

Argyll & Bute Local Housing Strategy Development



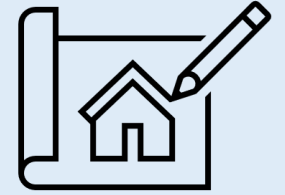
Insight briefing:

- Homeless population
- Prevention activity
- Temporary accommodation
- Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan
- Housing support & sustainment

LHS Main Issue 4:
Housing Options, Information & Support

Argyll & Bute LHS Development

Draft LHS Structure



The Local Housing Strategy will set out the vision for housing and housing related services in Argyll & Bute over the next five years.

To build a new Local Housing Strategy, Argyll & Bute Council and partners must set a new vision for homes and communities and set out priorities for action to tackle the main housing issues locally.

The LHS will also set a Housing Supply Target that guides the assembly of land for housing development to meet local housing need & demand.

Based on analysis of the local housing system in Argyll & Bute, it is proposed that the new Local Housing Strategy be developed around the following 4 Main Issues:

1. **Housing supply & placemaking**
2. **House condition, energy efficiency & poverty**
3. **Specialist provision & independent living**
4. **Housing options, information & support**

This briefing sets out evidence, insight and questions on the key issues which influence decision making on preventing and tackling homelessness

Housing options, information & support: What's our starting position? This briefing will explore...



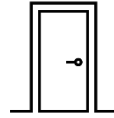
Homeless population profile



Which households are experiencing homelessness in Argyll & Bute?

What does a typical homelessness pathway look like?

Homelessness profile



What is the extent and nature of homelessness in Argyll & Bute?

What are the range of outcomes achieved by the homeless population in Argyll & Bute?

Homelessness prevention



To what extent is homelessness being prevented before housing crisis is experienced?

What are the range of prevention activities available and what are their impact?

Temporary accommodation profile



What is the role of temporary accommodation in alleviating homelessness in Argyll & Bute?

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan



What is the framework for transforming the delivery of homelessness services in Argyll & Bute?

What is the role of Housing First in tackling homelessness in Argyll & Bute?

Housing support profile



What is the profile of support needs in the homeless population in Scotland?

What is the role of housing support in promoting tenancy sustainment within an RRTP framework?

