

Ending Homelessness Together

Homelessness Strategy **2022-27**

Year 1 Annual Progress Report



Housing
Executive

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Foreword

On behalf of the Housing Executive we are delighted to present the Year 1 Annual Progress Report of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. Upon publication of the strategy in March 2022, we were enthused by the widespread support that accompanied the ambitions and aspirations we outlined during the public consultation on this strategy. The delivery of our Year 1 Action Plan represents the first steps in a 5 year journey to deliver these commitments.

While we are in the first year of this strategy we are delighted to highlight a number of key achievements which were outlined by the sector as being of particular importance when we consulted on the strategy. These highlights include:

- Initial work on the development of a Lived Experience Programme;
- The delivery of a Homelessness Prevention Fund which supported 34 projects;
- Working with partners such as the Department for Communities, Department of Justice and Department of Health to support the increased delivery of Housing First in Northern Ireland.

A later chapter provides further details on these and other key achievements while this report also provides details on our delivery of all 44 actions.

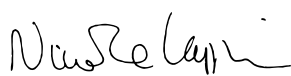
The independent evaluation of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 noted our engagement with those with lived experience as an area which we needed to and wanted to improve on. Over the past year, we are delighted to have engaged with those who have lived experience of homelessness at various events and this engagement has highlighted the vital contribution that such people have in guiding organisations like the Housing Executive who deliver the services they avail of. While this strategy highlights numerous high level actions that we seek to achieve, our engagement with Lived Experience Groups has identified many actions that on the surface seem simple, but in their impact can be life changing in helping people sustain their tenancies and thus prevent all of the negative consequences that homelessness can have on households. This engagement, both within any Lived Experience Programme and as part of events throughout the year, will continue to be crucial in shaping how we respond to homelessness.

This report also includes our Year 2 Action Plan which will guide delivery of the strategy during 2023/24. Guided by the collaborative approach we strive for in all of our work on homelessness, and in line with our vision of Ending Homelessness Together, this action plan reflects engagement with the sector in identifying what our priorities should be over the coming year. While many of the actions are carried over from Year 1, our commitment to deliver annual action plans reflects a desire to react to the ever changing landscape of homelessness rather than being bound by a rigid action plan that doesn't change over the course of the strategy.


While we have sought to reflect the ambition outlined in the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 it is appropriate to note caution in respect of our ambitions given the current funding environment. It is for this reason that a number of actions within the Year 2 Action Plan are noted as being reliant on securing funding.

Despite the challenging funding environment, the ability of the homelessness sector in Northern Ireland to continue to meet the challenges presented by another year of unprecedented demand for temporary accommodation is testament to the commitment of the organisations and staff, in supporting households who face the uncertainty that the homelessness journey presents.

In concluding this introduction, we would note that while we are extremely proud of the progress that has been delivered in 2022/23, we very much acknowledge how much there is yet to do. We look forward to working with our partners across the sector in continuing to deliver on our commitments in the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.



Nicola Lappin
Chair



Grainia Long
Chief Executive

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.

This report provides an overview of actions taken over the course of 2022/23 in meeting this duty while an overview of key facts and figures in relation to homelessness, including an update on rough sleeper numbers across Northern Ireland, is also included.

Challenges

The impacts of the pandemic are most evident when considering the increased demand for temporary accommodation. While pre-pandemic there was a significant increase in the number of placements provided, with 3,354 placements in 2018/19 increasing to 4,527 in 2019/20 these figures are a fraction of the number of placements post-pandemic. While 2020/21 and 2021/22 noted placements of above 9,000 the 10,253 placements provided in 2022/23 represents a 126% increase from 2019/20.

The requirement to meet our statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation has resulted in an increasing proportion of our homelessness budget being allocated to the provision of temporary accommodation which impacts upon our ability to support prevention initiatives which are vital if we are to deliver the aim of the Homelessness Strategy 2022/27, which is that wherever possible homelessness should be prevented; but if homelessness cannot be prevented it should be rare, brief and non-recurring.

The demands on temporary accommodation are perhaps best evidenced by the number of households to whom we owe a statutory duty increasing from

17,520 in the first year of the previous strategy to 23,978 in the final year of the strategy in 2022. Over the course of the first year of this strategy this figure stands at 26,310 and the Housing Executive will owe these households a full housing duty which includes the provision of temporary accommodation where necessary and assistance with the protection of the household's belongings. This duty will remain until such times as households either accept the offer of a social rented property or refuse two reasonable offers.

The homelessness system in Northern Ireland is subject to wider challenges within society and factors within the financial and property sectors are having an impact on the demand for homelessness services. This is most evident in the increasing number of homelessness presentations due to loss of private rented accommodation due to property sale, with this reason accounting for almost 10% of all presentations in 2022/23. The 1,593 presentations for this reason represents a 15% increase from the 1,380 in 2021/22 which in turn represented a 117% increase from the 636 presentations in 2020/21.

The Year Ahead

This report concludes with our Year 2 Action Plan. While cognisant of the wider challenges that are faced the action plan seeks to realise the ambitions of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 which received a broad range of positive comments during the consultation process. While seeking to realise the ambition laid out during the strategy the action plan also acknowledges the wider funding challenges which lie ahead with actions categorised by those which can be delivered with existing resources and those which are subject to delivery risks due to a reliance on securing in-year funding.



Key Achievements

While a later section of this report provides a summary of all 44 actions in our Year 1 Action Plan, this section provides additional detail on a number of the key achievements. Some of these actions, such as work on Lived Experience, were highlighted as key priorities during our public consultation in developing the strategy, while others such as work on a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and Street Needs Audits reflect work which was outside the Year 1 Action Plan but was carried over from previous commitments such as the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan.

Lived Experience

At the heart of 'Ending Homelessness Together' 2022-27 is a commitment to engage with those with personal experience of homelessness, with the aim of working together to prevent homelessness. Within the Year 1 Action Plan, Action 10 sought to appoint a strategic partner to develop and implement a Lived Experience Programme, whilst Action 11 committed to hosting four Service User meetings over the course of 2022/23.

In May 2022, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team met with Homeless Connect to discuss Action 11 and plan how they would lead and facilitate the respective meetings. Two separate groups were organised, one group in Belfast and the second group in Derry/Londonderry. The first two meetings took place in September 2022 and focused on homelessness prevention. The following two meetings, attended by our Chief Executive, took place in the beginning of February 2023 and focused on tenancy sustainment. Representatives from the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team were in attendance at all meetings to listen to and learn from those with lived experience of homelessness. Individuals in all meetings spoke about the need for early intervention such as homelessness education in schools, as well as the need for more support to help people sustain their tenancies from the moment they are allocated a property. Discussions in the second sessions focused on the need for better communication between the Housing Executive and new tenants, with some individuals proposing information leaflets to be provided to explain how gas meters, water boilers or appliances work for

example. These invaluable insights have informed the development of the Year 2 Action Plan and have particularly shaped Actions 28 and 31.

In relation to the Homelessness Strategy's commitment to a Lived Experience Programme, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team have spent some time this year exploring participative initiatives and gaining a deeper understanding of the topic. In October 2022, the team attended an event hosted by Housing Rights called 'Participation: Putting the ME in hoME and the US in hoUSing'. The event showcased organisations which are empowering individuals with lived experience of homelessness and excelling in participative work. Additionally, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team has carried out its own in-depth research into good practice examples of lived experience projects, which combined with the learnings from the event, will help inform the development of our future lived experience work.

