



**Homelessness Strategy
2017-22**
**ANNUAL PROGRESS
REPORT 2018-19**

ending homelessness **TOGETHER/**

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FOREWORD

This is the second Annual Progress Report on the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 “Ending Homelessness Together”. In another challenging year, progress continues to be made against the 18 actions within the Strategy. This report contains information on how we have performed against our Strategy Outcome Indicators and our Year 2 Implementation Plan. Detailed analysis is provided on the numbers and type of household presenting as homelessness, the reasons for homelessness and the costs/spend associated with homelessness.

Key achievements include:

- Commencement of review of temporary accommodation with a view to the development of a long term and sustainable temporary accommodation provision strategy
- Completion of the roll in of the Housing Solutions approach across the whole organisation
- The development of a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan
- Local Groups working together to organise interagency events to raise awareness of the issues around homelessness

As well as outlining some of the key activities undertaken, and as this is an outcomes based report; we also hear from clients experiencing homelessness themselves via our case studies. These stories, more than any statistical analysis give us a real understanding of the factors that can lead a household to homelessness and help us devise prevention strategies that might stop another household from experiencing the same thing. This will form a key part of our year three implementation plan. They also give us an insight into what it is like for a household, already vulnerable, to navigate the often complex processes associated with finding a long term solution to their homelessness. The unique perspective of the client helps us to see what could be done better. Finally they help us understand how we can better support these clients to long term tenancy sustainment.

The one thing that is clear from all of the case studies is that the reasons and actions needed to address homelessness are never straightforward, and that agencies must work together to provide the best client outcome. The Housing Executive remains mindful of the devastating impact homelessness can have on a household and this Strategy recognises homelessness as an issue that goes beyond housing, where, in many cases it is other factors which have led to homelessness. As we progress in the delivery of this Strategy, we know and are grateful, that the resolve to work together across the voluntary, statutory and community sectors has only increased. Going forward, The Housing Executive will continue to strive to forge new and innovative partnerships, to develop new initiatives and new approaches to service delivery in conjunction with our partner organisations and to ensure that the client and their needs are central to everything we do.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Professor Peter Roberts, Chair



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Clark Bailie, Chief Executive



Top: Launch of Lifehouse Support Activities Hub
Bottom: Fun day at the Hub Launch

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Executive is identified in the Housing (NI) Order 1988 (as amended) as the organisation tasked with responding to homelessness in Northern Ireland. Among the homelessness duties placed upon the Housing Executive is the duty to produce a Homelessness Strategy, laying out a plan on how to address homelessness and we do this on a five year basis.

Changes to the Strategy

In developing this Homelessness Strategy 2017-22, the need for flexibility in an ever changing environment was recognised and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances was included in Action 3 of Objective Five – Monitor emerging issues and develop appropriate strategies as necessary.

In year two of delivery of the Strategy the Housing Executive and its partners across all sectors, have agreed the need to adapt some of the actions within the plan to ensure the most appropriate and effective response going forward.

What does this mean?

Action 7 of the Strategy – *Review and implement Belfast and L'Derry rough sleepers Strategy* and Action 8 – *Identify chronic homelessness need outside Belfast and L'Derry and devise appropriate action plan to tackle issues* have been merged into one action – *Develop and Implement a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan*. Having listened to the Sector via the Local Area Groups it was agreed that the increasing complexity of clients – reflected in higher acceptance rates, demanded a new approach and greater understanding. The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan includes actions to quantify chronic homelessness by location and to develop appropriate responses to deal with the specific issues faced by those experiencing chronic homelessness. This reduces the total number of actions in the Strategy to 17.

Action 13 (originally action 14) has also been amended to reflect the new Supporting People structures: Ensure the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 links in to the SP Thematic Group on Homelessness (Action amended to reflect development of SP Thematic Group on Homelessness)

Other Progress

An Implementation Plan with key milestones to be achieved is produced each year of the Strategy. Progress continues to be made against all actions in the Strategy and all milestones identified were achieved with the exception of two milestones in the Year Two Implementation Plan.

The actions are: the development of a Scheme to assist clients to access the private rented sector, which was delayed mainly due to budgetary constraints and the development of a Common Assessment Framework and Central Access Point. The introduction of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) had major implications for the sharing of information causing minor delays to development of these initiatives. These actions will be carried forward to year 3.

Challenges

A significant challenge in the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 is the reliance on co-operation of statutory and voluntary organisations in the delivery of a number of actions. As a result of this, there has been a major focus on engaging with the Central Homelessness Forum and Local Area Groups to ensure the vision of ending homelessness together is achieved through a partnership approach that was envisaged in the development of the Strategy.

A main emphasis in the Year 3 Implementation Plan will be to have a greater focus on homelessness prevention, particularly with regards to the Communication Action Plan within objective 1. To assist with the challenges associated with homelessness prevention the Housing Executive has developed a Homelessness Prevention Fund for 2019/20 and stakeholders across the sector have been provided with details of this fund.

The National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) review, referred to in the progress update for Action 14 later in this report, noted the need to have greater ownership of strategy delivery outside the Housing Executive. Work has already commenced on this through the delivery of a workshop with the Central Homelessness Forum on the Year 3 Implementation Plan and this work will continue with all of the relevant implementation groups referenced in objective 4.

Year 2 saw considerable challenges in terms of Homeless funding. The Housing Executive has a duty to provide homeless households with interim accommodation until settled accommodation is secured and increasing demands on temporary accommodation is a significant factor in the funding challenges encountered during 2018/19.

While the funding environment provided a challenging context for the delivery of the Strategy, a number of major projects were initiated or progressed in Year 2 that, if successfully delivered, will contribute to the vision of ending homelessness together. These projects include:

- a. Strategic review of temporary accommodation;
- b. More effective partnership working in the sector through the development of common assessment tools;
- c. Further embedding of our Housing Solutions and Support approach;
- d. Publication of Chronic Homelessness Action Plan.

You can read of the progress made against all the actions in the Progress Report later in this document.

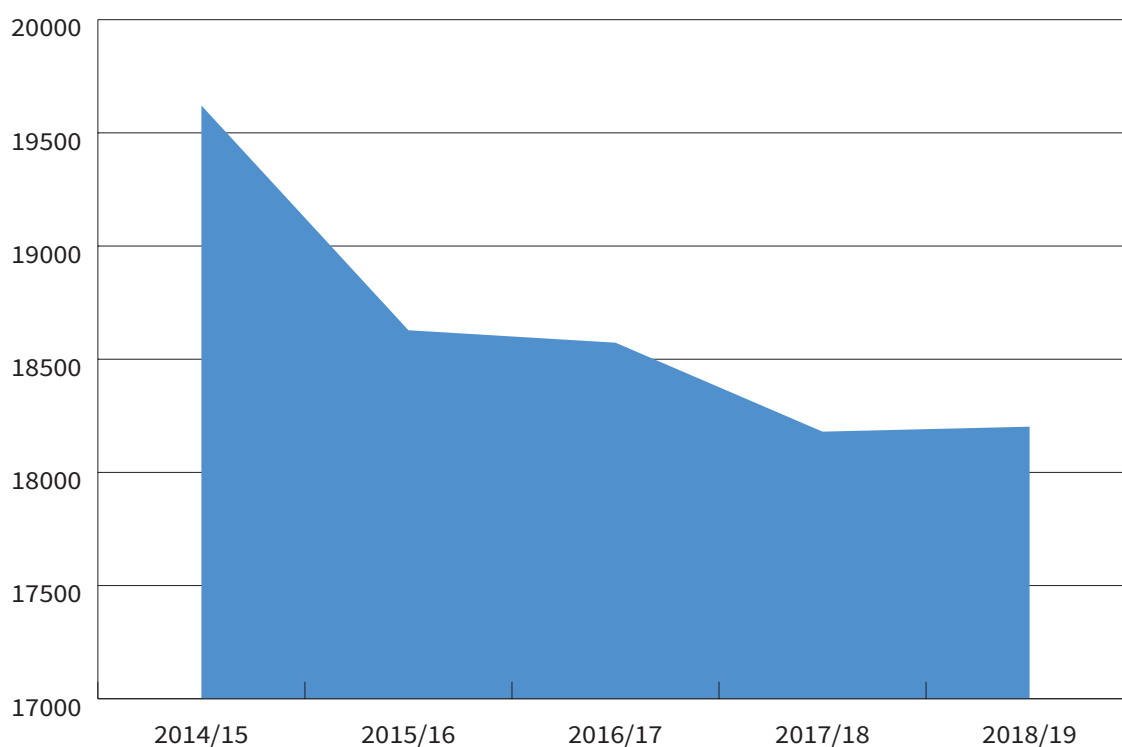
HOMELESSNESS DATA

Outcomes Based Accountability – Indicators

This Strategy aligned with the emerging Programme for Government (PfG) by adopting an outcomes approach to support the draft PfG outcome of ‘we care for others and help those in need’. The outcomes and indicators for this Strategy are outlined in the table below:

Outcome	Indicator(s)
We have support that prevents us from becoming homeless	Number of households presenting to the Housing Executive as homeless
We live in suitable homes	Average length of time spent in temporary accommodation
	Number of Full Duty Applicants (FDA) discharged
We have the support we require to access and/or sustain a home	Number of instances of repeat homelessness

Outcome 1 - We have support that prevents us from becoming homeless



■ Presentations

The graph above outlines the indicator for ‘We have support that prevents us from becoming homeless’ and shows that since 2014/2015 there has been a marginal decrease in the number of households presenting as homeless to the Housing Executive. The baseline figure for this indicator will be 18,180, which is the number of presentations in 2017/18, and the figure for 2018/19 represents an increase of 0.1% from the baseline. In the context of recent years, however the overall trend across the longer term shows a decrease in presenters from a recent peak of in of 19,621 in 2014/15.

Outcome 2 – We live in suitable homes

The table below outlines the first indicator for this outcome which is the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation for each household in 2016/17 and 2017/18. The baseline figure for this indicator will be the figures found in 2017/18.

Accommodation Type	Year	Average Length of Placement (Days)	% difference from 2017/18 to 2018/19
Single Lets	2017/18	394	10.9% (increase of 43 days)
	2018/19	437	
DIME*	2017/18	125	2.4% (increase of 3 days)
	2018/19	128	
Voluntary Sector Hostels	2017/18	245	-5.7% (decrease of 14 days)
	2018/19	231	
Housing Executive Hostels	2017/18	223	-6.7% (decrease of 15 days)
	2018/19	208	
Hotel/B&B	2017/18	48	-62.5% (decrease of 30 days)
	2019/18	18	
Total	2017/18	282	-0.4% (decrease of 1 day)
	2018/19	281	

*DIME refers to Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation

Housing Executive staff will engage with all households in temporary accommodation with a view to ensuring the duration of the placement is as short as possible. This emphasis on minimising the length of placement is particularly relevant to hotel/B&B placements which are used in emergency cases only and in the absence of any other suitable accommodation. Unfortunately, for those households who are seeking accommodation in areas of exceptionally high demand there is no other option beyond providing a placement in temporary accommodation for a significant period of time.

In terms of the above table it is necessary to note some of the more pronounced changes, notably the figures for single-lets and Hotel/B&Bs. Single-lets are very often in areas where there is a high demand for social housing and this in turn, makes move on difficult which impacts on the length of stay in temporary accommodation. There has been a substantial decrease in the length of stay in Hotel/B&Bs which is the result of an increased focus on providing alternative placements in other forms of temporary accommodation.

The Strategic Review of Temporary Accommodation project initiated in year 2 includes an objective to consider our strategic response to homelessness to make the stay in temporary accommodation as short as possible. During consultation events, held in June for the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan stakeholders from across the sector noted the need to balance efforts to make the stay in temporary accommodation as short as possible with the needs of clients who may require the support that is provided in temporary accommodation. While the Housing Executive will seek to ensure the stay in temporary accommodation is as short as possible the needs of the client will be paramount.

The second indicator for outcome 2 is the number of Full Duty Applicants (FDA) duties discharged. In 2017/18 there were a total of 6,467 FDA duties discharged via an allocation for a social rented property and this was the baseline figure for this indicator. In 2018/19 there has been an increase of 482 FDA duties discharged via an allocation for a social rented property. This 7% increase has resulted in a total of 6,949 FDA duties discharged via an allocation for a social rented property. Therefore, 90.3% of the 7,696 allocations for a social housing property were made to Full Duty Applicants compared to 88% in 2017/18.

Outcome 3 – We have the support we require to access and/or sustain a home

The indicator for the final outcome is the number of repeat homelessness presentations which refers to the number of presentations where the previous application had been closed less than 12 months before the current homeless application. The figure of 1,016 (5.6% of total presenters) for 2017/18 provided the baseline figure for this indicator. There has been an increase of 72 cases during 2018/19 bringing a total of 1,088 repeat homelessness presentations (5.9% of total presenters). The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan includes an action to review the causes of repeat homelessness and the Housing Executive's Research Programme for 2019/20 includes a project to provide further analysis on homelessness data, including chronic homelessness, so that we can better understand the reasons for repeat homelessness and put in place interventions which will help to reduce it.