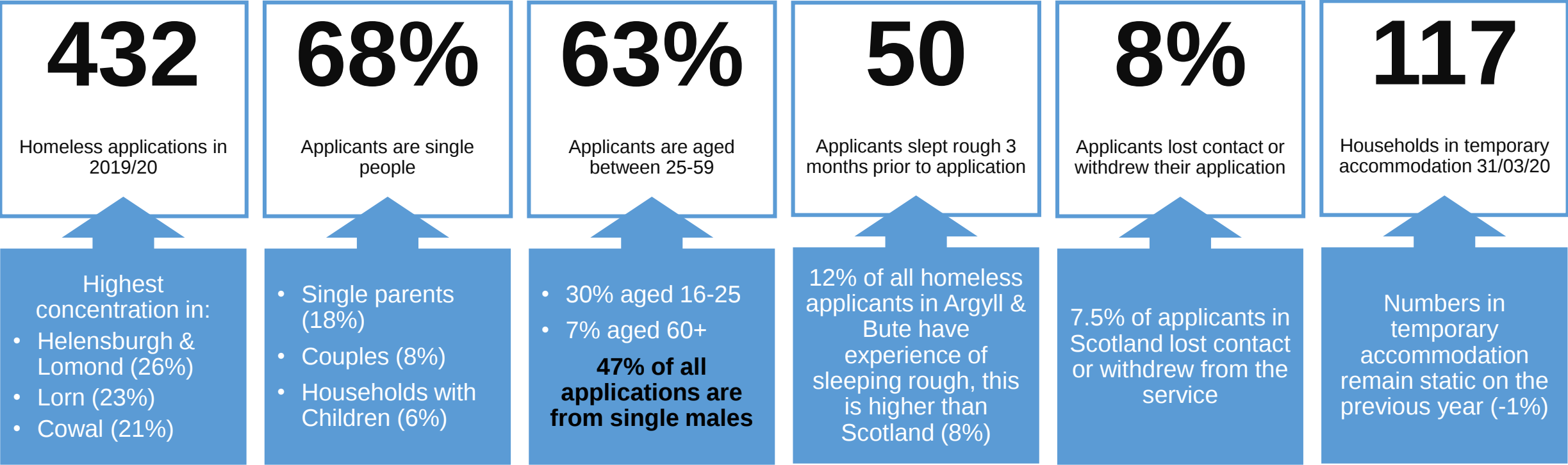


Homeless Population Profile

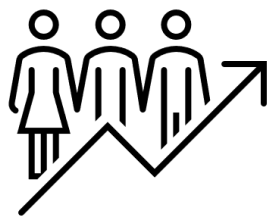
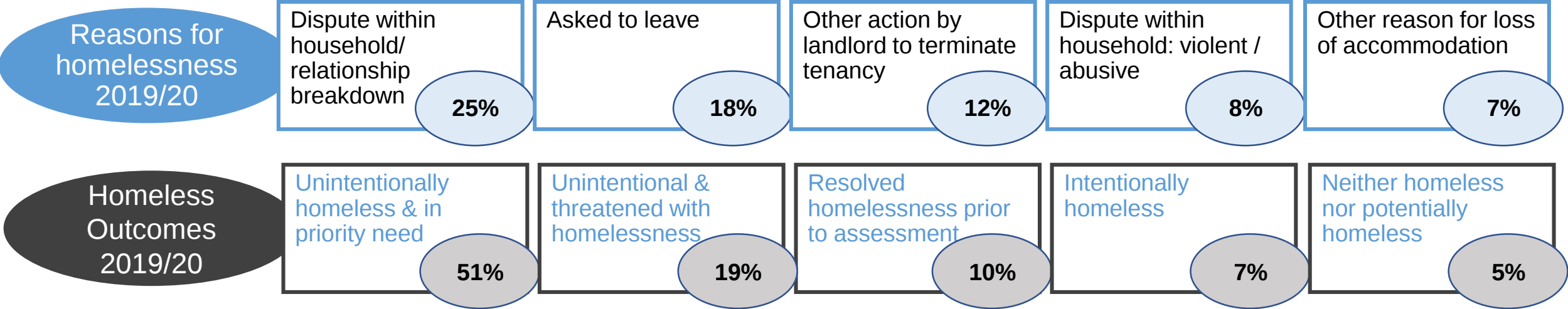


In 2019/20, 432 households made applications for assistance under the homeless legislation in Argyll & Bute, down 6% on the previous year. 424 cases were closed during the year.

Homeless applications per annum	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Total application	401	478	516	460	432
Annual % Change	*	16%	7%	-12%	-6%



Homelessness Profile



Repeat homelessness In Argyll & Bute: 4.6%

Repeat homelessness in Argyll & Bute is lower (4.6%) than Scotland (4.8%)

37 weeks

The average time to discharge the homeless duty from application to final outcome in 2019/20 was 37 weeks. This is an increase on 2018/19 at 35 weeks.

87% of homeless households secured a positive outcome

(e.g. SST, private tenancy, support to stay in current home etc).

Homelessness Prevention Profile



In 2018/19, 1,438 households approached the housing options service for assistance which is 27% lower than the previous year.

1,438

Prevention approaches in 2018/19

31%

Households were RSL tenants

20%

Households went on to make a homeless application

38% households were seeking general housing options advice

24% were at risk of eviction/repossession

- 18% PRS tenants
- 14% living in family home
- 10% owner occupiers
- 7% living with friends/partner

- 263 households (13%) assessed with vulnerabilities inc:
- Physical ill-health 21%
- Debt 17%
- Mental ill-health 17%

Prevention activity 2019/20

General housing advice, information & assistance

52%

Client informed of rights under homelessness legislation

29%

Assistance that will enable household to remain in their current home

7%

Assistance in securing appropriate alternative housing

4%

67% of those seeking assistance from the Housing Options service achieved positive outcomes in 2019/20

48% of households were enabled to remain in their current accommodation achieving positive housing sustainment

LHS Main Issue 4: Housing Options, Information & Support

Temporary Accommodation Profile



In 2019/20, there were 131 units of temporary accommodation across 6 HMAs. Most units are leased from the private rented sector and located mainly in Lorn and Helensburgh & Lomond:

HMA	Serviced Accommodation	Council Retained Accommodation	RSL	Private sector	BTHA*	Total
BUTE			5			5
COWAL	10		6	7		23
H'BURGH & LOMOND	8	6	4	21		39
KINTYRE				5		5
LORN			2	8	32	42
MID ARGYLL		1	1	15		17
TOTAL	18	7	18	56	32	131

R RTP vision for temporary tenancies:

1. To provide accommodation when required preferably where the client will reside until permanently housed
2. To maintain a variety of good quality temporary accommodation in community settings
3. To minimise and preferably eliminate, transfer from one temporary tenancy to another
4. Time spent in temporary accommodation is no more than 20 weeks by 2024
5. Continue to minimise, and preferably eliminate completely, use of B&B
6. To implement a rural Housing First project in Argyll & Bute by flipping more temporary tenancies thereafter to Secure Tenancies

In 2019/20....