In January 2023, as part of Action 10, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team reached out to two potential strategic partners, Homeless Connect and Housing Rights, who both have expertise in the area of participation. It was collectively decided that the main objective for the Year 1 programme in Quarter 4 of 2022/23 would be assembling a lived experience group and consulting with them on what a Lived Experience Programme would look like.

On Tuesday 7th March, the first of two consultations took place in Belfast, with the second one taking place in Derry/Londonderry on Tuesday 14th March. Both sessions were hosted by Housing Rights and Homeless Connect, with the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team in attendance. The main topics covered in the Belfast session were around barriers to participation and what meaningful engagement would look like through a Lived Experience Programme. An example of barriers raised during the session were language barriers, specifically for refugees or individuals from migrant communities. Participants also raised the point that any engagement should be on a regional basis and not just in the bigger cities. A resounding theme of the sessions was that experiencing homelessness is a traumatic life event, and so services which support individual's experiencing homelessness should have a trauma informed approach.

It was agreed between Housing Executive and the strategic partners that Fiona Boyle would be commissioned to attend both consultations and write up a report based on the conversations. This report was completed in April 2023 and has helped to gather intelligence and inform the development of a future lived experience programme.

Street Needs Audit

The purpose of the Street Needs Audit is to assist the Housing Executive in its statutory duty to respond to homelessness, by providing the organisation with a comprehensive understanding of the scale of rough sleeping and street activity in Northern Ireland. After initial discussions with providers in January 2023, it was agreed that the audit would cover 3 cities across Northern Ireland, with the Welcome Organisation carrying out the Belfast and Newry audits and First Housing Aid & Support Services (FHASS) and DePaul (Foyle Haven) carrying out the Derry/Londonderry audit.

It was collectively felt that the Street Needs Audits should take place over several weeks to ensure a true reflection of the street activity levels. Due to the reported levels of street activity in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry it was agreed with providers that the audits would be carried out over a 6 week period, which commenced in Belfast on 3rd February, and a week later in Derry/Londonderry on 10th February 2023. The Newry audit was carried out over a 2 week period which commenced on 18th March 2023.

In early February 2023, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team began assembling Steering Groups for each respective city, which were set up to guide the data collection, and ratify the findings. The Steering Groups consisted of representatives from local Housing Solutions teams, District Council, the Public Health Agency, Health and Social Care Trusts, PSNI and Belfast Complex Lives Team. By the end of March 2023, all three steering groups had met once and a second meeting is planned in Q2 of Year 2 of the Homelessness Strategy to ratify the final report.

It is hoped that the final report which will be published in Year 2 will provide the Housing Executive with a detailed assessment of need, which can better inform prevention work and future service commissioning.

Centre for Homelessness Impact

An overarching principal of the Homelessness Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan is 'evidence based' decisions. This principal particularly guided the creation of Action 8 regarding a 'Homelessness Data Action Plan'. Alongside this data action plan, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team have been listening to feedback from the sector regarding the need for better data, and so have explored other ways in which the Housing Executive can utilise homelessness data with the aim of preventing homelessness.

In Quarter 3 of Year 1, the team linked in with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI), which is a UK wide organisation that exists to improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness through better use of data and evidence.

On Friday 3rd March, the CHI team, which is led by Dr. Lígia Teixeira (Chief Executive Officer), joined the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team in Belfast for a one day workshop. The morning session focused on providing the team with a statutory perspective on the ongoing challenges facing the homelessness system. The afternoon session focused on how we can make the best use of homelessness data, how we can improve on the data that is currently provided and how we can better define measures of success. Representatives from key organisations were invited to join this session such as DePaul, Extern, Homeless Connect, Housing Rights, Simon Community and Welcome Organisation.

Since this meeting, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team and CHI team have been working collaboratively on an 'Ending Homelessness Framework' for Northern Ireland as well as a 'Value for Money' project relating to Housing Executive Temporary Accommodation. The team feel that this collaborative working will have significant benefits as part of the ongoing implementation of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27, and in particular our data aspirations within the Year 2 Action Plan.



Homelessness Local Area Groups

'Partnership working' is another overarching principal of the Year 1 Action Plan which has guided the work of the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team over the past year. Continuing to build on the success of the Homelessness Local Area Groups from the previous Homelessness Strategy, the team have encouraged and helped to facilitate the first in-person meetings in both Causeway and South Antrim & Mid and East Antrim local offices. Feedback from the sector is extremely positive regarding these meetings with members commenting on how they create a space for people to get to know each other on a level that online does not permit. Over the course of the last year the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team have witnessed the strengthening working relationships between all member organisations, and the team are determined to continue building on this success, with plans already in place for other groups to meet in-person in Year 2.

Homelessness Awareness Week

Homelessness Awareness Week is a week of events aimed to raise public awareness of homelessness across Northern Ireland and seeks to challenge stereotypes surrounding homelessness, highlight the work of the homeless sector and aims to build links between services, service users and the public. Homelessness Awareness Week 2022, took place from Monday 5th December to Sunday 11th December 2022. In September 2022 Homeless Connect who organised the week, engaged with each of the 7 Homelessness Local Area Groups to find out if any of the groups would be keen to organise an event in their local area. It was envisioned that the events would promote the positive work carried out by the Homelessness Local Area Groups, and the Housing Executive alongside relevant partners. The Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team were delighted at the response, with Causeway, South, South West and Ards and North Down groups all deciding to host a range of events. The Causeway event hosted by The Vineyard in Coleraine was a particular highlight of the week as it echoed the Homelessness Strategy's commitment to involving and listening to those individuals with lived experience of homelessness. The event gave three individuals a chance to tell their powerful,

personal stories and share their experiences with all the Homelessness Local Area Group members, professionals from across the sector and included the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens. Other events organised throughout the week included a pop-up advice centre for members of the public, a range of workshops and table discussions in relation to homelessness with organisations from the sector and a women's football tournament to raise awareness of homelessness in the local area.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

The Housing Executive introduced a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in December 2021. The purpose of this was to ensure the availability of accommodation to all those rough sleeping and who could be at risk due to severe weather conditions, for example when temperatures fall near or below freezing. The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol continues to be implemented as and when required and the Housing Executive continue to work in partnership with Welcome Organization, First Housing Aid & Support Services (FHASS) and DePaul to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place, including extending the opening of day centers and expanding the numbers of temporary bed spaces.

In Year 1 of the Homelessness Strategy, the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team created a log to record all SWEP's which have been implemented or considered since 1st April 2022. The log notes details such as weather conditions, warning area, whether the Welcome Organisation was used overnight and comments about Rough Sleepers outside of Belfast. From April 2022 to March 2023, there was a total of 39 occasions on which a SWEP was considered, with a decision taken to implement a SWEP applicable on 23 of these 39 occasions. The most prominent reason as to why a SWEP is called is due to severe cold weather including snow and ice, with temperatures below zero.

The log also acts as a helpful tool to advise the Homelessness Team and Out of Hours Management Team of previous decisions made regarding particular weather conditions and helps to facilitate discussion and agreement in whether a SWEP should or should not be implemented dependent on circumstances.

Homeless Data 22/23

The following section provides an overview of key homelessness data recorded over 2022/23. A detailed breakdown of all homelessness data is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

This section also focuses on the Outcomes and the accompanying Indicators which are used to measure the work delivered by the Housing Executive and overall the progress of the Homelessness Strategy.

