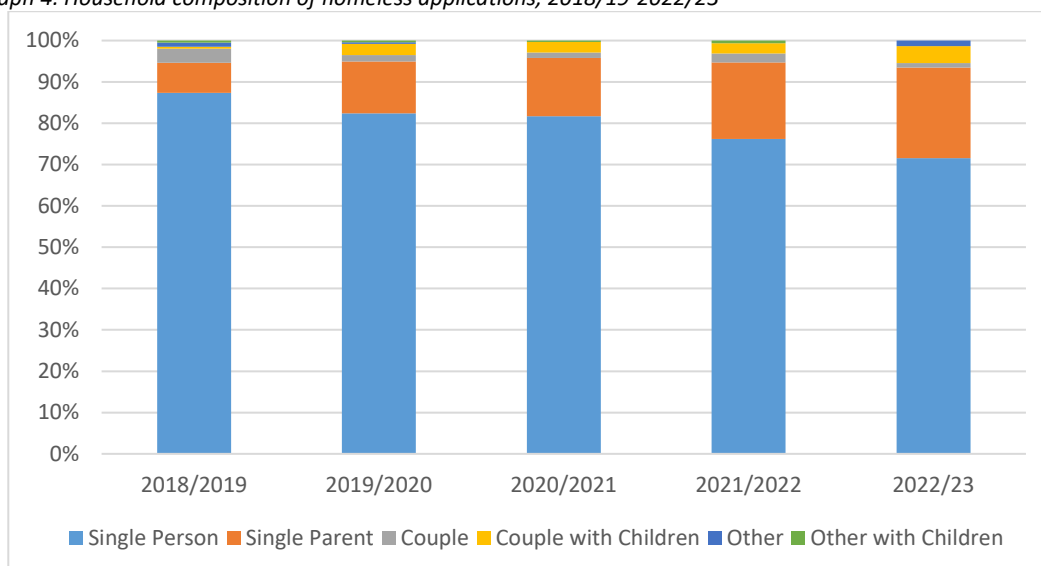
- Asked to leave remains the most common reason for making a homeless application at 33%.

⁵ Homelessness services in Scotland - A thematic review, February 2023 [homelessness-services-in-scotland-a-thematic-review-february-2023.pdf \(housingregulator.gov.scot\)](https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-services-in-scotland-a-thematic-review-february-2023.pdf)

- Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy has been the cause of 16% of the 292 applications made – increasing by 44% since last year and 109% since 2020/21. Legal restrictions on private landlords, limiting rent increases and freezing evictions in response to the growing cost of living crisis and measures installed earlier with regards to Covid 19 can provide explanation for this increase – leading private landlords to sell their properties due to affordability.
- The intention of local landlords to sell their rented properties was indicated in a survey by Crisis commissioned by Inverclyde Council and results received in early 2022/23, other national studies have reported finding similar landlord intention in relation to exiting the sector⁶.
- Inverclyde continues to differ from national statistics in relation to the prevalence of those leaving institutions i.e., prison/hospital/care consistently appearing within the top 3 reasons for homelessness since 2015/16 to 2021/22. While nationally, the top three reasons remain unchanging as ‘Asked to leave’ and ‘Dispute within household’ both ‘non-violent’ and ‘violent or abusive’.
- In 2022/23 however, while still within the top 5 reasons for applications, the number of people in Inverclyde whose technical reason for application was due to leaving an institution fell by 30% in one financial year- from 14% of applications to 11%. Numbers specifically relating to prison discharge decreased by 35% during this time.

3.6 Homeless households: composition and age of main applicant

Graph 4: Household composition of homeless applications, 2018/19-2022/23



Most applications to the Homelessness Service in Inverclyde remains as single persons households at 72%.

⁶ Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Making the case for the next five years [0362-rapid-rehousing-transition-plans-report-2-v3.pdf \(cih.org\)](#)

Rent Better Research Programme, Wave 2 Final Report by Indigo House [RentBetter Wave 2 Full Reports | Rent Better \(indigohousegroup.com\)](#)

However, the number of households that include children has continued to increase over recent years and now amounts to 26% of applications. This may have an impact on the property sizes required for future temporary furnished accommodation, potentially having to move away from 1-bedroom properties to 2+ bedroom properties that could accommodate families.