Presentations and acceptances

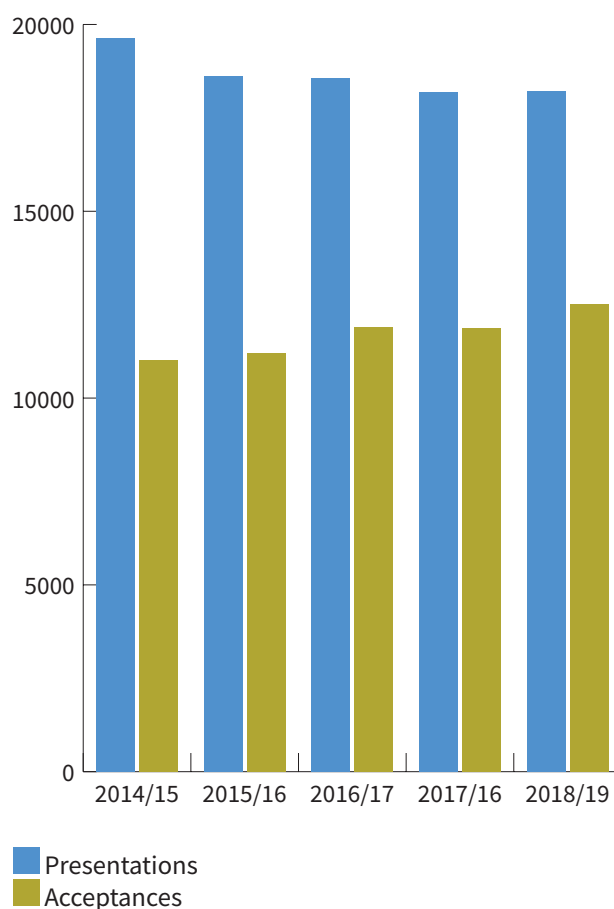
The chart opposite notes that households presenting as homeless totalled 18,202 in 2018/19 and of these 12,512 were accepted as Full Duty Applicants. In Northern Ireland the Housing (NI) Order 1988 (as amended) identifies the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as the agency tasked with responding to homelessness. The Order places a statutory duty on the Housing Executive to provide interim and/or permanent accommodation for certain homeless households, dependent upon investigations and assessment of their circumstances.

In order to be "accepted" as statutorily homeless, a household must meet the four tests of:

- Eligibility
- Homelessness
- Priority Need
- Intentionality

Any household that meets these four tests will be accepted as a "Full Duty Applicant" and will be owed a full housing duty. The full housing duty includes ensuring that accommodation is made available for the household as well as the provision of temporary accommodation where necessary and assistance with the protection of the household's belongings.

Whilst the number of households presenting as homeless has decreased over the past five years the number of households accepted as homeless has increased over the past five years from 11,016 in 2014/15 to 12,512 in 2018/19, an increase of 13%. This increase in acceptances is reflective of the increasing complexity and vulnerability associated with homeless households. In 2018/19 the Housing Executive commissioned research that seeks to provide further understanding on the reasons behind such an increase, particularly with regards to the Accommodation Not Reasonable category for homelessness.

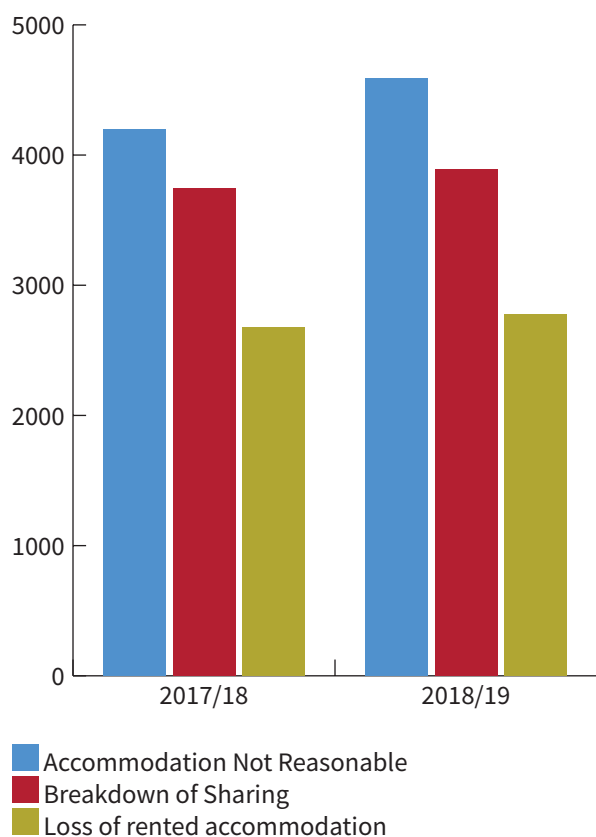


The table below shows that there has been a year on year increase in the percentage of applicants accepted as Full Duty Applicants over the past five years. This again points to an increasing proportion of applicants presenting with vulnerabilities.

Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Presentations	19,621	18,628	18,573	18,180	18,202
Acceptances	11,016	11,202	11,889	11,877	12,512
% of applications accepted	56%	60%	64%	65%	68%

Presentation Reasons

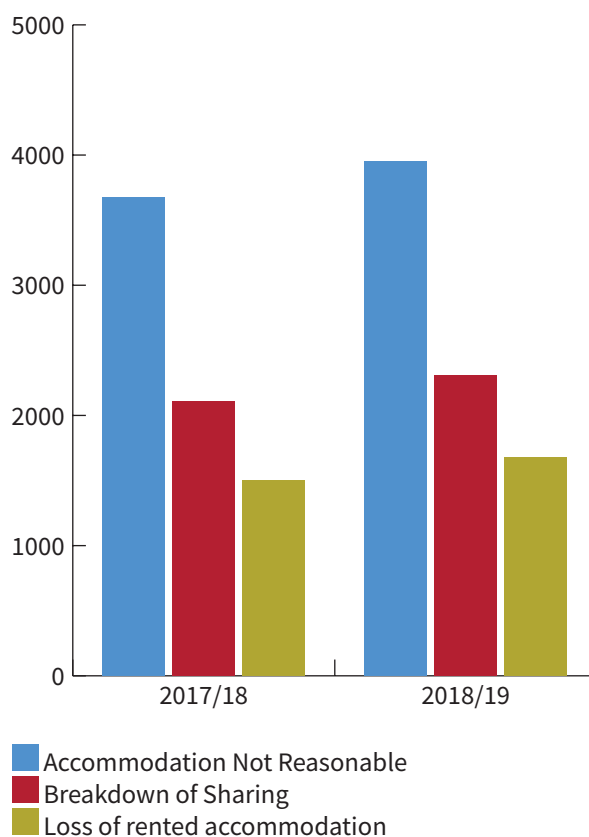
The top three reasons for presenting as homeless have again remained consistent with Accommodation Not Reasonable (4,588 in 2018/19), Breakdown of Sharing/Family Dispute (3,890 in 2018/19) and Loss of Rented Accommodation (2,779 in 2018/19) again the top three reasons for presenting as homeless.



In terms of percentage of presentations there has been a marginal increase in Accommodation Not Reasonable from 23.1% of all presentations in 2017/18 to 25.2% of all presentations in 2018/19. Both Breakdown of Sharing/Family Dispute and Loss of Rented Accommodation saw a marginal decrease in terms of the percentage of presentations with Breakdown of Sharing decreasing from 20.6% of all presentations in 2017/18 to 21.3% of all presentations in 2018/19. Loss of Private Rented Accommodation increased from 14.7% of all presentations in 2017/18 to 15.3% of all presentations in 2018/19.

Acceptance Reasons

The top three reasons for acceptance as Full Duty Applicants have also remained consistent with Accommodation Not Reasonable, Breakdown of Sharing/Family Dispute and Loss of Rented Accommodation the top three reasons for acceptance as a Full Duty Applicant.



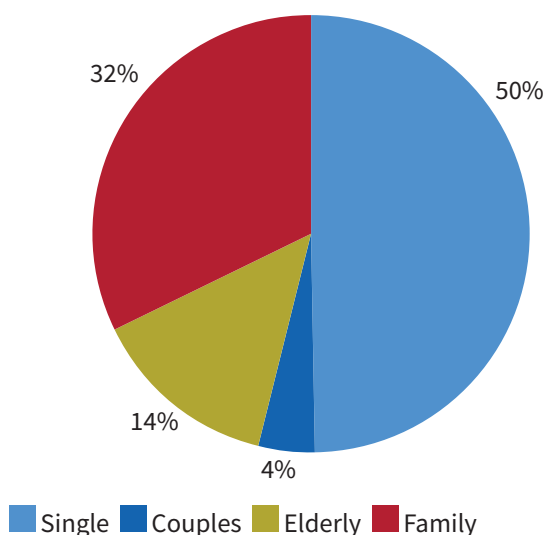
In terms of percentage of acceptances there has been a marginal increase in Accommodation Not Reasonable from 30.9% of all acceptances in 2017/18 to 31.6% of all acceptances in 2018/19. Both Breakdown of Sharing/Family Dispute and Loss of Rented Accommodation also saw increases in terms of the percentage of presentations with Breakdown of Sharing/Family Dispute increasing from 17.7% of all acceptances in 2017/18 to 18.4% of all acceptances in 2018/19. Loss of Rented Accommodation increased from 12.6% of all acceptances in 2017/18 to 13.4% of all acceptances in 2018/19.

The table below outlines the percentage of applications accepted for each of the three main reasons.

Homelessness Reason 2018/19	Presentations (% of total presentations)	Acceptances (% of total acceptances)	% of applications accepted
Accommodation Not Reasonable	4,588 (25.2%)	3,955 (31.6%)	86.2%
Sharing Breakdown/Family Dispute	3,890 (21.4%)	2,307 (18.4%)	59.3%
Loss of rented accommodation	2,779 (15.3%)	1,681 (13.4%)	60.5%

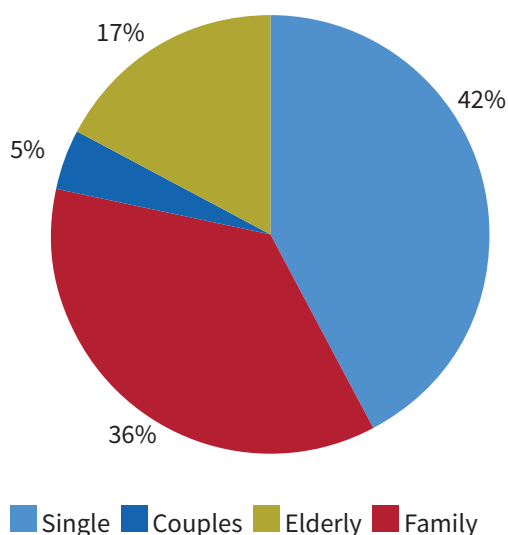
Homeless Presentations by Household Type

The chart below outlines homelessness presentations by household type and this presents a consistent pattern with the past number of years. Singles remain the household type with the highest percentage of total presentations which is at 49.8% for 2018/19, a marginal decrease from the from the 2017/18 figure of 50%.



Homeless Acceptances by Household Type

The chart below outlines homelessness acceptances by household type and this presents a consistent pattern with the past number of years. Singles remain the household type with the highest percentage of total acceptances which is at 42% for 2018/19.

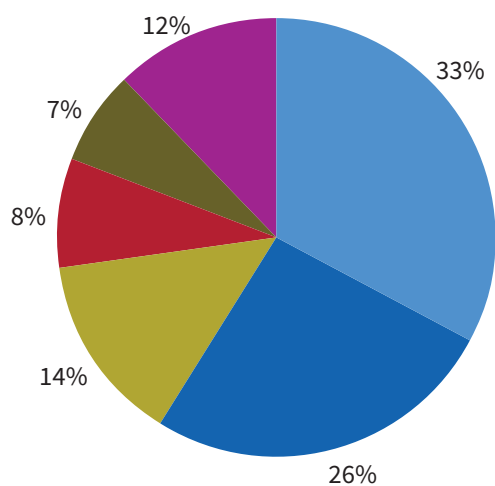


The table below outlines the percentage of applications accepted for each of the three main reasons for the household categories.

Household Type	Presentations	Acceptances	% of applications accepted
Singles	9,063 (49.7%)	5,293 (42.3%)	58.4%
Couples	794 (4.4%)	545 (4.4%)	71.3%
Families	5843 (32.1)	4,535 (36.2%)	77.6%
Pensioners	2,502 (13.7%)	2,139 (17.1%)	85.5%

Homeless Presentations by Tenure

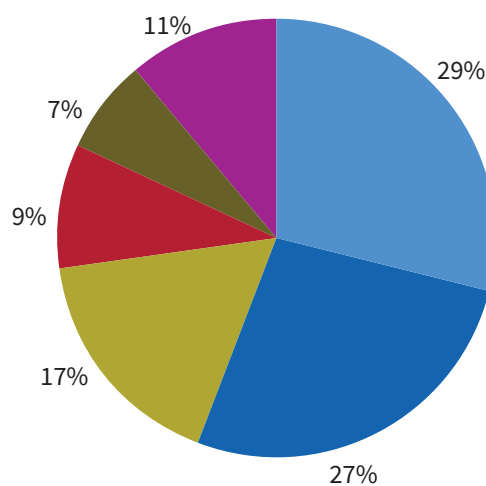
The chart below outlines presentations for 2018/19 by the tenure of the household at the point of application. 32.8% (5,985) were sharing at the point at which their application was made. 26.2% (4,762) were private tenants, 21% (3,830) were social rented sector tenants and 7.5% (1,372) were owner occupiers.