Homelessness Presentations increased by 1.31% from 2021/22

The top reasons for presenting as homelessness remained consistent with the previous year (Accommodation not Reasonable followed by Sharing Breakdown/Family Dispute and Loss of Rented Accommodation).

There was an increasing number of Homelessness presentations due to loss of private rented accommodation due to property sale, with this reason accounting for almost 10% of all presentations in 2022/23.

In 2022/23 there was a total of 10,253 placements in temporary accommodation, an increase of 10.66% from the previous year.

The number of Families presenting as homeless increased by 5.93%, mainly due to reasons in relation to loss of private rented accommodation.

Number of repeat homelessness presenters decreased by 2.27% from 2021/22.

The average length of stay in temporary accommodation increased by 5% in comparison to 2021/22.

Outcomes Based Accountability - Indicators

This Strategy aligned with the draft 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. As part of the ongoing review and development of our homelessness data, a number of new indicators have been included under each of the three outcomes;

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

- Number of households accepted by the Housing Executive as statutorily homeless
- Number of cases recorded as homelessness prevention (cross-sector and subject to ongoing work on agreeing a definition)

Outcome 2 - We live in suitable homes

- Number of households placed in temporary accommodation

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

- Number of applicants presenting to the Housing Executive recorded as experiencing chronic homelessness

Outcome	Indicators
1. We have support that prevents us from becoming homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households presenting to the Housing Executive as homeless • Number of households accepted by the Housing Executive as statutorily homeless • Number of cases recorded as homelessness prevention (cross-sector and subject to ongoing work on agreeing a definition)
2. We live in suitable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average length of time spent in temporary accommodation • Number of households placed in temporary accommodation • Number of Full Duty Applicant (FDA) duties discharged
3. We have the support we require to access and/or sustain a home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of instances of repeat homelessness • Number of applicants presenting to the Housing Executive recorded as experiencing chronic homelessness



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

The graph below outlines the total number of households presenting to the Housing Executive as homeless and includes the total number of homelessness acceptances, which considers the newly added indicator of total number of households accepted by the Housing Executive as statutorily homeless.

While the total number of homelessness presentations (15,965) in 2022/23 shows an overall decrease from 2018/19, homelessness presentations have increased by 1.31% from the previous year 2021/22. The graph below also outlines homelessness acceptances from 2018/19; however as this is a new indicator the baseline figure will be recorded from 2022/23. The baseline figure for acceptances is 10,349 for 2022/23 meaning approximately 65% of homelessness presentations were accepted as statutorily homeless

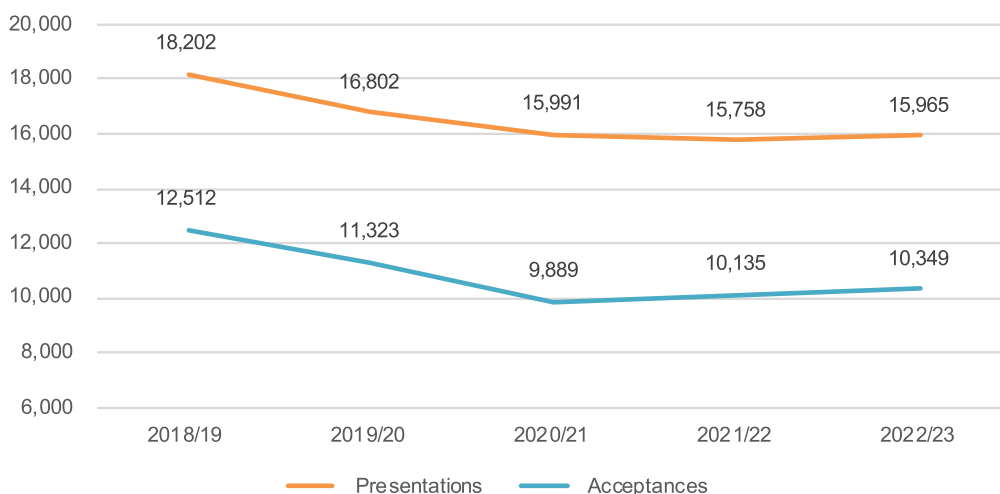
by the Housing Executive.

It should be noted that a Landlord Services Advice Note (LSAN) regarding homelessness prevention has been developed to assist Housing Solutions and Support Teams and Patch Managers in categorising homelessness prevention on the Housing Management System as per the P1E definition;

'A successful P1E outcome is where you are satisfied that your positive intervention on behalf of a client is likely to result in homelessness being prevented or relieved for at least 6 months.'

This was agreed by the Central Homelessness Forum, with an accompanying letter which will be issued to applicants. This will help to capture a better insight to the level of prevention work being carried out by operational staff in the Housing Executive and therefore the baseline figure for homelessness prevention activity will be recorded from 2023/24.

Total Number of Homelessness Presentations and Acceptances



Outcome 2 - We live in suitable homes

The following graph highlights the indicator 'average length of stay in temporary accommodation'. From 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, the average time spent in temporary accommodation was 228 days, equating to 33 weeks. This represents an overall decrease from 281 days recorded in 2018/19, however the average length of stay increased by 5% from 2021/22.

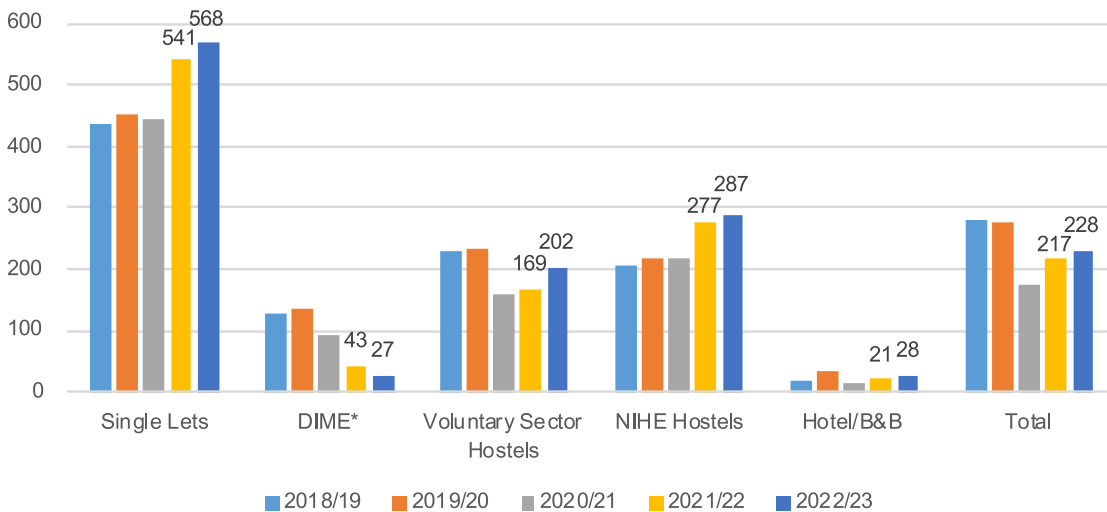
To address the new indicator of 'number of households placed in temporary accommodation' the baseline figure for 2022/23 of number of distinct households placed in temporary accommodation was 4,728.

It is important to note that the impact of the pandemic affects these figures. The requirement for temporary accommodation, including a significant number of short-term placements, increased as COVID-19 restrictions were implemented and that level of demand has continued despite public health guidance no longer being applicable.