Table 1: Age group of main applicant, 2018/19-2022/23

Age of applicant	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
16-25	44	60	53	58	48
26-59	160	189	249	256	233
60+	1	6	9	11	11

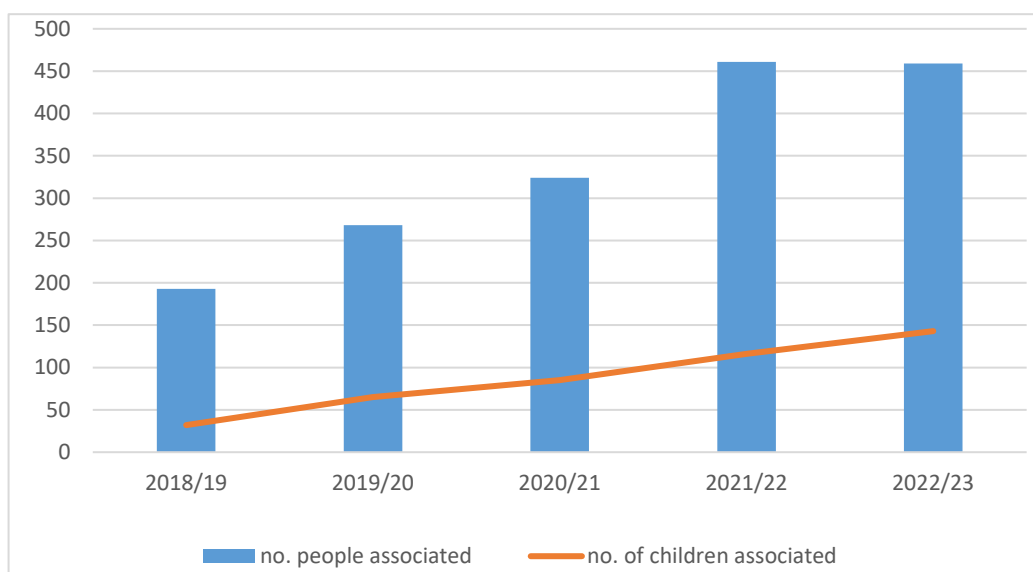
The age profile of Inverclyde’s homeless population mainly falls within the 26-59 age range at 80%.

Whilst applicants aged 60+ remains the smallest group within the service, there has been a significant increase from the baseline figure from 2018/19. Although upon further analysis, this baseline figure appears to be an outlier which could misrepresent the numbers of this group.

Scottish Government statistics from 2018-2019 indicated that Inverclyde had the lowest rate of youth homelessness of all local authorities in Scotland, at a rate of 3.5 per 1000.⁷ With little change in this area, applicants aged 16-25 account for 16% of cases, and while every effort is made through the integrated management of the HSCP to avoid youth homelessness a small number of individuals with complex needs have highlighted the necessity to consider transitional pathways from children’s service to independent living and the support from adult services.

3.7 Number of children affected and/or children in temp

Graph 5: Number of children associated with applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness 2018/19-2022/23



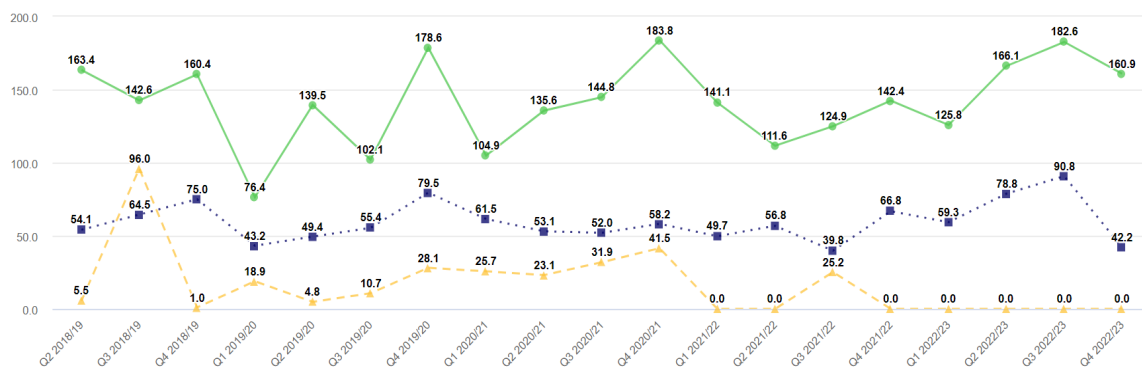
⁷ [Youth homelessness 2018-19: statistics - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2019/06/Youth-homelessness-2018-19-statistics.pdf)

The number of households with children in temporary accommodation increased nationally because of the pandemic, with 30th September 2022 recording the highest number of children in temporary accommodation since recording of the Homelessness Statistics series began in 2002.⁸

- The number of children associated with homeless applications in Inverclyde this past year has increased by 23% - from 116 in 2021/22 to 143 in 2022/23.
- This amounts to 31% of all those associated with homeless applications in the area – increasing from 25% in 2021/22.
- In Inverclyde as of 31st March 2022 there were 2 children in temporary accommodation while at the date 31st March 2023 there was 3 children recorded to be staying within temporary accommodation.