There were no breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order



80% customer were satisfied with the temporary accommodation provided



In total, the council invested £565,064 in homeless temporary accommodation in 2019/20;

In 2019/20 there were 224 placements in temporary accommodation (compared to 239 in 2018/19) and the average length of stay was 165 days (compared to 159 & 134 in the previous two years).



This is just above the LHS target of 160 days or less, but does indicate an increasing trend towards lengthier placements.

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Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)



As part of the national 'Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan' (2018), all local authorities in Scotland were required to submit a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to Scottish Ministers by 31st December 2018.

In Argyll & Bute, the principle of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is to move from a primarily reactive, crisis intervention homeless service to a pro-active, early intervention preventative service.

The plan sets out a whole system change of culture in the way homelessness is tackled in Argyll and Bute

The RRTP Action Plan focuses on three major elements:

1. **Prevention**
2. **Reducing time in temporary accommodation**
3. **Sustaining permanent accommodation**

More homelessness to be prevented through assertive outreach



Integrated working between housing, health, mental health and addiction services on prevention & tenancy sustainment work



Protocols with partners to ensure people leaving public services are not discharged into homelessness



More focus on rehousing targets to reduce time spent in temporary accommodation



Greater uptake of first offers by improving approach to areas of choice, reasonableness for offers decorative quality of homes offered



Where leaving accommodation is unavoidable, to have high quality, fit for purpose temporary accommodation, available for occupation



Maintaining the current mediation service to reduce homelessness through disputes within families



Greater alignment of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) to homeless households



Provision of Rural Housing First



Flexible Emergency Fund to enable front line housing support workers to assist households in crisis



Decoration allowance scheme to support early occupancy



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Housing Support Profile



Pause & reflect:

The tenancy support service focuses on homeless prevention and transitional/ tenancy sustainment.

In 2019/20 there were 342 new households requiring support. The main areas of support related to accommodation and to social and economic well-being; however many also had issues around employment, health or safety and security.

At the year-end (March 2020), there were a total of 127 clients aged 16-24 and 153 aged 25+.

Of the total departures last year, 77% were planned, which continues the positive increasing trend of recent years, but remains below the LHS target which is to achieve 80% planned departures. Total spend on Tenancy Support in 2019/20 amounted to £798,006.

The R RTP commits to transforming the working relationship between support commissioners and providers across the Council and H&SCP to assist homeless households with complex support needs.

The aim is to deliver a joint and seamless service will be offered. This transformation will be based on Appointment of link officers for Mental Health, Addictions and Housing to:

Ensure providers offer support at the right level to suit client needs.

Assess needs and ensure psychologically informed support interventions

Ensure the organisation best suited to meet the highest level of need has ownership of client support with other agencies in a supporting role

Seek to minimise the number of professionals working with each individual thus enhancing the likelihood of positive engagement

About one third of homeless presentations to the Council have no identified support needs and for whom permanent housing provision ends their housing crisis.

A further 18% require only tenancy support provided in both temporary tenancy and when rehoused in permanent accommodation, supported until fully settled.

However an estimated 49%, close to half of all presentations, have some form of underlying mental health and/or addiction condition and the proposal for a new model of support is designed to meet those needs.