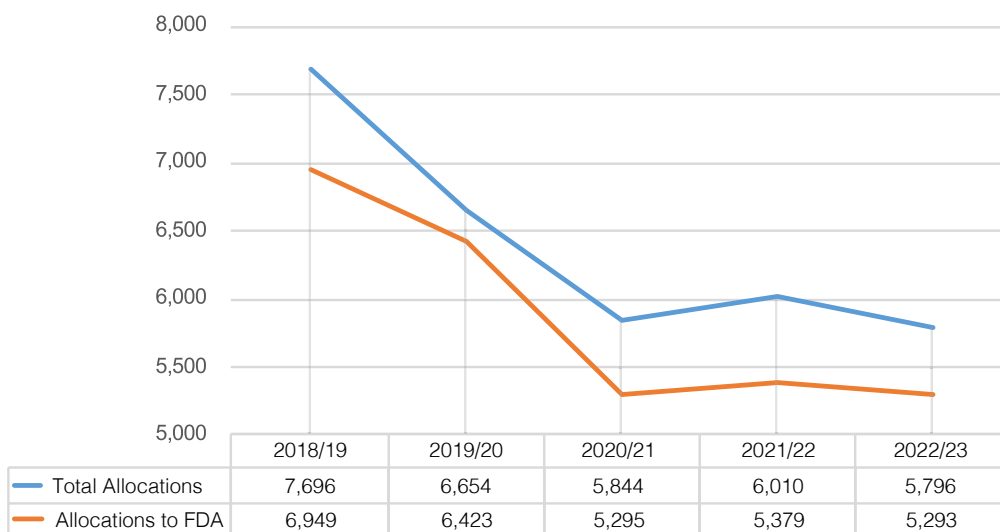
The chart below outlines the number of Full Duty Applicants who have had their statutory homelessness duty discharged through the allocation of a social rented property. In 2022/23 a total of 5,293 Full Duty Applicants (FDA) have been allocated a social rented property out of 5,796 allocations.

Average Length in Temporary Accommodation

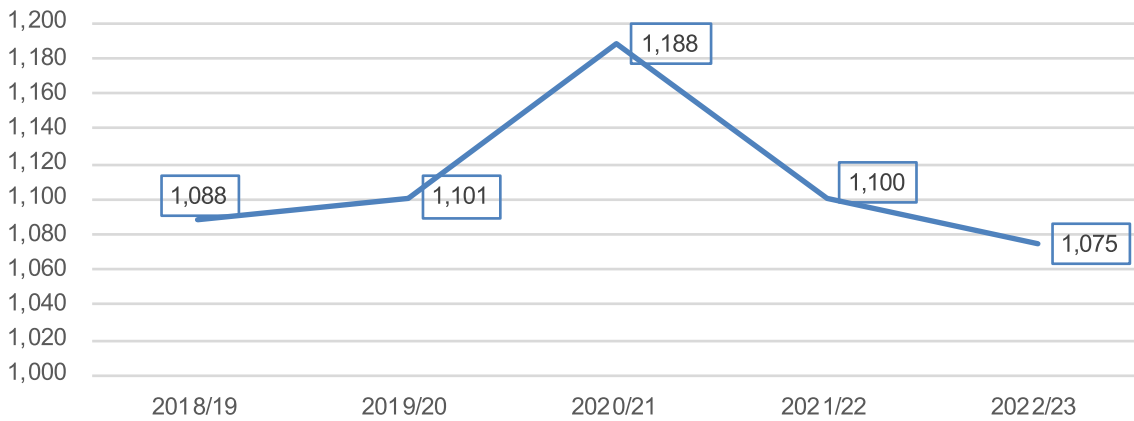
*DIME refers to Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation



Social Housing Allocations



Repeat Homelessness Presentations



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

The above graph represents the numbers of repeat homelessness presentations over the past five years where the previous homeless application had been subject to a presentation less than 12 months before the current homeless application. During 2022/23, a total number of 1,075 repeat homelessness presentations was recorded highlighting an overall decrease of 1.19% from 2018/19 and 2.27% decrease from 2021/22.

The Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team recognises the need to accurately measure chronic homelessness in the Chronic Homelessness Action Plan and have subsequently defined specific criteria for chronic homelessness. This criteria was developed alongside partner agencies and contains a number of primary and additional indicators. The criteria states that an individual can be said to be experiencing chronic homelessness if either or both of the following primary indicators apply if;

- 'An individual with more than one episode of homelessness in the last 12 months' and/or
- 'An individual with 3 or more placements/exclusions from temporary accommodation during the last 12 months'

AND if two or more additional indicators apply:

- Additional indicators are categorised as
 - Mental Health Problems
 - Addiction: Alcohol
 - Addiction: Drugs
 - Addiction: Other
 - Street activity: Rough Sleeping
 - Street Activity: Drinking/Begging
 - Violence/Risk: From Others
 - Violence/Risk: To Others
 - Violence/Risk: To Self
 - Left Prison within the last 12 months,
 - Left Youth Custody within the last 12 months
 - Defined as 'Looked after Child'

In January 2023, the Housing Executive began recording chronic homelessness when processing new homeless applications. The baseline figure for those experiencing Chronic Homelessness will be recorded from 2023/24.

2022 Rough Sleeping Count/Estimates

As part of our commitment to regularly monitor and measure the extent of rough sleeping throughout Northern Ireland, the Housing Executive have been conducting annual rough sleeping counts/estimates since 2018. Prior to 2018 the Housing Executive carried out snapshot counts only in areas where there was an identified need, which were primarily urban areas such as Belfast and Newry. The approach since 2018 has enabled the Housing Executive to publish information on rough sleeping across Northern Ireland as outlined in this update. This snapshot also allows the Housing Executive to track progress, consider whether current measures are effective in tackling rough sleeping and/or if new approaches are needed.

To ensure consistency each year and to gather data which is comparable with other jurisdictions, the Housing Executive conduct the rough sleeping count/estimates using Homeless Link's Rough Sleeping Estimate guidance².

Rough Sleeper Street Counts

As per Homeless Link's guidance, rough sleepers are identified using the definition below:

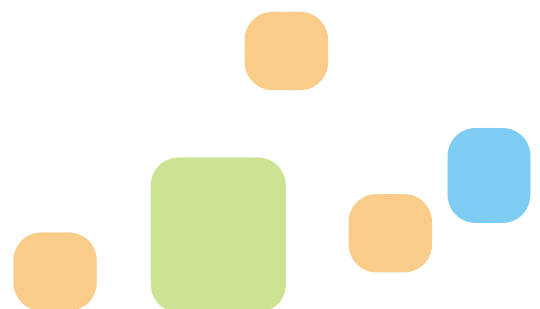
People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places, not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or 'bashes').

The rough sleeper street counts took place in the following locations:

- Belfast - night of Tuesday 1st November leading into the morning of Wednesday 2nd November 2022.
- Newry - night of Tuesday 8th November leading into the morning of Wednesday 9th November 2022.
- Derry/Londonderry- night of Tuesday 22nd November leading into the morning of Wednesday 23rd November 2022.

The Housing Executive carried out Belfast & Newry counts alongside staff from the Welcome Organisation. The count for Derry/Londonderry was carried out alongside staff from First Housing Aid and Support Services (FHASS). Both partner organisations have expert knowledge of rough sleeping and provide daily support and assistance to individuals who rough sleep in the cities.