3.8 Time spent in temporary accommodation

Graph 6: Time (Days) spent in temporary accommodation, 2018/19-2022/23



The average amount of time spent in temporary accommodation in 2021/22 was reported as 138 days, while cases closed in 2022/23 time spent in temporary accommodation amounted to around 113 days on average – an 18% decrease.

3.9 Case duration

Table 2: Average time (weeks) from assessment to closure for applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness, 2018/19-2022/23

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Case duration (weeks)	28.6	27.2	33.2	25.4	25.4

The average case duration from open to closure has remained the same as the previous year at 25.4 weeks on average.

3.10 Repeat cases

Table 3: Repeat Homeless Figures, 2018/19-2022/23

⁸ Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Making the case for the next five years [O362-rapid-rehousing-transition-plans-report-2-v3.pdf \(cih.org\)](https://www.cih.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/O362-rapid-rehousing-transition-plans-report-2-v3.pdf)

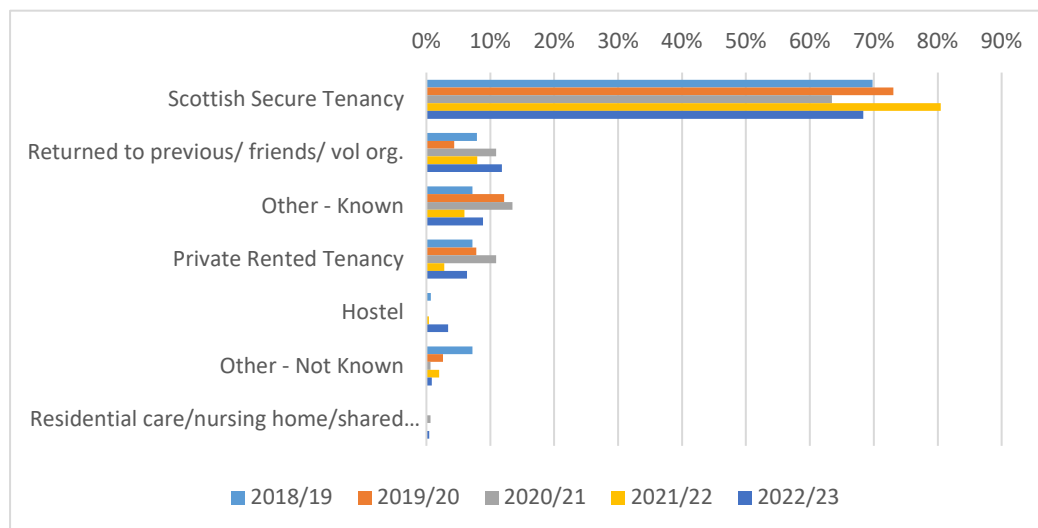
Year	Number of households re-assessed as homeless within the same year i.e., repeat cases	Percentage of cases classed as 'repeat'	Percentage of cases classed as repeat in Scotland as a whole
2018/19	15	10%	5%
2019/20	25	13%	5%
2020/21	30	13%	5%
2021/22	26	10%	5%
2022/23	19	6.5%	-

Consistently the local authority sees a higher proportion of repeat cases than that of Scotland as a whole. This is likely in account of the prevalence of complex and multiple support needs within the local homeless population and the number of SIMD1 areas located in the authority. With the commencement of the in-house support team in November 2022, the service predicted that the number of households re-entering the homeless service would see a decline.

As of year-end 2022/23 the data supports this prediction, with a 27% reduction in numbers of repeat cases to the service, putting us closer in line with national figures.

3.11 Outcomes

Table 3: Outcomes of unintentional homeless cases where contact was maintained, 2018/2019-2022/2023



- 74% of unintentional homeless cases where contact was maintained resulted in a settled tenancy (68% in RSLs, 6% in PRS) in 2022/23, down from 82% the previous year.
- 14 of homeless applications were closed where the household was known to be held in custody – we are revising our protocols around prison liberations and cases closed resulting from a custodial sentence/remand.

Contact was lost prior to duty discharge in 11% of cases down from 13% the previous year. This is an area where Inverclyde has saw higher numbers than national averages in the past, particularly due to an inconsistency in recording of outcomes. The service has spent time tightening up our recording systems to address these issues. In addition, the outreach capabilities of the support team may have impact on this area, allowing for a complete and successful discharge of homeless into a secure and settled tenancy as opposed to a fall away from the service only to return.

4. RRTP Objectives – Activities and Progress

Four high level objectives were realised in the forming of the RRTP in 2019. Outlined are some of the activities and progresses towards these objectives made between April 1st 2022 and March 31st 2023.