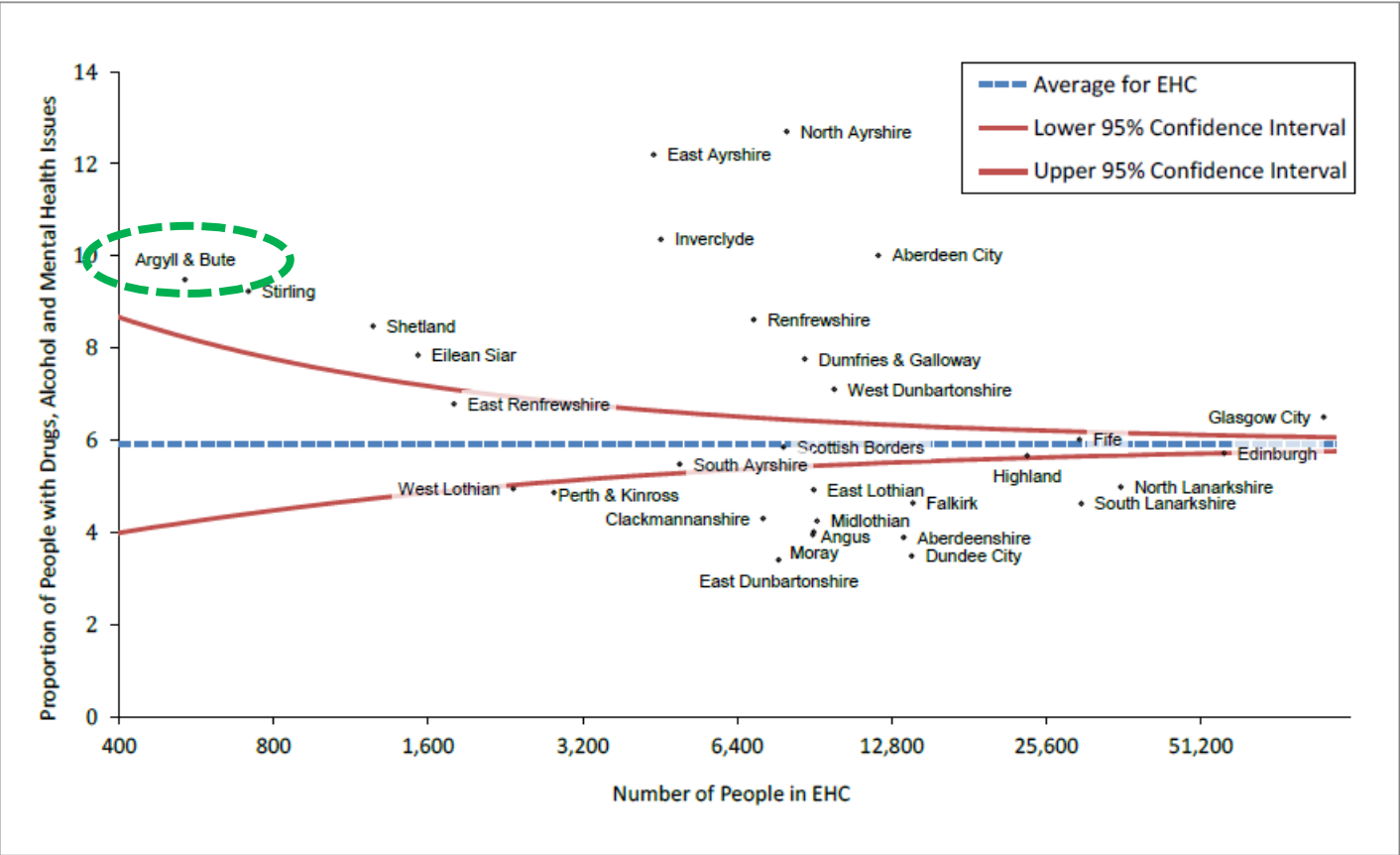
Levels and type of support required	No	%
Current Homeless cases		
No support required	172	33%
Tenancy support only	95	18%
Enhanced tenancy support including low level mental health and/or addiction support	45	9%
Medium level mental health and/or addiction support for complex cases in addition to tenancy support	80	15%
High level mental health and/or addiction support for complex cases in addition to tenancy support	130	25%
Total homeless presentations 2017/18	517	100%

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Housing Support Profile



Figure 10.3: Proportion of People in the Cohort with Drug-, Alcohol-Related and Mental Health Issue by Local Authority



The “Health and Homelessness in Scotland” report (Scottish Government, 2018), tracked engagement with health services by the homeless population in each local authority across a 15 year period from 2001-2016.

Data analysis identified the number of homeless people in each local authority who experienced the tri-morbidity of drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

Argyll & Bute has a substantially greater proportion of homeless people experiencing these tri-morbidities. The average for the homelessness population in Scotland is 6%, i.e. 6% of those who have ever experienced homelessness also have experienced the tri-morbidity of drug, alcohol and mental health problems.