1. Homeless Link, 'Rough Sleeping Estimates Toolkit 2021 – A guide for Local Authorities' - [Microsoft Word - Rough Sleeping Estimates Toolkit 2021 \(Final\) \(kxcdn.com\)](#)



Rough Sleeper Street Estimates

An evidence-based estimates approach was used in all other areas across Northern Ireland to gather rough sleeping estimates. This method is intelligence-led and involves working with partner agencies, including local Housing Executive offices, PSNI, local councils, Health Trusts and relevant community and voluntary agencies. These agencies record and report how many people are rough sleeping in their area on a chosen night.

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 is not included in the estimate unless there is evidence that they did sleep rough on that night.

The chosen night for the evidence-based count across Northern Ireland was the evening of Tuesday 22nd November going into the morning of Wednesday 23rd November.

Headline Figures

A total of 33 people were estimated to be rough sleeping in Northern Ireland across the street counts/ estimates outlined above. This represents a 43% increase from the 2021 figure of 23.

The use of a methodology that is consistent with England enables a comparison to be in respect of overall numbers. When a direct comparison is made numbers of rough sleepers in Northern Ireland are substantially lower than the most recent figures provided for England where it was noted that there were 3,069 people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2022.

Rough sleeping by area

The table below outlines the number of rough sleepers by Local Government District (LGD).

Council	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	4	0	1	1
Belfast	16	28	10	18	26
Causeway Coast & Glen	4	0	0	0	0
Derry City & Strabane	13	1	2	0	2
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	1	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0
Mid & East Antrim	0	1	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0	1
Newry, Mourne & Down	5	1	6	4	3
Total	38	36	18	23	33

Acknowledgements

The Housing Executive would like to note the assistance of Welcome Organisation (for Belfast and Newry) and First Housing Aid and Support Service (for Derry/Londonderry) in both the preparation and completion of each of the street counts. Additionally, the Housing Executive acknowledges the wide range of organisations who supported the completion of the estimates in all other areas.

Annual Update 22/23

The table below details actions taken to deliver each of the 44 actions in the Year 1 Action Plan. The update for each action provides a headline summary for each action and concludes with a note on whether this action has been carried in to the Year 2 Action Plan which is included later in this document.

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
Experiential Evidence		
1	We will commission independent research on a feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland.	<p>Over the course of 2022/23 the Housing Executive has been seeking to develop research around the practicability of a Housing First approach in Northern Ireland. The Housing Executive want to replicate the Housing First Feasibility Study For The Liverpool City Region², where appropriate and relevant. The wider Homelessness team and the Research Team have worked together to develop and plan the aims and objectives of the research project and the following objectives have been set;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the strengths and weaknesses of the existing temporary accommodation portfolio in relation to client outcome • To examine the numbers of clients that could be targeted by Housing First and estimate future need • To provide comparative costs for delivering Housing First versus existing service delivery in the context of clients experiencing chronic homelessness • To identify property portfolio requirements and timescales to reach capacity and what are the service requirements for landlords • To examine potential for efficiencies and value for money analysis (across all sectors but particularly housing/health and justice) • To examine the likelihood of achieving specified outcomes with and without Housing First • To examine the role of lived experience in Housing First and its impact on success • To create a model for Housing First in Northern Ireland. <p>The procurement process has been carried out and Fiona Boyle Associates have been appointed to carry out this research with a Research Advisory Group comprising of a range of key partners having been established. The key output of the study will be a written report. An interim report will be produced by October 2023. The final draft report will be produced by the end of March 2024.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 Year 2 Action Plan will continue to deliver this piece of research.</p>
2	We will commission independent research that seeks to provide a comparison of homelessness funding between Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions.	<p>The comparative research piece was not included in the Housing Executive's Research programme due to other research projects being developed and finalised during 2022/23. The Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team have drafted a research request with a view to commissioning this project during 2023/2024.</p> <p>The research will be included in the Year 2 Action Plan, and will be subject to funding.</p>

2. Crisis, *Housing First Feasibility Study for the Liverpool City Region* - https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237545/housing_first_feasibility_study_for_the_liverpool_city_region_2017.pdf

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
3	We will commission independent research on local efforts to address chronic homelessness.	<p>The Housing Executive would intend to commission a piece of research to find out and understand the work carried out by local organisations to address chronic homelessness across Northern Ireland. This research will seek to replicate the On-Street Food Services in Dublin: A Review Report³, where appropriate and relevant.</p> <p>This specific research piece was not included in the Housing Executive's Research programme due to other research projects being developed and finalised during 2022/23. A research request form has been submitted and Homelessness Strategy staff are in the process of liaising with Research on the commissioning of this project, with the aim of including this project in the 2023/2024 Housing Executive Research programme.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan, and will be subject to funding.</p>
4	<p>We will review and consider the findings for the following projects which were completed and/or commenced in 2021/22;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review prevention funded projects; - Accommodation needs of prisoners; - Challenges facing sector in terms of retention & recruitment of staff; - BCS Housing Solutions Scoping Review; - Understanding Tenancy Terminations and; - Experiences of Youth Homelessness 	<p>During 2022/23 one of our Housing Services Graduate Trainee joined the Homelessness Strategy Team for a three month placement. The placement offered the Graduate Trainee an opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and provide them with an overall understanding of what the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 aims to achieve.</p> <p>As part of the placement our Graduate Trainee reviewed all six pieces of research. It is to be noted that two of the projects were in their final draft formats and due to be finalised and published in 2023/24. The outcome of the review was an internal report developed by the Graduate Trainee which outlined subsequent recommendations for the Homelessness Strategy Year 2 Action Plan with consideration to actions in relation to Mental Health and those with lived experience of homelessness.</p>
5	We will work with the Centre for Public Health (QUB) and Business Services Organisation to investigate 'Using administrative data to better understand the antecedents, needs and outcomes of people who are homeless in Northern Ireland'.	<p>The Housing Executive has been working with the Centre for Public Health, Queens University Belfast and Business Services Organisation (BSO) to better understand the background, needs and outcomes of those who are experiencing homelessness in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Work to develop and complete a data sharing agreement was finalised during 2022/23. The Housing Executive shared case level data which consisted of 205,330 homeless applications with Business Services Organisation. The data is subject to analysis which will be cross referenced with a range of health and social care data to deliver the following sample research objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What proportion of looked after children become homeless; does this vary by type of care? • What is the relationship between ill-health and homelessness? How much does pre-existing chronic ill health or acute downturns in health contribute to homelessness presentations? • To what extent does homelessness exacerbate ill health? • How does mortality risk for people experiencing homelessness compare with the rest of society? • How does the health service usage of those who are homeless compare to the rest of society? • What can local variations in policy/practice and outcomes tell us about what works? <p>As of 31st March 2023, work with data matching continues. The work of data matching is being led by the Business Services Organisation and upon satisfactory progress, a Steering Group will be established.</p> <p>The continued development of this research will be incorporated into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