Objective 1: Reduce the need for temporary accommodation by preventing homelessness

- Inverclyde’s homeless service has an action plan in place to rebrand the service as a Housing Options and Homelessness Advice service – focusing more closely on the prevention of homelessness. This year of the RRTP has focused on strategic planning for change with the Housing Options and Homelessness Advice Service launch in 2023/24.
- The RRTP Steering Group has undertaken a Prevention Mapping Activity – through this activity several recommendations were made including an addition to RSL Tenancy Abandonment Process, requiring that RSLs inform the Homeless Service when they begin abandonment procedures. We have received 18 notices in the past 6 months that abandonment investigations were underway or that procedures were beginning. The impact of this activity will be evidenced by successful prevention work for cases where notice was received, with households supported back into their tenancies where possible.
- RRTP funding of £56k has been allocated to procure essential items not included in SWF such as carpets and washing machines to make tenancies more sustainable and prevent recurring homelessness – at present this has been used to the benefit of 12 households
- Improving links with prisons for increasing early intervention work – we are working with the Justice System to establish housing pathways for prison liberations. The number of homeless applications that resulted due to a prison discharge has decreased from 37 in 2021/22 to 24 in 2022/23.

Objective 2: Enable service users with no/low support needs to access settled housing quickly

- In the 4th year of Inverclyde’s RRTP we have been able to ‘flip’ 2 further temporary occupancy agreements to Scottish Secure Tenancies bringing the total number of flipped tenancies to 21 – limiting disruption to a household’s journey and reducing the stigma associated with temporary accommodation units.

- The average time spent in temporary accommodation has been reduced from 138 days in 2021/22 to 113 days in 2022/23.
- Commissioned CRISIS to complete a survey of the Private Rented Sector to map the attitudes of local private landlords. The intention of building a closer relationship with and increase opportunity to access the sector, prevention of homelessness and discharge of homeless cases into the PRS.
- In partnership with social housing associations, reviewed the section 5 process. The section 5 referral protocol is now both applicant-led (person-led) or void-led (property-led), to maximise available RSL's housing stock, applicants' choice and to enhance quick discharge of homelessness duties.
- Through continuous collaborative working with local housing associations 14% of all social housing lets in 2022/23 went to homeless households. River Clyde Homes allocation of social lets in 2020/21 was 9% to homeless households and has risen to 17%. An agreement is in place between RSLs and the service to share letting activity as part of our commitment for better communication, engagement and joint working between the services responsible for housing people in urgent need.
- The rapid re-housing support team is supporting 50 households, from short-term, low-level support to longer term sustainable support to those with the most complex needs.

Objective 3: Implement a Housing First model which enables excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment

- 'Introduction to Housing First' training has been procured and delivered by Turning Point Scotland to 64 staff members, with a further 20 undertaking Practitioners training and 10 senior officers attending Housing First Managers Training across Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde HSCP, Registered Social Landlords and third sector housing support providers.
- Initiation of Inverclyde's Housing First Pathway was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic but became fully operational with introduction of the Rapid Rehousing Support Team.
- At this time, Housing First support has been provided to 58 individuals in total.
- Prior to the initiation of our Rapid Rehousing Support workers the service had nine clients receiving HF support through 3rd sector organisations. This represents an increase of over 500%, indicating that the service now has a much larger scope for providing Housing First pathways without the restrictions on availability of local commissioned supports.
- Consideration for the housing first pathway largely came from identification of beneficiaries with the following history - homeless/Long history of repeat homelessness/tenancy failures, experience of trauma/abuse, ongoing addictions and/or mental health issues and experience of institutional care or imprisonment. Referral routes are open to a range of partners including homeless service, addiction and mental health services, community/criminal justice, family and children teams and third sector partners.
- The service additionally focused on cases facing or experiencing long term homelessness – all persons experiencing long term homelessness were

automatically referred to the in-house support team while the Assessment and Support Officers concentrated on households approaching long term homelessness to prevent this. This resulted in a reduction of 21% from Q3 to Q4 when this focused approach commenced.

- Engagement with those with lived experience is improving in relation to how we deliver our services – collaboration with local community care Forum, Your Voice has resulted in an engagement session with a group of homeless or previously homeless households to discuss some areas of suggested improvement within the service and communicate to the group the changes the service was making. Since this session Your Voice have continued to provide representation on the Communication and Engagement subgroup and continue to deliver valuable feedback from the group, this includes sense checking outgoing communications i.e., general information leaflets, giving their perceptions on stigmatising language etc. Resident interviews have also taken place to reveal perceptions on their journey through the service – details of one these homeless journeys can be found in section 5.