In Argyll & Bute that figure is **10%** (which is within the upper quartile of local authorities in Scotland) and 4% higher than the national average.

These findings provide insight into the complex nature of homelessness in Argyll & Bute, suggesting the need for a joined up, multi-agency approach which fully embraces both health and social work services in addressing the housing and underlying needs of those facing housing crisis.

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Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Delivery

Limited funding means the following will not go ahead:

- Appointment of an RRTP Project Manager and Research Assistant
- Appointment of 8 Homeless Prevention/Housing First Officers
- Establishment of Peer Support groups

The Argyll & Bute RRTP sets a 5-year framework to deliver the following outcomes:

The number of homeless applicants will reduce from 517 per annum (2017/18) to 300 (2023/24)

460 homeless applications were taken in 2018/19

Units of temporary accommodation are accordingly reduced from 140 to 100 (2023/24)

Short-term increase to 188 due to Covid

Support for homeless households is integrated between tenancy, mental health and addiction services

Mental Health Practitioner currently out to advert

People spend as little time as possible in temporary tenancies reducing from 26 to 20 weeks by 2024

2018/19: average of 23 weeks

People sustain permanent tenancies with a reduction in repeat homelessness

5.7% applications were repeats (2018/19)

In 2019/20, RRTP successfully delivered

Rent arrears prevention fund – Payments made directly to the landlord to prevent eviction action plus tenancy sustainment support.

£39k to 27 households facing eviction

Decoration Project – The decoration project aims to assist households to make a house a home and have a greater chance of sustaining that home.

7 households assisted (£6,405)

Mental Health / Addictions Practitioner - specialist support service to households facing housing crisis.

Post currently out to advert

Flexible Emergency Fund - empowers front line workers to assist households at the point of crisis, enabling access to services.

£4,250 paid to housing support providers



Training delivered to all partners

Housing First...

...is a secure tenancy as the first option for complex and/or chaotic homeless cases and Wraparound Support. The support and care provided as part of Housing First are both integral parts of the proposed new homeless model. It is anticipated that around 10 households per annum will be accommodated through the Housing First route in Argyll and Bute. The proposal is that Housing First is implemented in October 2020.

Housing Options, Information & Support: What are the issues?



Homelessness profile



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Homelessness prevention



In 2018/19, 1,438 households approached the housing options service for assistance, 27% lower than the previous year. 67% of those seeking assistance achieved positive outcomes, with 48% of households were enabled to remain in their current home. 20% went on to make a homeless application.

Temporary accommodation



In 2019/20, there were 131 units of temporary accommodation across Argyll & Bute. In this year, there were 224 placements in temporary accommodation (compared to 239 in 2018/19), at a cost to Argyll & Bute Council of £565,000.

Rapid Rehousing



The principle of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is to move from a reactive, crisis intervention homeless service to a pro-active, early intervention preventative service. The RRTP Action Plan focuses on: (1) Prevention; (2) Reducing time in temporary accommodation; and Sustaining permanent accommodation.

Housing support profile



Almost 50% of all homeless applications, have some form of underlying mental health and/or addiction condition. The tenancy support service in Argyll & Bute focuses on homeless prevention and tenancy sustainment. Total spend on Tenancy Support in 2019/20 amounted to £798,006, 77% households achieving a planned outcome.

Housing Options, Information & Support...

What's the problem we're trying to solve?



To build a new Local Housing Strategy, Argyll & Bute Council need to prioritise the main housing issues that need to be tackled to set local priorities that will guide action, partnership and investment moving forward. This briefing has focused on housing options, information & support in Argyll & Bute, presenting evidence on the extent and nature of the problem and progress in tackling it since 2016.

The purpose of the LHS conference is to finalise the main housing issues that require intervention in Argyll & Bute, examine the main issues in detail and generate ideas for action and investment. Key issues for consideration in the Housing Options, Information & Support Workshop are:

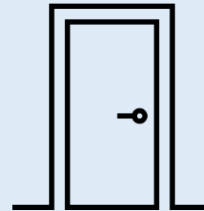
1

Is tackling homelessness through housing options, information & support a continued LHS priority?



2

What are the main challenges we face in tackling homelessness and improving housing sustainment in Argyll & Bute?



3

What's been proven to work and what are our priorities for action?