3. Dublin Region Homeless Executive, On-Street Food Services in Dublin: A Review - <https://www.homelessdublin.ie/content/files/Review-of-On-Street-Services-FINAL.pdf>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
6	We will develop and analyse key outcomes data in order to guide and measure progress.	<p>The Housing Executive provides funding to Outside Agencies to deliver homelessness services. The Outside Agencies provide reports outlining their overall outcomes and services delivered over the course of 2022/23. This allows for internal analysis to better understand the level of need, service gaps and ways to improve services.</p> <p>Additional outcomes data has been requested as part of the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund and as with previous years this will contribute to a final evaluation report. Upon conclusion of the current financial year, staff within the Housing Executive's Homelessness Team will review outcomes data and where appropriate will consider additional outcomes data for services delivered in the forthcoming financial year.</p>
7	We will develop a framework for the delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Fund which will incorporate an agreed definition for homelessness prevention.	<p>During 2022/23 the Housing Executive has made significant progress in supporting homelessness prevention. Invitations to apply for the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund were issued on Friday 9th September 2022 with a deadline for applications to be submitted by close of business on Friday 23rd September 2022.</p> <p>70 applications to the 2022/23 Fund were received and assessed by a panel which included representatives from each Housing Executive Region. Applications were assessed using a scoring matrix, which reflected the priorities identified following the evaluation of last year's projects and in the context of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. Based on available funding at the time of applications, the top 24 ranked projects had been granted funding via the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund. A further 10 projects had been granted via further award in December 2022. A total of 34 projects have been awarded Homelessness Prevention Funding and all final project evaluation reports are due on 14th April 2023.</p> <p>An analysis will be carried out on all projects, which will be collated into a report detailing total number of beneficiaries supported via the Homelessness Prevention Fund, homeless outcomes and the overall impact of the Fund.</p> <p>In addition, a business case has been developed with a view to seek approval for multi-year funding for the Homelessness Prevention Fund.</p> <p>A Landlord Services Advice Note (LSAN) regarding homelessness prevention has been developed to assist Housing Solutions and Support Teams and Patch Managers in categorising homelessness prevention on HMS as per the P1E definition agreed by the Central Homelessness Forum, with an accompanying letter which will be issued to applicants. This will help to capture a better insight to the level of prevention work being carried out by operational staff in the Housing Executive.</p> <p>Outside Agencies are reporting on this definition during Q4 of 2022/23 and final reports are due 28th April 2023.</p>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
8	We will implement a Homelessness Data Action Plan.	<p>A draft Homelessness Data Action Plan to reflect the new Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 has been developed and subject to internal approval within the Housing Executive this will be shared with relevant implementation groups.</p> <p>Alongside finalising the Homelessness Data Action Plan the Housing Executive is engaging with the Centre for Homelessness Impact ⁴ who visited Belfast on the 3rd March 2023 and joined the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team for a one day workshop. The morning focused on the ongoing challenges facing the homelessness system in Northern Ireland and the afternoon session focused on how we can make the best use of homelessness data, how we can improve on the data that is currently provided and how we can better define measures of success. The afternoon session was well attended from representatives from key organisations from across the homelessness sector.</p> <p>The Housing Executive and the Centre for Homelessness Impact will continue to work together as part of the Year 2 Action Plan in order to develop the following outcomes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully utilise our homelessness data with the aim of improving our understanding of effective homelessness prevention. • Improved understanding as to what constitutes value for money in regards to temporary accommodation with the view to further engage and learn from CHI. • Improved collaboration with local authorities across GB using the Centre for Homelessness Impact as a link. • Raise awareness across the sector of the ongoing developments and work carried out by the Centre for Homelessness Impact.
9	We will develop an addendum to our COVID - 19 Reset Plan.	<p>The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 ⁵ and the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation ⁶ have been developed to build upon and/or progress the actions initiated throughout the COVID-19 homelessness response and set out in the Reset Plan. Thus meaning the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation facilitate the transition to the 'new normal' and ensure any actions not fully achieved in the Reset Plan will be progressed as business as usual activities, as applicable.</p> <p>The Project Steering Group has therefore agreed that any actions that may have been part of any Reset Plan Addendum will be a part of the above action plans and be delivered as business as usual and thus negating the need for a Reset Plan Addendum.</p>

4. Centre for Homelessness Impact - <https://www.homelessnessimpact.org/>

5. Housing Executive, Ending Homelessness Together, Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 - <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/73313718-aa0e-4aae-b122-6573dcab88c7/Ending-Homelessness-Together-Homelessness-Strategy-2022-27.pdf>

6. Housing Executive, Homeless to Home, Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation - <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/fd320853-cf6e-4403-908f-d0a0b7dbbaea/Temporary-Accommodation-Strategic-Action-Plan-2022-27.pdf>

Enablers	Progress at 31st March 2023
Collaboration	
<p>10 We will seek to appoint a Strategic Partner to develop and implement a Lived Experience Programme</p>	<p>The heart of the new Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 is to listen to and respond to individuals with lived experience of homelessness. The Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027 has a commitment to involve those with lived experience in the co-production and co-design of strategy actions, recognising that their input is vital to the development and improvement of homelessness services.</p> <p>As part of the Housing Executives work to listen to and learn from those with lived experience of homelessness, a strategic Outline Case has been completed for the delivery of a Lived Experience Programme. Initially, this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a user involvement programme - this would include a service user pathway to ensure that there is a clear focus on roles, processes, opportunities, resources, support requirements and an individual exit plan. • Providing support to those engaged in the lived experience programme. • Development and delivery of communications around the lived experience programme. <p>It should be noted that while in the long-term the aspiration is for multi-year funding of a Lived Experience Programme, funding has been provided to develop an in year programme for 2022/23.</p> <p>Housing Rights and Homeless Connect submitted a joint proposal to deliver Homelessness Lived Experience Sessions before the end of March 2023. Following Housing Executive approval Housing Rights and Homeless Connect facilitated 2-half day events to gather views and insights from experts by experience as to what a Lived Experience Programme should look like. The 'Experts by Experience' event took place in Belfast on 7th March 2023 and 29th March 2023 in Derry/Londonderry.</p> <p>The main topics covered in both sessions included barriers to participation and what meaningful engagement would look like through a Lived Experience Programme. An example of barriers raised during the session were language barriers, specifically for asylum seekers or refugees. Participants also raised the point that any engagement should be on a regional basis and not just in the bigger cities. A resounding theme of the session was that experiencing homelessness is a traumatic life event, and so services which support individual's experiencing homelessness should have a trauma informed approach.</p> <p>Further details regarding the work and development of a Lived Experience Programme have been detailed earlier in this report.</p> <p>The development of a Lived Experience programme will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan, however the development of a programme will be subject to funding.</p>