Objective 4: Enable service users who need specialist supported housing to access commissioned HSCP services

- The service has undertaken a mapping exercise to capture available supported accommodation in the area with a view to identifying existing resource for specialist supported accommodation for homeless persons with complex support needs. This report surmised that required support needs outstrips available capacity both in terms of meeting diverse support needs and in capacity within commissioned supported accommodations.
- A report by Arneil Johnston in 2018 on Temporary Accommodation requirements in Inverclyde assessed that 15% of homeless applicants required specialist interim supported accommodation. The report projected 13 supported accommodation units to meet this demand.
- Development work is underway with local housing associations on core and cluster style accommodation models to match the varying needs of households coming through this service. It will also support and bring long term empty properties back into use. The aim is for these core and cluster units to be SST tenancies with HF support hubs onsite – in a similar style to the Finnish Model. The inclusion of these supported accommodations would bring 15 units into use, responding to the ask of the Arneil Johnston report.

5. Homelessness Journey's – Lived experience and case studies of good practice

5.1 As part of the service redesign, the service has committed to engage more fully with people who have lived experience of homelessness. Under this activity, we have completed Homelessness Journey interviews with some clients and are currently working with Homeless Network Scotland to provide a workshop to embed the voice of lived experience in our decision-making process and support clients in becoming directly involved in the change programme subgroups. Inclusion in these subgroups would provide

a more direct interface to those who our services impact and allow for continuous influence as to what proposals for the new accommodation would work best for people and how we deliver and refine a new model for the service. In addition, we continually engage with residents through use of both personal and communal notice boards and are working closely with Care Opinion, an online service which encourages people to share their opinions of the care they received. We will now be able to receive and respond to feedback via this site and are actively promoting its use via staff and notice boards throughout the service.

Case Study

A had been living with a family member following the abandonment of his own tenancy but had been asked to leave. This man was known to local mental health services and regularly misused alcohol which caused him to experience seizures. Having spent time in the hostel setting, A was observed to have problems around door keeping and susceptibility to exploitation which was thought to have been a significant factor leading to his homelessness. He was supported to move to a temporary furnished flat in the community.

A met the criteria for Housing First and was assisted by the in-house support team following their initiation in November 2022. The team assisted him with budgeting and attending GP appointments for his mental and physical health issues and to attend community support groups which he would be unlikely to attend on his own due to his struggles with anxiety, particularly in group settings.

A signed for a Scottish Secure Tenancy for a local housing association in February 2023 and the Resettlement Support Workers assisted him to access a starter pack provided by a local charity and a Community Care Grant.

As part of the tenancy agreement an Occupational Therapy referral was completed for adaptations in his new tenancy to incorporate a shower which was required in relation his physical health.

A is now happy in a secure tenancy and continues to receive 7 hours support per week.

A was able to provide some perspective on his life through homelessness and these are some of his comments:

“Never had that help, it made me nervous to begin with”

RRSWs were “someone to phone when I needed with no judgement” and he said this help made a noticeable difference

“The service saw something in me that I didn’t see in myself. I would do it all over again. It helped me find myself, gave safety, security, advice”

“Forever grateful”

- 5.2 The following case study was created to demonstrate the benefit of housing first for complex individuals with a history of offending behaviours that result in custodial sentences.

B was one of the first HF clients in Inverclyde.

He was a frequent offender, with drug and alcohol dependency and mental health issues, who had accessed the service repeatedly. He secured a permanent offer of housing in May 2021 and with support through the 3rd sector sustained this tenancy until February of 2022 when he went back into prison, however he wished to retain his tenancy.

The service facilitated the discussion with his social landlord who agreed to hold his tenancy. However, it meant that he would accrue some rent arrears.

B agreed and on release to set up an arrangement to repay his arrears and instead of coming back through Homelessness Services again, he was able to return to his home, giving him much needed stability at a crucial time.

Telephone contact was made with B prior to his prison release and on liberation he was supported as a prevention case, with a support plan put in place to help him to adapt back into his own tenancy. His allocated Rapid Rehousing Support Worker provided support at 10 hours per week.

Section 12 money was obtained to clear his gas and electricity debts, and he was assisted to arrange and attend an appointment with DWP to resume Universal Credit with an advanced payment arranged. He has been linked in with vulnerable group advice services who are assisting with income maximisation and helping with money management to address rent arrears via a payment arrangement.

The service assisted B with GP registration and attending appointments, securing a starter pack, and assisting with basic tenancy skills such as opening his mail, cleaning, and taking out his bins.

Previously B tended to lose contact with services for lengthy periods of time. He was supported to obtain a mobile phone, contact is in place with the community pharmacy to ensure his wellbeing and joint visits with his keyworker from ADRS provides him with the support he needs to continue in his tenancy.

Without the support provided to B to sustain his tenancy, the cycle of repeat homelessness would have continued on leaving prison.