Sharing Private Tenant NIHE Tenant
Owner-Occupier Housing Association tenant
Remainder

Homeless Acceptances by Tenure

The chart below outlines acceptances for 2018/19 by the tenure of the household at the point of application. 29% (3,637) were sharing at the point at which their application was made. 26.9% (3,375) were private tenants, 24.1% (3,016) were social rented sector tenants and 8.7% (1,086) were owner occupiers.



Sharing Private Tenant NIHE Tenant
Owner-Occupier Housing Association tenant
Remainder

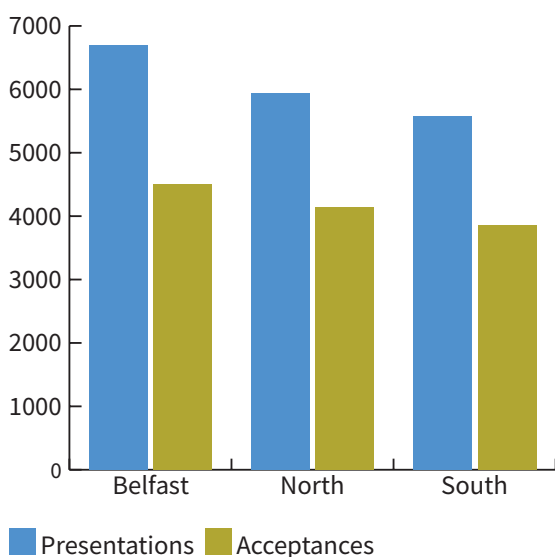
Homelessness by age of Head of Household

The table below outlines the percentage of presentations which are subsequently accepted by the age of the head of household. The increasing percentage of acceptances in the older age categories is reflective of the increasing vulnerability, and in many cases, unsuitable accommodation, amongst older households.

Age Band	Presenters	Acceptances	% Accepted
16-17	65	22	33.84%
18-25	3824	2401	62.78%
26-39	6395	4232	66.17%
40-49	2887	1919	66.47%
50-59	2315	1640	70.84%
60-69	1391	1095	78.72%
70-79	856	779	91%
80+	469	424	90.40%
Total	18202	12512	68.73%

Presenters and Acceptances by Region

The table below outlines the presenters and acceptances by Housing Executive region. Belfast is the region with the highest number of households presenting as homeless with 6,693 households presenting in 2018/19 while North region has 5,932 households presenting and South region providing 5,577 presentations. Compared to 2017/18 Belfast experienced a decrease of 3.3% in presentations during 2018/19 (6,924 presentations in 2017/18) while North experienced an increase of 3.6% (5,724 presentations in 2017/18) and South experienced an increase of 1.1% (5,514 presentations in 2017/18).



In terms of acceptances Belfast region had 4,506 households who were Full Duty Applicants while North region provided 4,144 acceptances and South region provided 3,862 acceptances. Compared to 2017/18 Belfast experienced a decrease of 2% in acceptances during 2018/19 (4,615 acceptances in 2017/18) while North experienced a decrease of 8.5% (3,820 acceptances in 2017/18) and South experienced an increase of 12.9% (3,422 acceptances in 2017/18).

In Belfast region 67.3% of households were accepted as Full Duty Applicants in 2018/19 while the figure was 69.8% in North region and 69.2% in South region. The corresponding figure for 2017/18 was 66.7% for Belfast, 66.7% for North region and 62.4% for South region. The Housing Executive commissioned research during 2018/19, previously referred to, which will investigate the variation in acceptances across our three regions over recent years.

Priority Need Reason

As previously noted, in order to be accepted as statutorily homeless a household must meet four criteria including Priority Need. The Priority Need Test determines if a household has some vulnerability which would make them less able to cope with homelessness than an average household. There are a range of categories which would mean a household would be in priority need. These include:

- A household with dependent children. These would include children under 16 where their primary residence is with the applicant or children up to 19 that are still in full time education.
- A household that has been made homeless due to an emergency like a fire or flood
- A person who is pregnant
- A person that has been subjected to violence or a real threat of violence
- A person who is vulnerable for some other reason – for example
 - you are elderly and vulnerable
 - you have a disability
 - you have mental health issues
 - you have health problems which mean you would be less able to cope with homelessness than a person who did not have these problems

The Housing Executive will seek evidence to determine if a household meets the Priority Need Test.

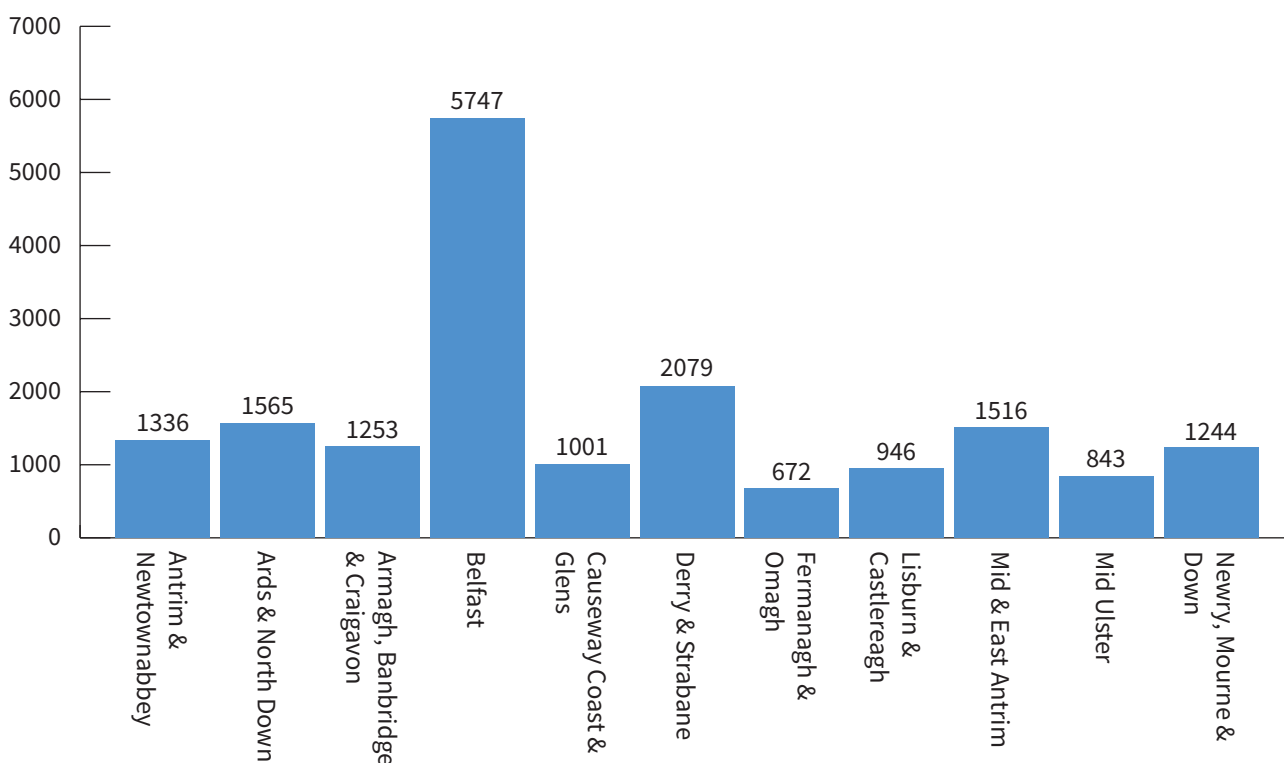
The table below outlines the reason for households accepted as homeless meeting the Priority Need criteria in 2018/19:

Priority Need Reason	Dependent Children	Emergency	Pregnant	Violence	Vulnerable	Total
Total	3,516	63	454	1,591	6,888	12,512

Presenters and Acceptances by Local Government District

Further to the previous narrative on presenters and acceptances the table below provides a breakdown of presentations by Local Government District. As part of our commitment to improve the range of data we analyse and publish it is the Housing Executive's intention to carry out an in-depth analysis on presenters and acceptances based on Housing Executive areas. These areas are aligned to Local Government Districts and will improve our understanding of homelessness at a local level. This analysis will be published during 2019/20.

Geographical Spread: Presenters

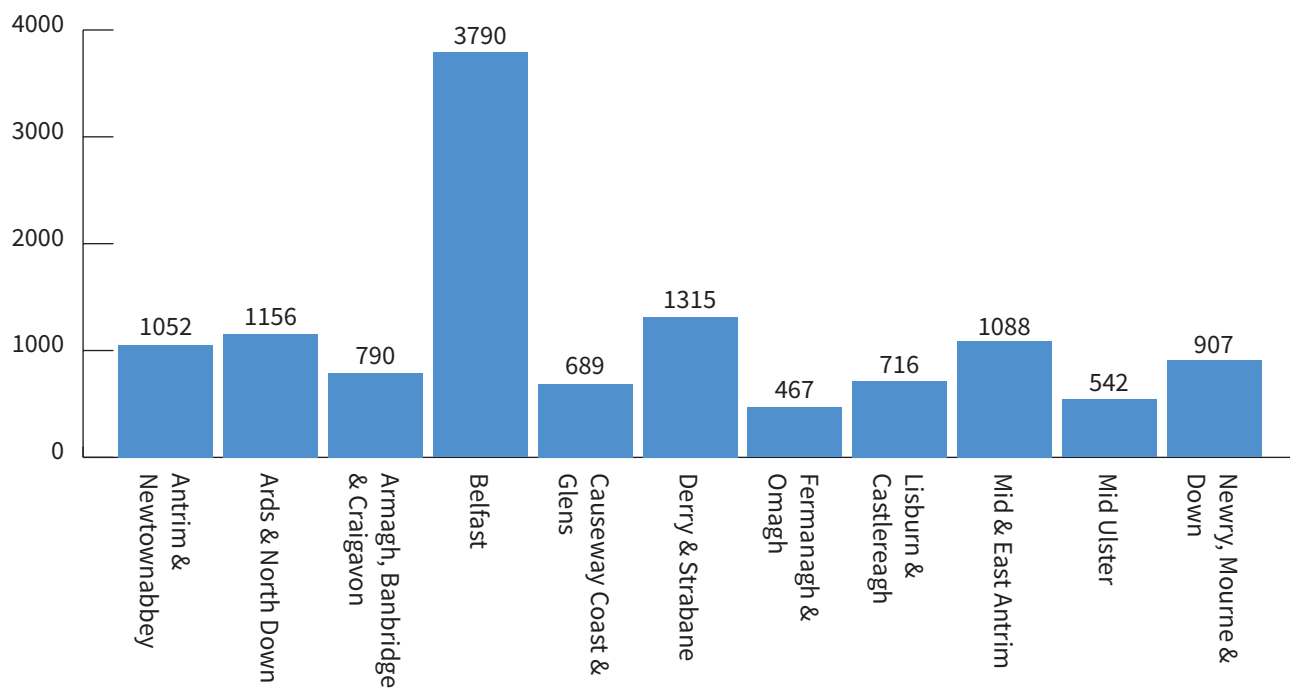


The table below outlines the correlation between these areas and the Housing Executive regions previously referred to.

Belfast Region	North Region	South Region
Belfast	Antrim & Newtownabbey	Ards & North Down
Lisburn & Castlereagh	Causeway Coast & Glens	Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon
	Derry City & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh
	Mid & East Antrim	Mid-Ulster
		Newry, Mourne & Down

Further to the previous narrative on presenters and acceptances the table below provides a breakdown of presentations by Local Government District

Geographical Spread: Acceptances



Tackling Rough Sleeping in Northern Ireland:

Key facts and figures

This section outlines findings from the Rough Sleeper Street Counts carried out by the Housing Executive in partnership with a range of voluntary and statutory partners across November. In areas where a Rough Sleeper Street Count was not carried out, the Housing Executive along with our partners, sought to estimate the number of rough sleepers in order to provide a snapshot of rough sleeping numbers across Northern Ireland.

Background

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and evidence confirms that for those affected this in turn leads to a deterioration in mental and physical health, often linked to weather conditions, sleep deprivation, addiction, depression and anxiety and poor access to general health and social care services.

We work closely on a daily basis with outreach services to move people from the street into appropriate temporary accommodation. It is important to note that previous street counts have identified that not all rough sleepers are without accommodation and this emphasises the need for the Housing Executive to work with our partner agencies to help individuals who are rough sleeping avail of the range of accommodation that is available.

As part of our statutory duty to homeless households we provided a total of 3,354 placements in temporary accommodation during 2018/19.

Rough Sleeper Street Counts

The Housing Executive and partner organisations recently completed rough sleeper street counts in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry. The methodology for the street counts is broadly similar to the process followed by Local Authorities in England and Wales and therefore consistent with data submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. During the street count rough sleepers were identified using the definition below: People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places, not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or 'bashes').

The Housing Executive works collaboratively with others in the sector to ensure it meets its statutory obligations to homeless households including due regard to emergency and temporary housing and have subsequently increased the number of bedspaces over the winter period.

Further detail on the three street counts is provided below:

- **Belfast Street Count**

The Belfast Rough Sleeper Street Count took place between 2am and 5am on Tuesday 6th November and was coordinated by the Housing Executive and the Welcome Organisation. The street count involved six teams comprised of volunteers from The Welcome Organisation, Housing Executive, Depaul, Belfast Trust, Salvation Army, Hosford House, Queens Quarter Housing, and PSNI. During the Belfast Street Count a total of 16 rough sleepers were identified. All individuals identified during the Belfast street count were known to the street outreach service provided by The Welcome Organisation.