Enablers	Progress at 31st March 2023
<p>11 We will host four Service User meetings over the course of 2022/2023.</p>	<p>An action from the previous Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 was to ‘Establish a Service User Forum’, however due to the pandemic it was not possible to facilitate face to face meetings. The Housing Executive wanted to continue to develop this and therefore approached Homeless Connect to work together to deliver Action 11. Homeless Connect contacted individuals who had received the Housing Executive Home Starter Pack and asked if they would be interested in working with a group led by and facilitated by Homeless Connect, alongside representatives from the Housing Executive. It was highlighted to all individuals that the Housing Executive’s role in the groups was solely there to listen to and learn from those with lived experience of homelessness and from those who are working in operational roles from across the homelessness sector.</p> <p>Two Lived Experience Groups took place in Belfast on Monday 26th September with the second group taking place in Derry/Londonderry on Thursday 29th September. The theme of the first meeting focused on homelessness prevention with a view to identifying how the sector could have done things differently.</p> <p>The following Lived Experience Group meetings took place in the beginning of February 2023. The Belfast group met on 2nd February, and the Derry/Londonderry group met on 8th February 2023. Both meetings focused on tenancy sustainment and the provision of support when settling into a new tenancy. The Housing Executive’s Chief Executive, Grainia Long attended both meetings with a follow up meeting having taken place with Grainia and the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team to explore how the Housing Executive can address some of the challenges highlighted during these sessions. Further details on the Lived Experience Groups has been detailed earlier in this report.</p> <p>The feedback from the Lived Experience Groups has been considered in the development of actions for the Year 2 Action Plan. It is vital that we continue engagement with the Lived Experience Groups and therefore this action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan, but will be subject to funding.</p>
<p>12 We will review the Terms of Reference and membership of all of the existing implementation structures (Central Homelessness Forum & Local Area Groups).</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Central Homelessness Forum have been reviewed and updated to reflect the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. The updated ToR have been approved by the group in June 2022. It was agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Central Homelessness Forum would be reviewed and subject to approval during the first quarterly meeting of each year to ensure they remain relevant with appropriate representation in the group.</p> <p>The Homelessness Local Area Action Plans and Terms of Reference were initially discussed during Homelessness Local Area Group meetings in September 2022. Following on from initial feedback the ToR and Action Plans were updated based on the overall discussions and feedback with further review to take place in February/March 2023 meetings.</p> <p>During the last quarterly meetings in February/March 2023, the Homelessness Strategy Team outlined the changes that have been made to the Local Area Action plans and how they reflect the Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027, emerging issues and trends, and how they have been developed to outline what is achievable by each of the groups. The actions and objectives within the Action Plan are reflective of ongoing challenges in the area and the issues that affect both clients and service providers across the homelessness sector. Some of the issues listed include recognising the impact of the cost of living crisis, the increasingly complex needs of service users and challenges that exist due to a lack of housing supply and affordability.</p> <p>The groups agreed that the Local Area Action Plans highlight the work of the groups and are based on collaboration, sharing information on services, raising awareness of homelessness in the Local Area and homelessness prevention.</p> <p>The updated Local Area Actions plans and Terms of Reference were agreed and ratified by the Homelessness Local Area Groups.</p>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
13	We will commence work to develop protocols and Data Sharing Agreements for partner public services to ensure effective homelessness prevention pathways are in place.	As part of this action the Housing Executive is currently exploring the development of Data Sharing Agreements with relevant agencies on a cross-border basis following requests from our area offices which border councils in the Republic of Ireland. A specific Data Sharing Agreement which is progressing with Monaghan County Council and it is anticipated this will provide a template for sharing data with other councils. This action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.
14	We will routinely communicate performance, budgetary, and trend information to stakeholders in user friendly formats.	The Housing Executive continues to share and deliver a range of information to regional and local groups. Budgetary information is shared as appropriate with a range of internal and external groups. A headline summary of homelessness spend is included in the Appendix of this report. The circulation and discussion of homelessness data forms part of the agenda for each quarterly meetings of the Homelessness Local Area Groups with relevant trends and emerging issues forming part of these discussions and updates. Relevant trend analysis has been presented at recent meetings of the Central Homelessness Forum and discussions held around issues linked to emerging issues such as loss of private rented accommodation linked to affordability and the cost of living crisis. The Housing Executive will continue to share and communicate homelessness data and information to all regional and local groups and this work will continue into the second year of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.
Legislation		
15	We will liaise with the Department for Communities in identifying potential legislative amendments.	The issue of legislative amendments for homelessness has been raised by various stakeholders at the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group. Potential legislative amendments that have been suggested include a statutory duty to collaborate and a statutory duty for prevention. The Housing Executive will work with the Department for Communities as and when required in the development of any legislative amendments. This action will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.
Interdepartmental Approach		
17	We will support the Department for Communities in the development and delivery of Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan.	The Year 3 Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan has been published and can be found via this link ⁷ . The Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team liaised with the Department for Communities as part of exploratory work for the Year 4 Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan and will support the delivery of the IDHAP as and when appropriate. Collaboration with the Department for Communities continues and this action will follow into the Year 2 Action Plan.
Funding		
18	We will support the delivery of new/reconfigured homelessness services through the identification of business need and the development of options to address these needs.	The Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee/Clearing Group was established in July 2019 as a mechanism to consider homeless funding priorities, service development and delivery models to provide assurance and recommendations to the Director of Housing Services given their responsibility for homelessness service provision and in their role as Housing Services representative on the Strategic Advisory Board (for Supporting People (SP) funded services). These groups continue to meet on a quarterly basis and continue to consider the development of any relevant services or models.

7. Department for Communities, Inter-Departmental Homelessness Action Plan - <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/dfc-inter-departmental-homelessness-action-plan-year3.pdf>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
19	We will support others in accessing funding opportunities.	<p>The Housing Executive (along with several other Central Homelessness Forum and Homelessness Strategy Steering Group member organisations) is represented on a Steering Group for the Housing and Homelessness Innovation & Voice Programme⁸ which is an ‘innovative, participative initiative which not only funds individual projects but which supports the creation of a movement working on the root causes of homelessness.’</p> <p>The Housing Executive will continue to work with the Community Foundation Northern Ireland and further developments will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
20	We will work to ensure effective commissioning structures are in place to prioritise funding.	<p>As part of the delivery of the Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee there was a review of the business case approval process in order to ensure that current commissioning structures are appropriate and adequate for the prioritisation of funding.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
Staff		
21	We will provide opportunities for staff to input to Homelessness research.	<p>The Housing Executive promotes staff involvement (both internal and external) in the delivery of research, this will continue into the pieces of research that we will deliver as part of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
22	We will seek to commence a rolling training programme for staff across the sector to equip staff to deliver psychologically informed responses.	<p>As of 31st March 2023, the Homelessness Team are exploring options on conducting a training needs assessment, with further options to be explored on development of a training programme in consultation with relevant partners.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan, and will be subject to funding.</p>
23	We will consider opportunities for staff interchange programmes and co-location of services.	<p>The Housing Executive, the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and Housing Rights are exploring opportunities for Youth Apprentices to be provided with placements in the Housing Executive with a long-term aim of providing support to young people who are homeless or threatened with homeless. Staff in the Homelessness Strategy Team have been liaising with staff in Workforce Development to organise a ‘Behind the scenes’ day at which the Youth Apprentices can be provided with an induction type training to learn more about the Housing Executive.</p> <p>The Youth Apprentices attended a Housing Induction Module Training day in the Housing Centre on the 1st February 2023. The module provided an overview of the Housing Executive’s Housing division with a focus on governance structures.</p> <p>As part of the Complex Lives project a multi-disciplinary team has been established, which involves co-location of staff and has helped improve outcomes using a case management approach to address the full spectrum of an individual’s needs.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
Process		
24	We will continue to embed the Common Assessment Framework as the main tool to assess and record needs on an ongoing basis.	<p>The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) continues to be used by Housing Solutions and Support Teams. Consideration is being given as to how Housing Rights can be included into the Common Assessment Framework as part of the Prisons Protocol.</p> <p>This is now in use by the vast majority of providers and there are ongoing discussions with those outstanding providers who do not use the CAF form with a view to having full use across all services.</p> <p>This work will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