6. Change Programme

- 6.1. The RRTP implementation timeframe aligns with the Change Programme currently underway in Inverclyde. This service redesign intends to achieve a full

transformational change of the service. It officially began in October 2022 with two-year action plans developed over six sub-groups in targeted areas.

- Communication and Engagement
- Estates and Accommodation
- Workforce
- Finance
- Information and Data
- Service Model

A new service structure and accommodation model is being curated through the programme.

6.2 Recruitment of a Change Lead, Well-being Co-ordinator, and 8 Rapid Rehousing Support Workers have created capacity within the system to deliver on the programme.

6.3 Four high level objectives were identified in the initial stages of the Programme as follows:

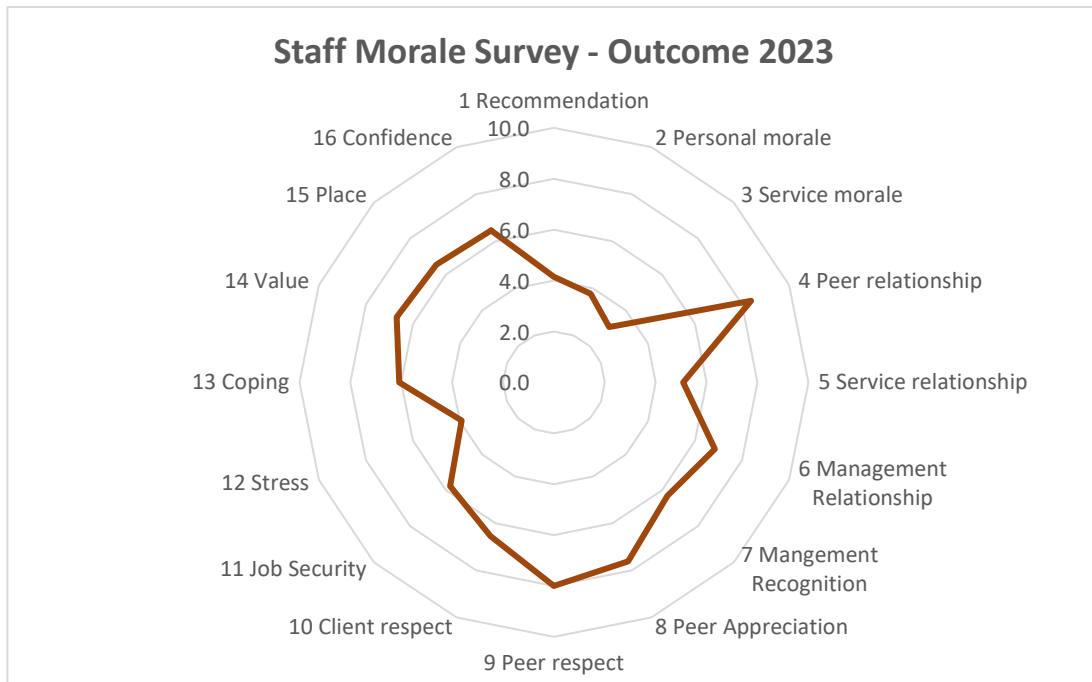
- Embed a culture amongst service users and staff focused on identifying and achieving personal outcomes.
- Deliver more efficient ways of working, ensuring a sustainable service for the future and contributing to savings and efficiency targets.
- Create a Rapid Rehousing Support Service to specifically target intensive support to those who present as repeatedly homeless or entrenched in temporary accommodation for significantly lengthy periods of time.
- Deliver an options appraisal and business case for a modernised temporary accommodation estate and future housing options to meet the needs of service users, with agility to cope with pressure points when there is an increase in presentations.

6.4 All activity is reported to the Programme Board, which incorporates representation from partnership agencies such as Housing Strategy, Finance, RSLs, staff side and Human Resources etc. The Board in turn reports to the HSCP Strategic Planning Group, Transformation Board, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel, Integrated Joint Board and Staff Partnership Forum.

6.5 Through the change programme an audit has been undertaken to ensure the provision of focussed staff training in areas such as trauma enhanced practice, use of recording systems, suicide intervention and prevention etc. Service Development Sessions are underway with the intention of regular and continuous communications with staff on homelessness issues i.e. prevention methods, opportunities for further training and self-development on the national homelessness agenda and current housing news and encouragement to be aware of changes to legislation. This keeps staff up to date within the sector and ensures accurate, confident provision of housing options advice.

6.6 A staff survey was conducted based on key areas relative to staff morale to obtain a baseline measurement at this stage, some key actions were implemented as result of

the findings, and this will be carried out at intervals during and on completion of the redesign programme.