- **Derry/Londonderry Street Count**

The Derry/Londonderry Rough Sleeper Street Count took place between 2am and 4am on Tuesday 20th November and was coordinated by the Housing Executive and First Housing Aid and Support Services. The street count involved two teams of volunteers from the Housing Executive and First Housing Aid and Support Services. During the Derry/Londonderry Street Count a total of 13 rough sleepers were identified.

At the time of the street count the Housing Executive was part of a multi-agency group that is seeking to address issues around street activity, including rough sleeping in Derry/Londonderry. This group comprised of representatives from the Housing Executive, Derry/Londonderry City Centre Initiative, Derry City & Strabane District Council, PSNI, Depaul Ireland, NWMF, First Housing and Damian House.

- **Newry Street Count**

The Newry Rough Sleeper Street Count took place between 2am and 4:30am on Thursday 29th November and was coordinated by the Housing Executive and The Welcome Organisation. The street count involved three teams of volunteers from the Housing Executive, The Welcome Organisation, Simon Community Northern Ireland and the PSNI. During the Newry Street Count a total of 5 rough sleepers were identified. It should be noted that the Housing Executive and voluntary organisations have offered those individuals identified during the Newry street count a range of services.

Rough Sleeper Street Estimates

In areas where the need for a street count was not identified we used an estimate to identify the number of rough sleepers using consultation with our local partners. To gather data in areas where a street count is not taking place we contacted local partners, including the PSNI, asking for the Housing Executive to be notified of any rough sleepers on the night of Wednesday 28th November. As with the rough sleeper street counts this is again consistent with the approach taken in neighbouring jurisdictions.

It is important to emphasise that the purpose of the estimate is to assess the numbers of people rough sleeping on the typical night chosen, rather than a larger sample of street activity, hidden homelessness or people using homelessness services. This means that, for example, a person who sometimes sleeps rough but sometimes has accommodation/shelter will not be included in the estimate unless there is evidence that they did sleep rough on that night. In previous years we have not provided any estimates of rough sleepers beyond those identified during the street counts in the larger cities and the purpose of this exercise is to provide a snapshot of rough sleeping activity in smaller settlements/rural areas.

As a result of the rough sleeper estimates we received nil returns in the majority of areas. We were however advised that there were four rough sleepers in the Coleraine area and we are seeking to engage with these individuals to provide the appropriate support and assistance.

Summary

In total the recent street counts and estimates identified a total of 38 rough sleepers across Northern Ireland. In 2017/18 there were two street counts carried out in Belfast and Newry which identified a total of 8 rough sleepers. While there has been a substantial increase in the number of rough sleepers recorded the Housing Executive would emphasise that this is the first time that Northern Ireland wide data on rough sleepers has been provided.

Furthermore, the use of a methodology that is consistent with England and Wales enables a comparison to be made with neighbouring jurisdictions. When a direct comparison is made numbers of rough sleepers in Northern Ireland are substantially lower than the most recent figures provided where it was recorded that there were 4,677 rough sleepers in England and 188 in Wales. Scotland records rough sleepers using a different methodology. (Please note the figures here relate to street counts carried out in England in November 2018 while the figures for Wales reflect a November 2017 total as

these are the most recent figures available at the time of publication)

The Housing Executive had previously carried out a Street Needs Audit over a twelve week period in 2016. Many of the people identified in street activity by the Street Needs Audit were characterised by chaotic lifestyles and poor health and well-being, they often proved difficult to engage with and resistant to offers of assistance. These entrenched individuals were more likely to require an emergency services response than to try to access crisis beds or other services. The majority of individuals encountered during the recent street counts have exhibited similar patterns of behaviour.

It is clear from the street counts that these individuals face many challenges and that they require intense packages of support alongside access to accommodation. All the statutory and voluntary agencies involved in dealing with homelessness across Northern Ireland are committed to continue to work together to ensure support is coordinated and improved.

The Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 noted a definition of chronic homelessness as ‘a group of individuals with very pronounced and complex support needs who found it difficult to exit from homelessness.’ The majority, if not all of those 38 individuals encountered during the recent street counts/estimates are experiencing chronic homelessness. In March 2018 the Housing Executive committed to the development of a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan, which will include actions for those who are rough sleeping across Northern Ireland. The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan will be published for public consultation in May 2019.



2019 Homeless World Cup's NI Squads

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Over the course of the past year we have provided total funding of approximately £37.1m for homeless services across Northern Ireland, which includes:

- £5.764m on temporary accommodation, including DIME (Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency);
- £1.840m for storage of personal belongings;
- £2.297m on outside agencies in the voluntary sector;
- £26m on Supporting People funding of homelessness services.

Further details on the overall homelessness spend are included in the Appendices.

The Housing Executive funds a range of outside agencies to provide services that assist in delivering the objectives of this Strategy. An overview of the services provided is listed below:

Housing Rights Service

housingadviceni.org:
Housing Advice in Prisons:
Beyond the Gate:
Community Housing Advice Partnership:

housingadviceni.org

HousingadviceNI is a regularly updated public advice website providing detailed advice and information on housing to members of the public. It aims to prevent homelessness and housing problems by providing people with 24/7 access to information and advice. It is supported by an email advice service, a directory of local advice agencies and a do it yourself section with tools, calculators and template letters.

As a result of this funding:

- Over 718,000 visitors were able to access information and advice
- 98% of users would visit the site again if they needed information and help with housing issues.

Housing Advice in Prisons

This service assists with the prevention of homelessness amongst those entering and leaving prison. It enhances the opportunities for rehabilitation and community integration and contributes to the reduction of homelessness and re-offending. This service is jointly funded by NIHE & NIPS (via DOJ)

As a result of funding:

- Advisers were able to assist with over 4,500 housing enquiries during 2018/19.

Beyond the Gate

This service assists with the prevention of homelessness for the most vulnerable clients with complex needs across all three NI prisons. It does this by providing dedicated and intensive specialist support, immediately upon and after release to sustain tenancies. It assists users to access accommodation and connects them to appropriate services in the community.

As a result of this funding:

- Housing Rights advisers were able to assist 72 vulnerable clients with complex needs and achieved positive housing outcomes for 90% of clients eligible for this service.
- 100% of clients felt the advice and assistance they received has generally improved their health and wellbeing.

Community Housing Advice Partnership

CHAP is a joint initiative between Housing Rights and Advice NI. This partnership enhances the capacity of 24 advice providers to deliver high quality housing advice to those across Northern Ireland who are homeless and/or in housing need.

As a result of this funding:

- CHAP agencies assisted 9060 clients deal with over 32,500 housing issues.
- 100% of CHAP agencies delivered positive housing outcomes for their clients

Simon Community NI – HOME TEAM

SCNI provide an innovative programme to meet the changing needs of a growing homeless population, working in close partnership with NIHE Housing Solutions teams in Belfast. SCNI staff co-ordinate floating support services in Belfast to ensure wraparound support for people previously homeless or at risk to sustain their tenancies. They will also facilitate homeless people to access affordable housing options in the private rented sector to boost move on within their hostels.

Council for the Homeless:

Council for the Homeless is an umbrella organisation which assists 76 member organisations to meet the aims and objectives of the Homelessness Strategy. They do this through information, engagement, developing workplace capacity, promoting active involvement and campaigning.

Case Study

Home Starter Pack Project – Funded by Housing Executive and Public Health Agency

CHNI's Home Starter Pack project delivers essential items for starting a new home to clients with FDA status, in order to facilitate the transition from temporary and hostel accommodation into permanent housing.

Each pack contains items such as a microwave, iron, toaster, kettle, bedding, dinnerware, cutlery, pots and pans and a slow cooker.

From 1 April 2018 -31 March 2019, 2250 packs were allocated (98.6 % of applications received). These were distributed from 6 collection points throughout NI to over 42 agencies. Of the clients who received packs, 29% had high support needs and 40.5% had medium support needs.

Outcomes

This scheme has proved invaluable for sustaining tenancies, as 94% of those who received packs were still in the same tenancy or other stable tenancy one year later.

Referral agencies overwhelmingly reported that the scheme improves people's ability to maintain their tenancies and helps clients settle in more quickly.

Clients themselves reported that in 98% of cases, the pack made it easier for them to keep their tenancy and without it, they would have struggled to stay in the same place long term. Each client (100%) said that the pack helped them "start my home".

Case Study

Client A had been homeless following a relationship breakdown in August. He had been working with the MDHST for support in relation to his homelessness. He was also attending the Crisis Team Service in relation to his mental health issues. Client A had also managed to reduce and then abstain from drug use, which had been an ongoing problem for him for a number of years and it had been a contributing factor to him being homeless. He has recently had his first child

and has secured a private rented tenancy through Smartmove. He was granted the Starter Pack to help him achieve his independent move after he had made so many positive changes in his life.

The client was delighted with the pack which he said "gave him a new start".

Extern Multi-disciplinary Homeless Support Team:

The Multi-Disciplinary Homeless Support Team (MDHST) continues to support some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society through the use of person-centred, social work interventions.

The previous financial year April 2018 - 31 March 2019 was another demanding, but rewarding year for the team. The MDHST in its' totality received 1526 referrals from a number of sources in the Greater Belfast area. The team are funded to support 1000 new referrals each year although these targets are consistently surpassed.

The following numbers are specific to each service:

- Core MDHST- 1094
- Refugee Floating Support Service- 241
- Complex Floating Support Service- 191

The funding envelope is comprised of allocations from the Housing Executive and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Fundamental to positive outcomes for service users is the professional partnership with NIHE, BHSCT, and Supporting People. Given the nature of the current landscape of homelessness, these relationships promote bespoke service provision for individuals and families who are homeless, and who also experience additional multi-complex needs.

During the reporting period, statistics gathered indicate that mental health difficulties are the primary programme of care for service users, with substance/ alcohol addictions featuring as the secondary programme of care:

Of the 1594 referrals to the MDHST:

- 670 individuals reported mental health as their primary difficulty
- 305 individuals reported addiction as their primary difficulty
- 662 individuals reported mental health as their secondary concern
- 257 individuals reported addiction as their secondary concern

These figures underpin the anecdotal observations of staff members in the team who had already identified that these factors together require intensive, bespoke support planning. Advocacy is a core function of the entire team, particularly in relation to the client group.

The objectives for the following financial year include engaging with all Government departments and with stakeholders and service users within the homeless sector, to identify key changes and policy drivers which can effect change in the societal perspective of individuals who are homeless.

East Belfast Mission: Street Soccer

Street Soccer NI is passionate about bringing positive change to people's lives by offering help, community and hope for the future. The programmes tackle homelessness, unemployment, addiction and mental health issues. There are 9 weekly projects across NI including 6 men's projects, 1 women's and two projects for people with learning disabilities. They work with over 80 people every week across NI and over 200 people per year.

Street Soccer attended the Homeless World Cup for the 6th time in Mexico City in November 2018. 16 players who are homeless or have experienced homelessness took part in the weeklong tournament to represent Northern Ireland. Both teams played were battling it out amongst 50 plus nations. The girls team finished 14th in their competition and the men's team 27th overall in theirs. Although there were no trophies home this year the teams did manage to pick up two awards for 'Best Female Coaches' and 'Best Female Player' for Keira Moss who was chosen from over 100 women. This was great recognition for the charity at the World Cup and a first time winning a coaches or player award.

Of the 16 players who attended the Mexico World Cup 10 now have their own accommodation or are living with their family. 7 of the 16 are in full or part time employment or education while 12 players are currently volunteering with Street Soccer.

All 16 have received support around employment and housing and good relations while 13 players have completed their level one coaching through IFA. 3 of the players have become ambassadors with Dame Kelly Holmes Trust.

NIACRO Base 2:

The Base 2 project provides a crisis intervention service for individuals who are at risk of exclusion from their homes due to paramilitary or community threat.

The project contributes to the prevention of homelessness by providing a threat clarification and mediation service throughout Northern Ireland and provides support to facilitate safe, timely relocation to those who remain at risk following mediation

Base 2 received 1294 referrals last year, a significant increase on previous years.

Through the verification process, the numbers of individuals presenting at risk of paramilitary or community threat and needing to terminate their tenancies were reduced by 29%.

Of those who were confirmed as under threat, a further 10% maintained their tenancies following Base 2 mediation. The work of Base 2 also benefits the local communities through its interventions, encouraging communities to seek non-violent solutions to community tensions.

Foyle Haven:

During 2018 funding for Foyle Haven provided the following outcomes:

- 79 individuals were supported, preventing them from rough sleeping or provided with accommodation as soon as was possible after they became a rough sleeper.
- 26 of these were Romanian nationals who had come to Ireland to beg on the streets and refused to engage registering with NIHE or DHSS. Depaul Foyle Haven led a multi-agency approach and extended opening hours as part of our Cold Weather Initiative to address the issue through the winter months and in December 2018 all but 1 Romanian had left the city.
- A total of 79 individuals were prevented from rough sleeping and accommodated while 60 were provided with direct housing intervention. A further 38 individuals were provided with indirect housing intervention.
- In terms of alcohol and substance interventions Foyle Haven provided the following assistance:
 - 41 individuals were assisted with alcohol & substance detox/reduction.
 - 73 individuals were assisted with physical & emotional Health interventions.
 - 192 individuals were provided with personal care interventions.
 - 12,608 meals were provided.
 - 51 individuals were assisted with targeted health and well-being activities.