6.7 The service also undertook a survey with residents regarding accommodation and the service provided to those who required temporary accommodation. This exercise provided a relatively positive result with a total 88% of respondents indicating that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service received from staff. The survey also.

6.8 Through the Change Programme and the inclusion of the in-house team of Rapid Rehousing Support Workers the amount of support the service can provide to those experiencing the trauma of homelessness has significantly increased. Some of the activities that have been implemented by this new team are listed below:

- A Support Lounge has been open since December 2022. This has allowed a communal space for service users to attend to have some company, tea/coffee/biscuits and regular hot food. There is a TV and radio, and the support workers encourage topical discussion. Use of art supplies has been popular also, with some service users enjoying mindfulness colouring books.
- The team has linked in with partner agencies to provide regular 'drop in' activities including 4 weekly optician visits with eye tests and free glasses for those who need them; 6-8 weekly haircuts provided freely by local college students; weekly recovery support group and weekly visit from benefits and money advice service.
- Increased communications with Inverclyde Centre residents – use of daily whiteboard with information regarding attendance of other services and local community resources and supports available to them.
- A Brunch Club has commenced - RRST have arranged with a local butcher, who has agreed to provide meats, rolls, eggs for wholesale prices. This provides RRST with

the opportunity to ensure service users can access a hot meal every Saturday and Sunday.

- Increased joint working with partner agencies and community-based supports – residents are making greater use of these community-based supports as a result – important for long term recovery and housing sustainment that support doesn't solely come in the form of the homelessness service.

7. Next steps for Year 5 of RRTP – 2023/24

- 7.1 The rebranding of the service as a Housing Options and Homelessness Advice Service is a major milestone. The cross-sector partnership and early intervention involved in this approach will be fundamental to fulfilling objective 1 with prevention at the forefront of a Housing Options Hub.
- 7.2 The hub will be used to undertake statutory assessment duties as well as providing a location for general housing advice with local housing associations involved in this element. The reduction of stigma in this style of service delivery reduces thresholds for obtaining assistance and should increase numbers of those accessing housing options advice prior to a crisis, rather than making contact at the point where a homeless application and temporary accommodation is required.
- 7.3 In Year 5 of the RRTP, the service will become more data driven. This will support short, medium and long-term forecasting of service delivery and provide context where changes have made improvements. Forecasting of future needs is of particular importance as we further decommission rooms in the hostel and utilise more temporary furnished flats in the community as a replacement.
- 7.4 The removal of local connection duties may impact on homeless presentation numbers to the area in future, this has not yet been evidenced but we will continue to monitor and respond accordingly. In addition, the response of the Scottish Government as a 'super sponsor' to the ongoing war in Ukraine has nationally increased the number of households requiring rapid access accommodation. As of yet, Inverclyde Homelessness Services have not been impacted by the refugee situation due to the ongoing work of our local Asylum and Resettlement Workers to prevent homelessness, however, discussions with this team are ongoing, as pressures continue to mount with rising numbers.
- 7.5 Like many local authorities, the service is looking to widen access to already available housing stock by working more closely with the Private Rented Sector. The Change Lead is introducing a PRS Landlord to improve relationships and communication with the sector, in turn increasing access to the PRS using initiatives such as the Deposit Guarantee Scheme and alleviating some of the current pressures on local housing associations.
- 7.6 Recognising that people who do not have secure accommodation are not all the same, therefore the accommodation and support they require is also different. The service is looking to develop a wider range of temporary and settled accommodation styles.

- 7.7 Initial discussions with local housing associations on core and cluster accommodation models, will provide more appropriate housing styles for individuals with complex needs. This has potential to make use of some of the long-term empty properties. Bringing these properties back into use will benefit people who need this type of tenure, the service, local housing associations and the community.
- 7.8 The service will create housing pathways in the coming year to support these new models.
- 7.9 Enhancing links in order to prevent homelessness. Ongoing discussions with Scottish Prison Service, Criminal Justice, Mental Health Services and acute hospitals are underway to improve transitional pathways to homelessness services or housing where homelessness can be prevented.
- 7.10 Strengthening these links, going forward we will focus on achieving SHORE standards and encourage continuous and improved collaborative working. Refreshing of discharge protocols and preventing homelessness will be evidenced in a continued decrease in the number of persons presenting to the service because of discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institutions.
- 7.11 The service has existing links and refer to Inverclyde Women's Aid for specialist support and/or refuge for up to 11 women. A Housing First pathway has been created in conjunction with Inverclyde's Women Aid, with training and capacity given to the service to provide a tailored housing first support to women and children with a history of domestic abuse. The next step is to identify appropriate referrals.
- 7.12 We will continue to expand our Housing First model in year 5 of the RRTP. A significant proportion of Inverclyde's homeless population (34% with high support needs as shown in Appendix 1) would benefit from this approach.

Appendix 1: RRTP Action Plan 2022-23

Objective 1: Reduce the need for temporary accommodation by preventing homelessness

Measure No	Measure	Target	RRTP baseline	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
M1.1	Number of homeless applications	Reduce by 10%	205	292	HSCP
M1.2	Number of P1 applications	Increase by 10%	702	682	HSCP
M1.3	Number of P1s progressing to HL1	Reduce by 20%	28%	39% (has reduced from 48% in 2021/22)	HSCP
M1.5	Number of homeless applications that resulted due to leaving an institution i.e., prison	Reduce by 15%	33	24	HSCP

Action No	Action	Target/Milestone	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
A1.1	Housing Options and Advice service – focusing on prevention	Launch 2023/24	Robust action plan in place to rebrand the service as a Housing Options and Advice service	HSCP
A1.2	Prevention Mapping undertaken by RRTP Steering Group	Complete March 2024	Recommendations have been made, including an addition to RSL Tenancy Abandonment Process, requiring that RSLs inform the Homeless Service when they begin abandonment procedures	HSCP
A1.3	Improving links with prison (early intervention work)	Link to M1.5	A contact from our local prison attends regular subgroup meetings – maintaining close links	HSCP

Objective 2: Enable service users with no/low support needs to access settled housing quickly

Measure No	Measure	Target	RRTP baseline	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
M2.1	Average time spent in temporary accommodation	Reduce by 10-20%	116	113 days (reduced by 18% from 2021/22)	HSCP

M2.2	Allocated social rented properties to homeless applications	Increase by 5%		14%	HSCP
M2.3	Number of HF households being supported by RRST	Increase by 10%		36	HSCP
M2.4	Number of households being supported by RRST	Maintain at 56		37	HSCP
M2.5	Number of households being supported by 3 rd sector	Decrease by 100%		5	HSCP
M2.6	Number of Housing First cases	Increase to 56		41	HSCP
M2.7	Number of households who spend more than 12 months in temporary accommodation	Reduce by 20%		Reduced by 21%	HSCP

Action No	Action	Target/Milestone	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
A2.1	In-house support team, focusing on both complex cases and clients with lower support needs	Maintain Capacity	At present the service is supporting 37 homeless households 36 of which are Housing First cases.	HSCP
A2.2	Work closely with Private Rented Sector to provide settled accommodation	2 Landlord Forums per year	Piloting Landlord Forum with the first meeting scheduled for June 7 th 2023	HSCP

Objective 3: Implement a Housing First model which enables excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment

Measure No	Measure	Target	RRTP baseline	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
M3.1	Number of HF tenancies established	Maintain at 56		17 with a further 3 with offers pending	HSCP
M3.2	Number of individuals receiving HF support	Maintain at 56		Increased by 300% since 1 st November 2022	HSCP

M3.3	Number of households receiving HF through 3 rd sector organisations	Reduce by 100%		5	HSCP
M3.4	Number of HF cases 12+ months tenancy sustainment	Increase to 70%		9	HSCP
M3.4	Number of repeat homelessness cases	Reduce by 20%	10%	6.5%	HSCP

Action No	Action	Target/Milestone	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
A3.1	Continue to establish HF tenancies	Maintain capacity	17 HF tenancies have been established, with further 3 households obtaining pending offers of secure housing	HSCP
A3.2	Work towards the HF principles through the in-house Rapid Rehousing Support Team	Monitor best practice	RRST work with some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable residents to help them break the cycle of homelessness and ultimately secure a permanent tenancy	HSCP
A3.3	Continue to increase support through HF to ensure tenancy sustainment	Review staff resource at capacity	Currently 41 clients overall receiving HF support – 36 by RRST and 5 by 3 rd sector	HSCP
A3.4	Focus on closure of long-term homelessness	Reduce by 20%	All persons experiencing long term homelessness were referred to in-house support team. This resulted in 21% reduction from Q3 to Q4	HSCP
A3.5	Improving lived experience engagement	Embed in decision making process	Engagement sessions through collaboration with local community care forum, Your Voice – discussions/suggestions on improvement in the service	HSCP

Objective 4: Enable service users who need specialist supported housing to access commissioned HSCP services

Action No	Action	Target/Milestone	Progress at 31 March 2023	Lead
A4.1	Undertaking a mapping exercise to capture available supported accommodation in the area	Complete March 2024	Potential for pathways being scoped	HSCP
A4.2	Ongoing communication with local housing associations	Complete Sept 2024	Discussions on core and cluster style accommodations	HSCP

Appendix 2: Service Flowchart from Assessment to Closure