In addition, the following referrals were provided:

- 14 people referred for and completed a detox
- 4 people registered with Mental Health Crisis team and services
- two referrals to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults team and
- 1 referral to Learning Disability team.

The Marc Project

The MARC project assists individuals to maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness by addressing alcohol and drug problems and attendant factors such as debt, housing and ill health. The individualised support programmes provided, empower individuals to develop skills such as budgeting and problem solving. Other components of the programmes, include resilience building, development of alternative coping strategies and the enhancement of support networks.

The MARC project utilises its extensive links with statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations to assist individual's access support in relation to mental health, debt and benefits. Demand for the service is highlighted by the fact that the MARC project has exceeded targeted activity levels. Its effectiveness is highlighted by the achievement of outcomes in relation to maintenance of tenancies

Welcome Organisation Drop In Centre

The Drop in centre in Belfast provides services to extremely vulnerable people who are traditionally hard to reach and have historically faced multiple exclusions and restricted access to mainstream services as a result of behavioural challenges linked to poor mental health, alcohol dependency, substance misuse and dual diagnosis. All services are delivered on a very low threshold, high tolerance model based on the principles of harm reduction.

Welcome Organisation Street Outreach

The Street Outreach service delivers a city wide, 7 days per week, day and night service that assists extremely vulnerable groups with a range of complex needs and challenging behaviours associated with chaotic lifestyles associated with homelessness, rough sleeping and street drinking in Belfast.



Mark Forsythe 2018 Homelessness Service & Support award winner



Preventing and alleviating homelessness, other Housing Executive strategies



ENDING HOMELESSNESS TOGETHER: OTHER HOUSING EXECUTIVE STRATEGIES – PREVENTING AND ALLEVIATING HOMELESSNESS

The Housing Executive has an extremely broad remit in relation to Housing in Northern Ireland and while the Homelessness Strategy is the main driver for its response to homelessness, various other Strategies also impact either directly or indirectly to preventing and alleviating homelessness. This chapter outlines how these many different work strands come together to ensure that as few households as possible find themselves threatened with homelessness.

The Customer Support and Sustainment Strategy

The Housing Executive recognises the importance of setting a household up to succeed and seeks to ensure that any new tenancy created will be sustainable in the long term. This aim is cited in both the Homelessness Strategy and the Tenancy Customer Support and Sustainment Strategy. The costs of tenancy failure include costs to the customer, to the public purse and to the landlord.

The Housing Executive's approach to tenancy sustainment focuses on a housing solutions model which offers a range of interventions, tailored to the individual, which aim to prevent homelessness or promote successful tenancy sustainment such as:

- Intervention or referral to secure alternative accommodation options
- Intervention to sustain the customer in their current home
- Intervention or referral to delay the urgent need to move home and/or
- Comprehensive information and advice to promote choice and informed decision making.

For those customers who wish to apply for social housing we will seek to work upstream in terms of pre-tenancy activities from the first contact with the customer.

We will identify and address problems or support needs at the outset (and prior to the commencement of tenancy) which may put tenants at risk of losing their tenancies (risk assessment).

The next Customer Support and Sustainment Strategy is currently in development and the prevention of Homelessness remains a key theme.

The Community Development Strategy

Close links have been established with the Community Development Team. The Case Study below demonstrates the outcomes to date of this cooperation.

Case Study

Communication (cross strategy input)

The Housing Executive (Housing Services) have a Service Level Agreement with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF) in relation to getting input from young people via the Housing Community Network on the development of Housing Executive Policies, Strategies and Action Plans to ensure they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

As part of this agreement, some of the young people were invited to take part in the Homelessness Strategy Service User Forum to give the unique perspective of what it is like to face homelessness as a young person and the particular difficulties this presents. The theme of the meeting was homelessness prevention and the young people were asked to think about the factors that led to their homelessness and what if anything could have been done to prevent it from happening.

Following the meeting the young people sat down with the Homelessness Strategy Team to discuss how best this input could be provided and it was agreed that they would create a video to share their experiences and make recommendations to the Housing Executive on how service provision could be improved.

Outcomes:

The completed video was launched at an event in the Merchant Hotel. The impact of the stories was significant and the recommendations were wide

ranging and extremely thought provoking. As a result, the Housing Executive has begun to explore ways to improve services and in particular is looking at how peer support, particularly for young people could be incorporated into its processes.

The media picked up the story and the young people have engaged to raise awareness across social and mainstream media. The young people report an improvement in confidence as a result of the project. The video can be found on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tofu6h6A0Ts&feature=youtu.be>¹.

The Social Enterprise Strategy

The Housing Executive's Social Housing Enterprise Programme was launched in September 2015 with the primary objective to invest in new or already existing social enterprises within Housing Executive communities. Despite significant investments in social housing over many years, there remain the profound issues of social and economic deprivation - leaving our communities the most likely to be socially disadvantaged and excluded. Economic deprivation and poverty are acknowledged as homelessness triggers. Around 75% of Housing Executive tenants receive full or partial Housing Benefit and it is the aim of this Strategy in some way to try and reverse the reliance on benefits.

The Programme launched with a 3 year strategy, with an annual investment of £500,000 a year. We ensure that all funds go directly into our communities to provide new and invest in existing social enterprises to create new services, jobs and training opportunities within Housing Executive communities. To date we have invested £1.5 million directly into our communities through the programme.

Case Study

Homelessness and Social Enterprise

As part of the Social Enterprise programme we invested £15,000 in the Welcome Organisation's Social Enterprise Welcome Home shop. Our funds helped provide a van and part time manager for the enterprise. This enterprise is based at their premises in Townsend Street and focuses on working with service users of the centre providing training and employment in upcycling furniture. The welcome Home Social Enterprise has a dual role in not only upcycling and selling furniture but also providing a wraparound service for those who obtain a tenancy and have no means to furnishing it. Welcome Home helps provide

furniture for their new tenancy and provides support in a wide range of tenancy management issues.

Private Sector Improvement Service

Accommodation Not Reasonable is one of the top reasons for homelessness in Northern Ireland. Through the provision of grant aid to the private sector, in particular the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant; clients are sustained within their properties avoiding the possibility of being faced with homelessness. The provision of all types of grant assists in the maintenance of properties and helps to avoid properties being lost to the housing stock due to falling into disrepair. Last year the Housing Executive Grants Team approved 1,558 grants, of which 944 were for adaptations to enable people with a disability to continue living in their own homes. We spent £11.1m to support adaptations. A further £3.3m was spent on grants to address issues which presented an imminent and significant risk to individual occupiers.

The Energy Conservation Strategy

The Housing Executive is also the Home Energy Conservation Authority (HECA) for Northern Ireland. As HECA, the Housing Executive has a target to reduce fuel poverty. Our work in relation to energy conservation has two impacts in relation to homelessness:

- By improving warmth and ventilation within properties they are less likely to fall into disrepair and be lost to the overall housing stock
- By reducing running costs households will have more income to ensure rent can be paid and the likelihood of losing that home is reduced.

The 2016 HCS details an improvement in energy efficiency of 29.1% since 1996 in relation to the occupied pre-1996 housing stock. This is an improvement when compared to the figures detailed in the 2011 HCS, which recorded progress in energy efficiency at 22.5%.

The findings of the 2016 HCS indicate that there has been a 20% reduction in the level of Fuel Poverty², compared with the position based on the findings of the 2011 HCS. During this period, a total of £300 million has been invested in energy efficiency and conservation programmes through the Department for Communities, the Housing Executive, housing associations, the Utility Regulator, and homeowners.

During the last financial year, the Housing Executive invested nearly £20m across energy efficiency

¹ Northern Ireland Youth Forum (Relentless Change Project Youth Steering Group), Pinball – Young people's journeys in to homelessness, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tofu6h6A0Ts&feature=youtu.be>

² Fuel Poverty is defined as circumstances where a household, in order to maintain an acceptable level of temperature throughout the home, would have to spend more than 10% of its income on all household fuel.

measures in 5,817 of its own properties. While across the private sector, nearly £19m has been spent on improving 7,209 homes through the Department for Communities' Affordable Warmth and Boiler Replacement schemes

The Housing Executive will continue to strive to improve dwellings, reduce running costs for householders and ultimately reduce the likelihood that households will be faced with homelessness.

The Rural Strategy

The Homelessness Strategy Team has worked closely with the Rural and Regeneration Team throughout the development of both the Rural Action Plan and the Homelessness Strategy. The introduction of urban/rural monitoring of homelessness is ongoing through this collaboration. The Housing Executive is aware that the challenges facing a rural household that may be threatened with homelessness can be very different from those facing an urban household. The Rural Resident's Forum has consistently provided the Homelessness Strategy Team with advice and guidance in the development of new plans such as the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan and has consulted with us on the ongoing Review of Temporary Accommodation which will ensure that any Strategic approach to the delivery of temporary accommodation going forward will be "rural proofed". A clear message came from the Forum about local delivery and the creation of the Homelessness Local Area Groups as part of the delivery structures for the Homelessness Strategy was the result.

The Community Safety Strategy

Anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood disputes are acknowledged as key triggers for homelessness and the Housing Executive is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour in all its forms. The vision of the Community Safety Strategy is one in which housing plays its part in creating a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous and fair society. The work of the Community Safety Strategy is wide ranging. Legislation allows for statutory interventions such as issuing clients with notices to leave the property. This, however, would be a last resort and only used where a client has failed to address offending behaviour. Prior to this the Housing Executive will work with the client with a range of non-statutory interventions.

- Warning letters
- Mediation
- Community based restorative practices
- Acceptable behaviour contracts



Young people from NI Youth Forums Relentless Change Programme launch 'Pinball'

PROGRESS REPORT

STRATEGY OBJECTIVE 1 To prioritise homelessness prevention

	Actions	Progress at March 2019
1	Identify pre crisis 'homeless indicators' and commission training package for relevant key front line workers.	<p>All Housing Executive staff have been required to complete an e-learning package on homelessness awareness. This was rolled out to approximately 3,000 staff during March 2019.</p> <p>The feedback gathered during the distribution of this e-learning package will inform the development of a redesigned course which will be distributed to other statutory agencies during 2019/20. A key aim during 2019/20 will be the development of an e-learning training course for the Housing Executive website to inform the public of potential 'homeless indicators'. In addition to the e-learning package all staff have been provided with a concertina leaflet which provides contact details for all key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Housing Executive was represented on the Relentless Change Programme Steering Group, led by the Northern Ireland Youth Forum, which produced a video outlining the experiences of young people who have been homeless. A key theme throughout the video is the impact that homelessness has on young people, particularly in terms of what they viewed as being a 'pinball' effect where young people were referred between a number of agencies and organisations. The Housing Executive are keen to engage with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum during 2019/20. Further details on this project can be found on page 33 of this report.</p> <p>Case Study 1 highlights the importance of the awareness of 'homeless indicators' and the role awareness of these can have in preventing homelessness.</p>
2	Implement a Housing Solutions and Support approach for homeless prevention.	<p>The Housing Solutions and Support approach has been fully implemented across the organisation. Training has been delivered to all Housing Advisors, Patch Managers, Lettings Managers and their respective Team Leaders.</p> <p>As a result all clients who approach the Housing Executive with a housing issue, including our tenants, have a Housing Solutions Interview with a member of staff who is trained in the Housing Solutions and Support approach. This means our staff engage with our housing clients and a range of statutory and voluntary agencies to help secure their preferred housing option and make sure the appropriate support is in place to ensure these clients have the skills and abilities to manage their home successfully over a sustained period of time with or without support, giving them the best chance of making a success of their tenancy.</p> <p>This service is provided in tandem with our statutory duties under the Homeless Legislation and the Housing Selection Scheme and is not an alternative to an individual's legal rights or the organisation's statutory or policy requirements.</p>
3	Develop effective communication strategy to ensure households approaching crisis can access the right support quickly.	<p>The Communication Action Plan was ratified by the Central Homelessness Forum during 2018/19 and the Homelessness Strategy team have sought to implement this over the course of the year. While there were a range of events and media stories, aimed at increasing awareness, over the year the Communication Action Plan will be further developed in 2019/20.</p>

	<p>Examples of work carried out on the Communication Action Plan included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the Local Area Groups a programme of activities took place during Homelessness Awareness Week. These events aimed to promote awareness of services within the respective areas and improvement engagement between statutory and voluntary agencies. The feedback on these events was extremely positive and a document detailing the outcome of each event has been produced. The Key outcomes from the events included: • New partnerships formed • Improved understanding and interagency working • Offer of assistance from business sector • Over 90% of all attendees at all events can apply the learning at home or work • Over 90% of all attendees at all events will seek to further understand homelessness • Increase in confidence to signpost those in need • Further opportunities to distribute local service directories • Requests for further events • The production of videos of service users sharing their stories to enhance understanding of service gaps and outcomes. • The funding agreements for 2019/20 have asked providers to link the funding to the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22. • Sharing of information/best practice across Local Area Groups and increased inter-agency working. • The development of a leaflet for medical practices. This is the result of a suggestion by the Service User Forum based on their experiences in looking for appropriate information and feedback will inform the development of further targeted information production. • Development of more robust policies and plans as a result of engagement with Local Area Groups • Delivery of an annual conference on Homelessness incorporating inauguration of the Excellence in Homelessness Service and Support Award • Welfare Reform is of key concern to many of our clients. Our Welfare Reform Team have undertaken a range of activities to raise awareness of this issue including: <p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nihe.gov.uk: general sign-posting page plus dedicated section for Housing Executive tenants • Quids In – a magazine for Housing Executive tenants • Providing PCs in local offices for clients to use to complete UC and HB forms online • Universal Credit checklists for customers • Development of pro forma which enables patch managers to have discussions with clients to ensure they understand the full implications of any housing move they may wish to make • Speaking with community groups • Working with Supporting Communities <p>In addition, the Housing Executive has sought to raise awareness of homelessness through attendance at events such as The Balmoral Show and through the delivery of presentations to groups such as the Central Housing Forum and Rural Community Network. The Housing Executive will look to widen this engagement through the Local Area Groups, and other key stakeholder groups, in 2019/20.</p>
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Case Study 1

Case Study Provided by Vineyard Compassion (Member of Causeway Local Area Group): Homelessness prevention and relief

Preventing Homelessness is a real challenge as often people are unaware of the triggers for homelessness until it is too late. Issues such as marriage breakdowns, debt etc. can get out of control very quickly and this can spiral into homelessness. Russell's story shows how timely interventions can make all the difference.

Compassion Housing: Homeless Prevention/Intervention

Vineyard Compassion is a charity based in Coleraine, whose aim is to support people 'from crisis to full potential', by providing practical support for the poor in the local community, whilst empowering them to tackle the underlying root causes of poverty.

Recognising the significant deprivation in the local area and with a desire to encourage and empower vulnerable people to overcome poverty and crisis, Vineyard Compassion was established. The charity launched a range of community-based projects that offer a holistic approach to tackling poverty and its underlying root causes. Vineyard Compassion takes a multi-faceted approach in addressing these complex issues to maximise the potential for lasting community transformation. Projects have been established and developed ever since 2001 with the charity formally established in March 2012.

These multi-faceted projects are making a real difference to the lives of thousands of people in the Causeway Coast and Glens area. Vineyard Compassion has been privileged to see dignity and hope for the future restored to individuals and families trapped in poverty cycles, with many going on to reach their full potential in life.

All projects are a response to various needs encountered in Coleraine & the Causeway Coast and Glens.

Our Compassion Housing Project: Is a short/medium term supported accommodation for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, needing support while living on their own but are moving towards independent living. Our main priority is to empower residents to identify & deal with their issues with the aim of bringing about stability, wholeness & positive change.

Russell's Story*

Russell had a history of gambling, which started out as simple slot machine fun but turned into a daily life of gambling after his marriage broke down. Over a period of a few years, he lost his job, his home and he accrued a large amount of debt. Russell ended up living in a house with no water, electricity, no heat and no hope. With mounting debts and unpaid fines, Russell realised that he needed to break this cycle and change his life. He had heard of Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre and after encouragement by family, he made the decision to contact this service run by Vineyard Compassion. This was not easy for Russell, as he had to face up to his problems and take the brave steps to ask for help.

Compassion Housing: Homeless Prevention/Action Taken

One Monday in October Russell called at Vineyard Compassion to get help, where he received support through Foodbank in the form of an emergency food pack, essential items and also benefits advice. By Wednesday Russell had attended his first appointment with Vineyard Compassion CAP Debt counselling service, where he was able to take the first step towards dealing with his debt issues. During the same week Russell began attending the Link supported volunteer work (attending 3 days a week) and also met with the Compassion Housing Manager. A few weeks later after completing the referral process Russell got the keys to his flat through Vineyard Compassion Housing.

Compassion Housing: Outcome/Intervention Taken

While living in the supported Housing, Russell continued to work with CAP Debt Counselling where he was offered hope and support through expert advice & practical assistance. This empowered Russell to get out of debt while teaching him essential budgeting skills that will last him a lifetime. Compassion Housing has been a source of stability for Russell while tackling his addiction to gambling. He is now debt free, no longer gambling and is well on his way to towards independent living. Russell has also engaged in a variety of other wrap round services which were agreed upon as part of his support plan. He has recently taken part in a short term (6 months) paid employment project of 15hrs/wk, that gave him paid work experience within the Link Logs social enterprise, with opportunity to get a variety of skills/training such as a forklift licence.

Russell's Own Words:

"It wasn't just a past-time for me, it really was an addiction, it's what I lived for, you know that old saying, 'beg, borrow or steal', that's how bad I was, I was doing everything that you shouldn't have been doing to get money to gamble, and I think sometimes it just blows me away, I just stopped"

"I went through the CAP process, and I am at now debt free, that was another blessing, the way that worked out."

*name changed



Starter Pack Project ; Sustaining Tenancies



STRATEGY OBJECTIVE 2

To secure sustainable accommodation and appropriate support solutions for homeless households

	Actions	Progress at March 2019
4	Support clients through to sustainable accommodation with appropriate support solutions using suitable housing led pathway models.	<p>The Housing Solutions and Support Teams have been fully rolled in across all areas of the Housing Executive. The approach continues to be reviewed and improved with new initiatives being developed to help staff provide the best service possible.</p> <p>A Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Risk Policy has been developed and a handbook produced.</p> <p>Following the launch of the Mental Health Awareness Handbook and the Managing Suicide Risk Policy and Procedures, staff from Housing Info & Tenancy Management, the Equality Unit, and our external partners, Lifeline, will be carrying out a series of talks with all front line Housing Services staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure staff are aware of these resources and how to use them • to give staff an opportunity to provide feedback and raise any gaps or issues in the policy/procedures • to raise awareness of the service which Lifeline provides to those who contact them <p>The Tenancy Management team have scheduled dates for this series of talks.</p> <p>Housing Solutions Assessment and Access Project: Common Assessment Framework/Central Access Point Update</p> <p>Common Assessment Framework</p> <p>This action included a milestone to develop a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across all providers of housing support and the Housing Executive's Housing Solutions and Support service, initially on a pilot basis in Belfast and Causeway and as a result identify measures that can gauge the effectiveness of the methodology for broader implementation.</p> <p>A major project is underway to draft and agree a common assessment framework. Significant work and engagement with a range of temporary accommodation and floating support providers has already been undertaken to develop the relevant tools and agree the implementation approach including the use of IT. All the relevant organisations have also committed the necessary resources to implement and evaluate the pilots.</p> <p>The benefits of a CAF are both for staff and clients in terms of the capture and sharing of information using a single assessment rather than ones which are unique to each organisation. It will also provide the basis for understanding the needs of the client and potentially tracking the client across various services.</p> <p>This action has been delayed, for a few months because of the additional requirements in terms of data sharing and specifically GDPR compliance. We are still on course to deliver this action, however due to the delay it will be brought forward as part of the Year 3 Action plan.</p> <p>Central Access Point</p> <p>The main objective of the Central Access Point is to work collaboratively with accommodation and support providers to identify arrangements for a Central Access Point (CAP) to accommodation services in order to deliver:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms for real time service availability • Mechanisms for client placements • Mechanisms for client tracking <p>During 2018/19 the Housing Executive has worked closely with stakeholders to develop a mechanism that will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared system for all temporary accommodation provision • A bespoke IT system with real time information that's user friendly • Accessible by multi-users at point of presentation • Allows staff to ascertain the appropriateness of a referral • Allows booking of placements at scheme and room level • Allows providers the ultimate decision regarding suitability <p>Key priorities for 2019/20 will be to build on the successful engagement which was a focus in 2018/19 and to continue to work with partners in neighbouring jurisdictions to ensure this project involves learning from best practice elsewhere.</p> <p>Case Study 2 highlights the role the impact appropriate support can have on a homeless household.</p>
5	Carry out strategic review of temporary accommodation and support needs of homeless clients.	<p>In 2018/19 the Housing Executive formally implemented a project to complete the necessary work to deliver this action. This project is significant in terms of its scale, scope and impact. It is considering supply and demand for temporary accommodation both now and into the longer term as well as a range of quantitative, qualitative and financial measures of performance. There are a range of stakeholders involved in the project both internally and externally and Campbell Tickell were appointed to carry out a research project to assist in the delivery of the project objectives. The project will conclude in 2020 with the production of the Housing Executive's temporary accommodation strategic plan. The objectives of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. To capture and analyse baseline information on temporary accommodation supply; • 2. To capture and analyse baseline information on current demand for temporary accommodation; • 3. To identify and develop a model for measuring baseline supply against need with a view to projecting future needs and producing strategic plans; • 4. To identify and develop key measures around temporary accommodation which will enable us to benchmark with other local authorities; • 5. To examine mechanisms to prevent homelessness and minimise demand for temporary accommodation, and make any stay in temporary accommodation as short as possible; • 6. To understand the experiences of temporary accommodation service users (including pathways in and out of temporary accommodation);

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7. To understand the current operating environment for providers of temporary accommodation; • 8. To develop a temporary accommodation strategic action plan. <p>In 2018/19, the following activities were completed/progressed in the delivery of the project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of formal project arrangements which includes both internal and external assurance • Consultation on and agreement of project objectives both internally and externally with providers of temporary accommodation • Appointment of Campbell Tickell to conduct research element of project and interim report produced • Completion of a series of data capture exercises to better understand demand, usage and supply of temporary accommodation • Series of visits/knowledge gathering exercises to identify best practice in other jurisdictions
6	Continue to assist clients in accessing the Private Rented Sector.	<p>The previous contract with Smartmove for the provision of a Private Rented Sector Access Scheme (PRSAS) ended on 30th September 2018. All referrals made to Smartmove prior to that date and which resulted in a tenancy being created continued to receive the 6 month tenancy management service as per the agreed contract.</p> <p>The aim of the Housing Solutions and Support service is to provide advice and assistance to our clients on a tenure neutral basis. For many of our clients the private rented sector provides the best prospect of permanent housing. However, while in 2015/16 13% of our clients were rehoused in the private rented sector this has reduced to less than 5% last year. Anecdotally it is assumed that this reduction is at least in part due to the limited support we can provide to clients (other than advice) to access the private rented sector. For many, affordability is the biggest barrier, particularly with regard to the initial cost in terms of a deposit and rent in advance.</p> <p>This action contains a milestone to ‘Determine a range of models to access Private Rented Sector (subject to business case and funding)’</p> <p>This action was not completed during 2018/19 as funding was not available to do so. The provision of a Private Rented Sector Access Scheme, which will provide support to clients to access and maintain private rented tenancies, remains a priority and is seen as key to more effectively delivering a range of housing options across tenures and addressing housing supply issues for some clients.</p> <p>As part of the budget provision for 2019/20 funding has been secured and this action will be implemented, in line with the Year 3 Implementation Plan, following consultation internally and externally.</p>

Case Study 2 – HOME Team

The HOME team (Simon Community & NIHE) were made aware of a challenging case of a 63-year-old woman who, following being in prison for 11 years, was due to move on to phase three of release preparation. However, the prison and probation services were struggling to identify appropriate post release accommodation.

A representative for Simon Community and NIHE arranged a visit to Hydebank to meet with the Lead Sentence Coordinator to discuss the case in more detail and to get a better understanding of what type of accommodation was required, what level of support was required and to begin to build a joint move on plan between all relevant parties, and most importantly with the individual herself.

It was agreed during the case conference that hostel accommodation would not be the most suitable and due to the process of the staged release, private rental options were not available either. Simon Community identified a move on flat where Laura* would have her own front door, kitchen, bathroom and a bedroom/living room. The move on flat was located on the Falls Road, close to Laura's job and close to support networks.

Laura's Probation Officer and Simon Community arranged for Laura to visit the move on flat and meet staff to ensure she felt comfortable and to give Laura the opportunity to ask any questions she may have about the practicalities of living in a move on flat, and the support she can avail of from both Simon Community, PBNI and the NIHE.

Laura was happy to move in to the move on flat and an agreed move in date was decided between all parties. In order to facilitate the completion of phase 3, the prison service will pay for the placement of Laura until she is released on license.

Laura has now resided at her move on flat for 3 months and states that she is happy. She continues to meet with her Probation Officer, Simon Community Staff and NIHE to further plan her move on in to temporary accommodation when she is ready.

Laura's Sentence Manager reported back that "From PBNI/NIPS position the placement has been ideal. Good balance between support and independence. I have not had much communication with staff but I do get the impression they have managed Laura well which is not always easy given some of the issues that she can present with.

Laura informs us that she is happy with the placement. She is aware that the placement is temporary and she continues to talk about other future options.

The location is ideal for her presently and she appears to enjoy the area which has good local amenities."

*Name changed.



Ending Homelessness Together Conference 2018



STRATEGY OBJECTIVE 3

To further understand and address the complexities of chronic homelessness across Northern Ireland

Please see Case Study 7 for an example of the impact of this objective.

	Actions	Progress at March 2019
7	Develop and Implement a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan	<p>In February 2019 the Board approved the publication of a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan for a 12 week public consultation. The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan is a testament to the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 being a document that is reactive to the needs and views of the homelessness sector. The Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 did not originally include a commitment to develop a Chronic Homelessness Action Plan but consistently through our engagement with the sector we identified a need to broaden the focus from only those who are sleeping rough to identifying actions which will help address issues facing households who are experiencing chronic homelessness. The Homelessness Strategy noted chronic homelessness households as those with 'very pronounced and complex support needs who found it difficult to exit from homelessness'.</p> <p>The Housing Executive is the only organisation within the UK and Ireland that has developed an action plan that addresses the needs of households which are experiencing chronic homelessness instead of focusing on the more specific group of rough sleeping, of which there are a limited number in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Case Study 3 highlights the importance of addressing chronic homelessness.</p>
8	Ensure appropriate Housing Models for chronic homeless clients.	<p>The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan, referred to in Action 7, has identified a draft criteria that will inform the future provision of Housing First in Northern Ireland. Objective 8 in the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan notes the need to 'Consider a range of housing options for the chronic homeless including Housing First models and ensure they are supported as soon as possible'.</p> <p>The Chronic Homelessness Action Plan notes that 'The Housing Executive is committed to the provision of the right type of accommodation and support in order to effectively implement a comprehensive Housing First provision across Northern Ireland.'</p>

Case Study 3

Clients with multiple issues and complex needs can end up in a cycle of homelessness with repeated tenancy breakdowns. A strong multi agency intervention approach is required to ensure that these clients can find and maintain a home.

Jane applied for housing on 2nd Oct 2018 via the Mental Health Team at Daisy Hill Hospital. Her marriage had recently broken down, she was suicidal and had addiction to alcohol. Daisy Hill were going to discharge her that evening and requested accommodation. She was placed on a temporary basis in a Crash facility. She then moved in with her sister short term but this wasn't going to last, the Housing Advisor suggested placement in Cuan Mhuire. Applicant agreed and following referral from GP she was placed in Cuan Mhuire Newry. Jane's Housing Advisor visited her 3 times during her stay at Cuan Mhuire assisted her to get benefits in place. They discussed housing options and assessed housing and homeless cases, assisted with trying to regain contact with her 2 sons and generally get her tenancy ready.

Jane expressed interest in getting rehoused in

Banbridge or surrounding areas as she was originally from that area and her sons attend school in Banbridge. She was fortunate enough to get a pre allocation of a new build housing association property in her desired area of choice while still in re-hab. She was progressing really well in re-hab and was showing positive signs she could manage a tenancy. The Housing Advisor arranged to get her a starter pack from CHNI and assisted to move her.

She is now doing really well. She has ongoing contact with her children, better relationships with other family members that had previously deteriorated and is still engaging with mental health services and AA.

We believe the example shows excellent interagency working and co-operation. Some of the agencies NIHE worked with on this case were Health Trust, Clanmil HA, PSNI, DHSS, CHNI. We also believe there was excellent work done by the Housing Advisor to ensure a sustainable Housing Solution was found and this particular client didn't fall into a cycle of chronic homeless as is often the case with people with addictions and mental health issues.



Working together in Mid Ulster

STRATEGY OBJECTIVE 4

To ensure the right mechanisms are in place to oversee and deliver this strategy

	Actions	Progress at March 2019
9	Department for Communities will engage with other relevant Government Departments to identify specific areas requiring Interdepartmental cooperation and will develop appropriate Homelessness Action Plan.	<p>A DfC led Inter-Departmental Homelessness action plan was published on 27th November 2017. The plan focuses on addressing gaps in services that have the most impact or have the potential to more positively impact on the lives and life chances of people who are either homeless or most at risk of homelessness. The plan was developed in an integrated way with other government departments (including the Departments of Health, Justice, Infrastructure and Education), statutory partners, homelessness service providers and service users. The first iteration of the action plan contains nine tangible actions which have been identified as priorities for NI departments and their statutory partners. The plan and its progress is monitored via the Department led Homelessness Strategy Steering Group (HSSG). HSSG reviewed quarterly progress reports on the Action Plan and signed-off on the Year 1 results.</p> <p>HSSG endorsed the Department's approach on development of the second year Action Plan and the 5 priority areas for action remained the same with the Year 2 Plan running to March 2020.</p>
10	Interdepartmental Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will oversee implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and the Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plan.	<p>Homelessness Strategy Steering Group (HSSG) oversees implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and the Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plan. The HSSG has been refocussed under revised terms of reference. They will continue to review and consider regular updates regarding the Year 3 Implementation Plan and the Interdepartmental Action Plan. In scrutinising progress against these activities HSSG members will seek to steer timely and effective delivery of the agreed outcomes, and evaluate progress on each of these Plans throughout 2019/20.</p> <p>HSSG has been presented with the Homelessness Strategy Annual Report following Housing Executive Board Approval in June 2019.</p>
11	Establish Local Inter-agency Homelessness Strategy Implementation Groups.	<p>There are 9 Local Area Groups across Northern Ireland which have continued to meet on a quarterly basis with their main role being the implementation of Local Action Plans which ensure the Strategy is effective at a local level. This year their work has had a focus on communication and working relationships within the groups and across the agencies have improved. Key connections between agencies have been formed.</p> <p>Key Achievements of the groups during 2018/19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their contribution to Homelessness Awareness Week saw four events taking place across NI. The events took place in Causeway, Fermanagh, Antrim and Dungannon. All events were well received and have led to shared learning and new partnerships. A full outcomes report was provided to the Central Homelessness Forum and initiatives from these events will be taken forward in year 3. • Local Service Directories have been produced for all localities (some remain under review). • Local Action Plans have been developed for all areas

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Groups have provided consultative forums/responses for the development of the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan, Strategic Review of Temporary Accommodation and the development of new data sets to inform better service provision. This ensures that Housing Executive reports and policies are robust and relevant. Improved relationships between the new Housing Solutions Teams and local Support Providers and more robust case conferences as necessary. Improved understanding of remits Direct access for the Housing Executive to relevant information from practitioners to inform strategic direction, e.g., the increasing complexity of clients – reasons and learning from providers will help inform new approaches. <p>Examples of the impact these groups are making can be found in case studies 4, 5, 6 and 7.</p>
12	Establish Service User Forum	<p>The Service User Forum continues to meet on a quarterly basis and the next meeting will be used as a consultation event for the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan. The Service User Forum has also met regularly during 18/19. The meetings have proved extremely productive and a number of follow up actions have been brought forward, as noted below.</p> <p>The key outcomes from the Service User Forum include:</p> <p>Production of a leaflet for doctor's surgeries to prompt clients to seek help at an early stage before homelessness occurs.</p> <p>Production of a video by Youth Forum members on the experiences of young people experiencing homelessness with suggestions for improving service delivery for other young people. The video will be taken to the local area groups for discussion and to inform development of new approaches to dealing with young people experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Housing Executive being invited to take part in the steering group of the Youth Forum's Relentless Change project designed to enhance the skills of young people that have experienced homelessness in order to share learning across groups.</p> <p>Work has begun to investigate peer mentoring. The Group felt that there was a gap in peer mentoring services for homeless clients. Via Housing Executive links between groups, the Antrim Area Enhancing Care for the Homeless (ECHO) Group identified a project which seeks to develop a release protocol from Holywell with the Housing Executive. It was agreed that this protocol may benefit from having a peer mentor attached to it so that clients could be supported by someone that has been through the process. This is currently being pursued.</p>

Case Study 4

Building relationships (South Antrim and Mid & East Antrim)

Members from the Antrim Group also took part in the Tackling Poverty Together Symposium organised by Mid and East Antrim Council as part of their Community Planning Agenda. The close links between homelessness and poverty were recognised. One of the main outcomes of the day was that a directory

should be developed, and as the Homelessness Group had already devised a directory, this was offered to the Council, to be enhanced with any further services that might be relevant to avoid duplication of work.

Case Study 5

Cross Sectoral Cooperation – Causeway Area

In developing their Community Plan Causeway Coast and Glens sought input from the Housing Executive. The resultant cooperation has resulted in actions from the Homelessness Local Area Group being linked across to and included in the Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan with representation

from the Council coming on to the Local Area Group. As a result, the event in Causeway was a jointly commissioned event between the Housing Executive and the Council and hosted by Vineyard Compassion from the Voluntary Sector.

Case Study 6

Interagency working to inform new approaches to homeless prevention

The Belfast Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Forum

The Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Forum was formed 6 years ago. With a Memorandum of Understanding in place it has acted as a vehicle for collaboration among support providers in the Belfast area. Current members of the Forum include Action Ability Belfast, An Munia Tober, Autism Initiatives, Barnardo's, Belfast Central Mission, Cedar Foundation, DePaul, East Belfast Mission, EXTERN, Homecare, LIFE, MACs, NIACRO, Praxis Care, Simon Community NI, Threshold, Triangle, Welcome Organisation, Women's Aid.

As part of the Housing Executive's Homelessness Strategy and development of the Belfast Homelessness Action Plan, the Forum was approached to take forward the work required on Homelessness Prevention & Tenancy Sustainment. The Forum members happily agreed to do this and saw it as recognition of their collaborative approach to improving service delivery.

The Forum engaged with the Housing Executive to determine its role and terms of reference for the work ahead. It was clear, in order to satisfy the objectives set by NIHE, that a case study analysis would assist the Forum in setting clearer actions for the year ahead. Forum members then collated a number of case studies each to the Forum's Chair & Co-Chair (namely Paul Fleming, NIACRO & Declan Morris, Extern).

The aim of the case studies was:

1. To identify any issues affecting operational performance and service user outcomes with particular regard to 'Homelessness being prevented'
2. Provide recommendations to inform service delivery

Collaboratively, members came together to formulate a case study format that suited everyone and an analysis of the case studies was carried out in order to formulate findings, determine trends and identify areas of learning.

Having collated findings, the Forum was able to utilise the skill-base within its membership to create a more visual presentation of its findings from the 30+ case studies it had gathered from all the participants. Tom Dinnen (East Belfast Mission, Hosford) kindly offered his time and skills to formulate these findings and recently presented to the wider Forum.

Outcome of the project:

The collaboration has now created specific actions for the Forum to take forward, in order to meet the objectives of its Homelessness Action Plan responsibilities.

Case Study 7

Paula's story: Case provided by Belfast Housing Solutions Team

Single mum with one child

Paula presented as homeless in September 2017. Her relationship with her mother had broken down and she was asked to leave the family home. She required temporary accommodation for herself and daughter.

Paula was placed in temporary accommodation at Laburnum Hostel by her housing advisor. She felt at the time this was a perfect placement due to location within her area of choice. She spent most days in the flat with her daughter and did not engage in any support offered, she felt like she was managing on her own and did not require any help. She would not answer the door to any visitors.

In September 2018 she was admitted to Lagan Valley Hospital following a serious suicide attempt. She spent four weeks in hospital and on her discharge her daughter had been placed in the care of her father.

Housing Advisor made contact with Paula when a discharge letter from hospital was received. Alternative temporary accommodation was discussed to provide Paula with high level of support. She refused this offer.

The Housing Advisor arranged a meeting with Paula's Social Worker and family at Cloverhill Hostel. Paula needed a lot of convincing as she didn't want staff judging her. She finally accepted the placement with a goal of having her daughter returning to her care.

The family support worker and key worker at Cloverhill worked intensely with Paula to build her confidence. They liaised with her Social Worker, Gateway Team and Home Treatment team to plan dates for her assessments to be completed. They facilitated joint visits between Paula and her daughter which then increased to supervised overnight stays. Following intense assessment her daughter was returned to her care.

Paula was able to contact her Housing Advisor by phone or attend a housing clinic when she needed someone to talk too. She managed the housing options daily.

Reflecting on her time at Laburnum Hostel, Paula felt that she was coping but she now knows that she had isolated herself from family, friends and professionals who all wanted to help.

Outcome:

Paula said: She couldn't have done it without the support from Cloverhill Hostel and my Housing Advisor "if you work with them they will work with you" "they completed regular checks on my progress, when I was feeling low there was always someone I felt comfortable talking too" "My daughter was returned to my care as a result of the intense support provided from my social worker, family support worker, key worker and housing advisor"

"I have been housed in my own two bedroom accommodation by Radius Housing with my daughter. A place I call home, I still require the help of Depaul floating support and regular checks by my Social Worker but each day I am getting stronger and more independent.



Consulting on the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan



Looking forward together

STRATEGY OBJECTIVE 5

To measure and monitor existing and emerging need to inform the ongoing development of appropriate services

	Actions	Progress at March 2019
13	Ensure the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 links in to the SP Thematic Group on Homelessness	<p>There is now a clear focus on the review and development of housing support services providing support and accommodation to those affected by homelessness with the establishment of the Homelessness Thematic Group. This will ensure that the Supporting People Strategy for this client group is aligned to the objectives of the Homeless Strategy. Work is also being undertaken to improve the information and data which is collated to inform strategic actions and service development, including through the Strategic Review of Temporary accommodation. In Year 2 additional units of accommodation were commissioned to specifically address the needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness in Belfast.</p> <p>In Year 3, the focus will be on further enhancing the alignment of these structures with the Central Homeless Forum and Area Local Groups in terms of identifying priorities and considering existing service provision, as well as the provision of key information to inform the Supporting People strategic assessment of need.</p>
14	Review the Housing Solutions and Support approach.	<p>The National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) carried out a peer review of Belfast Housing Solutions and Support in 2018. With the agreement of the Central Homelessness Forum a peer review will be carried out in Causeway and South Down Housing Solutions and Support during 2019/20.</p> <p>The NPSS Review covered the following aspects of homelessness services within the Housing Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Overview • Website Review • Reception and Interview Room Facilities • Customer Interview Observation • Housing Options File Review • Homelessness File Review • Staff • Managers • Partners • Visit • Quality of Housing Options <p>As part of the Housing Executive's response to the NPSS Review a Steering Group is responsible for the delivery of an action plan to ensure the recommendations within the report are achieved over the course of 2019/20.</p>
15	Monitor emerging issues and develop appropriate strategies as necessary.	<p>The Housing Executive has a team with specific responsibility for looking at the impact of Welfare Reform on the organisation and planning appropriate responses. The team is now seeking ways to incorporate these responses into existing practice.</p> <p>The Housing Executive's Research Programme for 2018/19 included the following projects on Welfare Reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare Reform: DLA, PIP and NIHE tenants • Universal Credit: The Customer Journey • Universal Credit: The Rural Perspective

		<p>The Local Area Groups continue to include relevant actions in their action plans and where appropriate, issues are raised to the Central Homelessness Forum for potential additional action. Examples of work to be undertaken by the local groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues related to the aging population have been highlighted. As health deteriorates a client may need to move as the property becomes unsuitable for their needs. A case study in this report indicates some of the pitfalls that can be experienced. This has led to a joint project to develop materials/resources to help older clients understand the full implications of the homelessness journey. • An increase has been noted in domestic violence presentations and acceptances. Work will be undertaken to understand the causes and any necessary response will be developed in partnership with relevant agencies. • Increasing difficulty in accessing the private rented sector for the homeless client group has been noted. This will be investigated in the development of any future private rented sector access scheme with a view to mitigating issues for landlords which may be causing the blockage.
16	Examine homeless trends and develop new measures.	<p>The Housing Executive has worked closely with the Department for Communities and Analytical Services Unit with a view to improving the range of data that is published on homelessness. This six-monthly publication, first published in March 2019³, will remain in experimental format for two years so that further amendments can be made pending feedback from interested parties. As a result of this, the Housing Executive, now provides a wider range of data published on a six monthly basis. This data includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless presenters by reason • Homeless presenters: Accommodation not reasonable breakdown • Homeless presenters: Intimidation breakdown • Homeless presenters by household type • Homeless presenters by local government district • Homeless presenters by decision • Homeless presenters by legislative test outcome • Repeat Homeless Presenters • Households accepted as homeless by reason • Households accepted as homeless • Accommodation not reasonable breakdown • Households accepted as homeless: Intimidation breakdown • Households accepted as homeless by household type • Households accepted as homeless by local government district • Total households discharged by local government district • Households accepted as homeless by priority need category • Households accepted as homeless by outcome • Children from households accepted as homeless by age bracket • Placements in temporary accommodation by household type • Placements in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation • Children placed in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation

³ Department for Communities, Northern Ireland Homelessness Bulletin April - September 2018 - <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-homelessness-bulletin-april-september-2018>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children placed in temporary accommodation by age category • Current placements in temporary accommodation by banded length of stay and accommodation type <p>The Housing Executive is due to attend a meeting of the GSS Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Statistics Working Group on 15th May 2019 and this will further inform the development of data that is consistent with England, Scotland and Wales going forward.</p> <p>The Housing Executive's Research Programme for 2018/19 included a commitment to commission research on accommodation not reasonable/regional variation on acceptances and Customer User Journeys. The research on accommodation not reasonable/regional variation on acceptances commenced in March 2019 while the Customer User Journey research will be commissioned as early as possible in 2019/20.</p>
17	Produce an annual report outlining progress on the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22.	<p>The Housing Executive Board approved the Year 1 Annual Progress Report⁴ in May 2018. The Year 1 Annual Progress Report was launched at an event with stakeholders from across the sector in October 2018.</p> <p>Further to the Year 1 Annual Progress Report this report, published in 2019, provides an overview of actions taken in Year 2 of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 and the Housing Executive will continue to produce a report for all subsequent years of the Strategy.</p>

⁴ Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 Year 1 Annual Progress Report - https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getmedia/410e152e-7d24-4082-83df-7dd8ede6e159/homelessness_annual_progress_report_2017-18.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf

APPENDIX ONE – STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Table 1 – Presenters by reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/ family dispute	Marital/relationship breakdown	Domestic violence	Loss of rented accomm	No accomm in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accommodation not reasonable	Release from hospital/ prison /other institution	Fire/ flood other emergency	Mortgage default	Bomb/ fire damage civil disturbance	N'hood harassment	Other reason	No Data	Total
2014/15	3,891	1,849	956	2,841	1,458	590	3,663	471	84	387	27	1,516	791	1,097	19,621
2015/16	3,671	1,531	845	2,480	1,212	544	3,922	431	93	216	36	1,357	638	1,652	18,628
2016/17	3,971	1,739	865	2,668	1,406	661	4,119	435	72	188	53	1,519	668	209	18,573
2017/18	3,744	1,776	917	2,679	1,404	558	4,201	402	132	181	44	1,494	528	120	18,180
2018/19	3,890	1,804	1,174	2,779	1,245	481	4,588	339	54	123	44	1,448	174	59	18,202

Table 2 – Presenters by household

Household Type	Single males			Single females			Couples		Families	Pensioner Households	Undefined	Total
	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total				
2014/15	185	2,013	4,663	6,861	176	1,436	1,934	3,546	874	6,194	2,146	19,621
2015/16	139	1,868	4,336	6,343	160	1,388	1,822	3,370	794	5,887	2,234	18,628
2016/17	102	1,606	4,336	6,187	122	1,366	1,843	3,331	813	5,851	2,335	18,573
2017/18	69	1,552	4,350	5,971	106	1,274	1,749	3,129	827	5,805	2,445	18,180
2018/19	66	1,429	4,353	5,848	89	1,252	1,874	3,215	794	5,843	2,502	18,202

Table 3 – Top Three Reasons (presenter)

	Presenters Top 3 Reasons		
	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Loss of Rented Accommodation
2014/15	18.70%	19.80%	14.40%
2015/16	21.00%	19.70%	13.30%
2016/17	22.20%	21.40%	14.40%
2017/18	23.10%	20.60%	14.70%
2018/19	25.20%	21.37%	15.27%

Table 4 – Acceptances by Reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/family dispute	Marital/relationship breakdown	Domestic violence	Loss of rented accomm	No accomm in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accommodation not reasonable	Release from hospital/prison / other institution	Fire/ flood other emergency	Mortgage default	Bomb/ fire damage civil disturbance	N'hood harassment	Other reason	Total
2014/15	1,912	778	832	1,479	584	405	3,117	288	59	199	18	952	393	11,016
2015/16	2,084	706	750	1,460	582	414	3,413	293	65	122	30	902	381	11,202
2016/17	2,140	796	852	1,546	708	387	3,652	295	63	102	29	988	331	11,889
2017/18	2,106	867	904	1,502	764	355	3,674	286	77	99	27	952	264	11,877
2018/19	2,307	929	1,124	1,681	710	374	3,955	236	38	65	31	931	131	12,512

Table 5 – Acceptances by Household

Household Type	Single males				Single females				Couples	Families	Pensioner Households	Undefined	Total
	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total					
2014/15	89	650	1953	2,692	100	738	1,134	1,972	469	4,182	1,701	0	11016
2015/16	72	716	1984	2,772	94	775	1,164	2,033	469	4,100	1,828	0	11202
2016/17	52	678	2212	2,942	74	816	1,238	2,128	497	4,346	1,941	35	11889
2017/18	31	681	2225	2,937	56	799	1,220	2,075	532	4,306	2,027	0	11877
2018/19	33	655	2373	3,061	53	828	1,351	2,232	545	4,535	2,139	0	12,512

Table 6 – Top Three Reasons (acceptances)

	Acceptances Top 3 Reasons			Loss of Rented accommodation
	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown		
2013/14	28.80%	17.30%		13.50%
2014/15	28.30%	17.30%		13.40%
2015/16	30.40%	18.60%		13%
2016/17	30.70%	18.00%		13%
2017/18	30.90%	17.70%		12.60%
2018/19	31.60%	18.44%		13.44%

In addition to the data over 5 years, the tables below are based on the overall presentation and acceptance figures for 2018/19. In coming years, these tables will be updated so that further analysis can be carried out.

Table 7 – Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Presentations)

Reason	Accommodation not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Overcrowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
Total	719	193	460	227	162	2,548	162	117	4588

*Please note – these 719 cases were keyed before the additional reasons for Accommodation Not Reasonable were added to the system.

Table 8 – Intimidation Breakdown (Presentations)

Reason	Intimidation- ASB	Intimidation- Disability	Intimidation- Paramilitary	Intimidation- Racial	Intimidation- Sectarian	Intimidation-Sexual Orientation	Total
Total	60	3	377	15	19	7	481

Table 9 – Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Acceptances)

Reason	Accommodation not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Overcrowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
Total	269	104	468	203	140	2,540	130	101	3,955

*Please note – these 269 cases were keyed before the additional reasons for Accommodation Not Reasonable were added to the system.

Table 10 – Intimidation Breakdown (Acceptances)

Reason	Intimidation- ASB	Intimidation- Disability	Intimidation- Paramilitary	Intimidation- Racial	Intimidation- Sectarian	Intimidation-Sexual Orientation	Total
Total	49	2	297	7	12	7	374

Table 11 – Presentations and acceptances by Local Government District

Council	Presentations	Acceptances
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,336	1,052
Ards & North Down	1565	1,156
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1,253	790
Belfast	5,747	3,790
Causeway Coast & Glens	1,001	689
Derry & Strabane	2079	1,315
Fermanagh & Omagh	672	467
Lisburn & Castlereagh	946	716
Mid & East Antrim	1,516	1,088
Mid Ulster	843	542
Newry, Mourne & Down	1,244	907
Total	18,202	12,512

Table 12 – Presentations and Acceptances by Tenure

Tenure	Number of Presentations	Number of Acceptances
B&B / Hotel	65	40
Caravan	44	27
Child In Care	32	30
HM Forces	13	9
Hospital Patient	64	52
Housing Assoc tenant	1226	831
Institution	20	18
Local Authority	51	33
Lodger	361	231
NIHE Hostel Resident	9	9
NIHE Tenant (Introd)	423	338
NIHE Tenant (Secure)	2181	1847
No Fixed Abode	632	250
Other	434	349
Owner-Occupier	1372	1086
Possession - Use & Occ	42	28
Prisoner	121	88
Private Tenant	4762	3375
Sharing	5985	3637
Squatter - Use & Occ	3	0
Tied Accommodation	14	6
Traveller	7	6
Voluntary Sector Hostel	339	221
No tenure	2	1
Grand Total	18202	12512

APPENDIX TWO – TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Table 13 – Supported Accommodation Services

Belfast	Accommodation Services		Floating Support Services		Total	
Row Labels	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units
Homeless Families with Support Needs	10	181	0	0	10	181
Offenders or People at risk of Offending	4	89	2	229	6	318
People with Alcohol Problems	5	128	1	61	6	189
People with Drug Problems	0	0	1	30	1	30
Single Homeless with Support Needs	14	386	3	197	17	583
Women at Risk of Domestic Violence	2	33	1	420	3	453
Teenage Parents	1	6	1	6	2	12
Young People at Risk	3	52	0	0	3	52
Young People Leaving Care	1	18	0	0	1	18
TOTAL	40	893	9	943	49	1836

North	Accommodation Services		Floating Support Services		Total	
	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units
Generic	1	10	0	0	1	10
Homeless Families with Support Needs	12	95	2	80	14	175
People with Alcohol Problems	4	58	1	40	5	98
Single Homeless with Support Needs	12	228	1	215	13	443
Women at Risk of Domestic Violence	5	72	5	428	10	500
Teenage Parents	1	16	0	0	1	16
Young People at Risk	6	101	3	161	9	262
Young People Leaving Care	1	15	0	0	1	15
TOTAL	42	595	12	924	54	1519

South	Accommodation Services		Floating Support Services		Total	
	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units	Number of Services	Number of Units
Generic	0	0	2	64	2	64
Homeless Families with Support Needs	3	28	5	451	8	479
People with Alcohol Problems	2	50	1	18	3	68
Single Homeless with Support Needs	11	195	0	0	11	195
Women at Risk of Domestic Violence	4	33	3	315	7	348
Young People at Risk	3	17	6	323	9	340
Young People Leaving Care	1	7	0	0	1	7
TOTAL	24	330	17	1171	41	1501

Additional Temporary Accommodation

NIHE Hostels:

Housing Executive Hostels	Number of Services	Number of Units
Homeless Families with Support Needs	14	120
Total	14	120

Single Lets:

Circa 1,450 as of May 2019

Single lets are acquired as necessary and the number in use at any point in time may vary

Additionally NIHE has the discretion to use B&B or Hotel accommodation in exceptional circumstances and for short durations in response to crisis.

Table 14 – Placements in Temporary Accommodation

Total Number of Placements in Temporary Accommodation					
Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total	2817	2890	2746	3024	3354

APPENDIX THREE – FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

Table 15 – Financial Investment in Homelessness

	Temporary Accommodation	Homelessness Services	Voluntary Sector Funding	Supporting People	Leased Properties	Private Rental Sector Access Scheme	Total
	Top Up and Supporting People Costs	Furniture Storage & Taxi	Homelessness Services	Floating Support for homelessness projects & schemes	Private Sector emergency accom.	Facilitate creation and sustainment of private sector tenancies	
2014/15	£25M	£1.3M	£2.1M	£6.4M	£956K	£114K	£35.9m
2015/16	£24.3M	£1.4M	£2.2M	£6.4M	£956K	£360K	£35.6m
2016/17	£26.7m	£1.4m	£2.3m	£5.8m	£956k	£450k	£37.6m
2017/18	£25.6m	£1.7m	£2.4m	£6.0m	£958k	£483k	£37.1m
2018/19	£24.8m	£1.8m	£2.3m	£6.0m	£989k	£360k	£36.2m

This document is available in alternative formats.
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