8. The Community Foundation Northern Ireland, Community Solutions to Housing and Homelessness - <https://communityfoundationni.org/programmes/housing-and-homelessness-fund/>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
25	We will continue to develop specification for digital solutions to support implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, provision of bed availability information, producing meaningful measures and data analysis.	<p>Work is ongoing with MRI and various internal stakeholders to develop a specification for a new Homelessness and Housing Solutions/Allocations system. The Central Access Point specification developed as part of the Housing Solutions Assessment and Access (HSAA) project has been reviewed and is being included in the specification of the new Homelessness and Housing Solutions/Allocations system specification.</p> <p>The ongoing development will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
Objective 1 - Prioritise homelessness prevention		
26	We will seek to continue the Homelessness Prevention Fund.	<p>As per Action 7, the Housing Executive has made significant progress during 2022/23 in supporting homelessness prevention. Invitations to apply for the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund were issued on Friday 9th September 2022 with deadline for applications to be submitted by close of business on Friday 23rd September 2022.</p> <p>70 applications to the 2022/23 Fund were received and assessed by a panel which included representatives from each Housing Executive Region. Applications were assessed using a scoring matrix, which reflected the priorities identified following the evaluation of last year's projects and in the context of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. Based on available funding at the time of applications, the top 24 ranked projects had been granted funding via the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund. A further 10 projects had been granted via further award in December 2022. A total of 34 projects have been awarded Homelessness Prevention Funding and all final project evaluation reports are due on 14th April 2023.</p> <p>An analysis will be carried out on all projects, which will be collated into a report detailing total number of beneficiaries supported via the Homelessness Prevention Fund, homeless outcomes and the overall impact of the Fund.</p> <p>In addition a business case has been developed with a view to seek approval for multi-year funding for the Homelessness Prevention Fund.</p> <p>In anticipation that Homelessness Prevention funding may become available during 2023/24, the Homelessness Prevention Team issued invitations welcoming applications on Friday 24th March 2023. Through this approach and in the event that a fund can be established, this will maximise project duration through having completed the application and assessment stage, which in previous years has generally taken around 6 weeks to complete.</p> <p>The overall objective is to be able to provide 2023/24 Homelessness Prevention funding (subject to funding availability) for up to a maximum of 10 months from the 1st June 2023 to the 31st March 2024.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan, and will be subject to funding.</p>
Primary Prevention		
27	We will target Homelessness Prevention Training to the Community Sector.	<p>A Homelessness Awareness Presentation has been created and has been delivered to Housing Community Networks/Community Groups on a limited scale. However it is intended that the scale of this delivery will broaden over the coming year.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy team and the Housing Executive's Communication team will work collaboratively with a view to promoting this on social media in order to increase the impact of this action - this will be brought forward and linked to the Communication Action Plan.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

Enablers	Progress at 31st March 2023
<p>28 We will ensure that one meeting of the Service User Forum is dedicated to homelessness prevention to seek ideas for effective actions as part of the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.</p>	<p>As noted in Action 11, two Lived Experience Groups took place in Belfast on Monday 26th September with the second group taking place in Derry/Londonderry on Thursday 29th September. The theme of the first meeting focused on homelessness prevention with a view to identifying how the sector could have done things differently.</p> <p>The following Lived Experience Group meetings took place in the beginning of February 2023. The Belfast group met on 2nd February, and the Derry/Londonderry group met on 8th February 2023. Both meetings focused on tenancy sustainment and the provision of support when settling into a new tenancy. The Housing Executive's Chief Executive, Grainia Long attended both meetings with a follow up meeting having taken place with Grainia and the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team to explore how the Housing Executive can address some of the challenges highlighted during these sessions.</p> <p>A recurring theme in all sessions was that early intervention could have prevented homelessness. Some individuals spoke about the need for more support and awareness of homelessness in schools. This feedback has helped shape Action 28 in the Year 2 Action Plan.</p> <p>The inclusion of Action 39 in the Year 2 Action Plan has been guided by feedback in the second meetings in February 2023. In these sessions, discussions focused on the need for better communication between the Housing Executive and new tenants, with some individuals proposing information leaflets to be provided to explain how gas meters, water boilers or appliances work for example. These invaluable insights have prompted the Homelessness Strategy and Policy Team to link in with the Tenancy Sustainment Team and support their work on a 'Warm Handover Protocol'.</p>
<p>29 We will seek to deliver a public awareness campaign to shift mind-sets towards, and raise awareness of homelessness prevention. This will include support and promotion of Northern Ireland's Homelessness Awareness Week.</p>	<p>A draft Communication Action Plan has been developed to reflect the new Homelessness Action Plan which seeks to incorporate lessons from other action plans (internal and external) that the Homelessness Strategy team are involved in. In delivering this action the Homelessness Strategy team and the Housing Executive's Communications department with a view to increasing the profile of homelessness awareness on social media throughout the year.</p> <p>Homelessness Awareness Week 2022, took place from Monday 5th December to Sunday 11th December 2022. In September 2022 Homeless Connect who organised the week, engaged with each of the 7 Homelessness Local Area Groups to find out if any of the groups would be keen to organise an event in their local area.</p> <p>It was envisioned that the events would promote the positive work carried out by the Homelessness Local Area Groups, and the Housing Executive alongside relevant partners. The Causeway, South, South West and Ards and North Down Homelessness Local Area Groups organised a range of events over the course of the week.</p> <p>In addition the Housing Executive Communications Team ran a multi-channel communications campaign to mark Homelessness Awareness Week. The Team worked closely with the Homelessness Team, to ensure they proactively showcased the work of Housing Executive staff, raise awareness of our partnership work, promote events taking place and provide signposting to advice and support services. This included media interviews, press releases and photographs in local papers and social media updates across all channels. Messaging across all social media channels reached an audience of more than 60,500.</p> <p>Raising awareness of homelessness and homelessness prevention will continue as part of our Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
Secondary Prevention		
30	We will, as part of the Homelessness Data Action Plan, identify COVID-19 impacts and explore appropriate actions arising from any trends.	This action is aligned to the delivery of both Action 8 (We will implement a Homelessness Data Action Plan) and Action 9 (Review of COVID-19 Reset Plan). As part of ongoing data monitoring both internally and via Homelessness Local Area Groups the Housing Executive continues to monitor the impacts of the pandemic on homelessness trends.
31	We will target homelessness prevention initiatives to those at most risk, such as young people, including former care leavers, victims of domestic abuse, those with offending histories, and families with intergenerational repeat homelessness. Prioritise funding to those projects with best proven outcomes.	<p>An evaluation of the 2021/22 Homelessness Prevention Fund has been carried out. This has considered a range of data which has contributed to the delivery of the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund, including development of the 2022/23 scoring matrix, which contained the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously successfully delivered project for 2 or more years; and • Aligns with specific customer groups who are at particular risk of homelessness in order to prioritise those most at risk and those projects with best proven outcomes. <p>The Complex Lives initiative was introduced in October 2021 and development is ongoing. This project seeks to prevent homelessness and in particular repeat homelessness for some of the most complex homeless customers through a multi-agency approach.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
32	We will seek to work with health partners to develop and deliver mental health support initiatives aimed at homelessness prevention.	<p>A number of the 2022/23 Homelessness Prevention Fund projects are aimed at delivering support in relation to mental health.</p> <p>The Complex Lives 'whole system' approach to support vulnerable people, including in respect of mental health, has been under development in Belfast since October 2021. The Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) includes representatives from the Public Health Agency and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.</p> <p>Inspire Advocacy For All is a service which offers advocacy, peer support and helps to develop resilience and self-help. Inspire attended the recent Team Leader Forums in February 2023 and the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team have been liaising with Inspire to attend future Homelessness Local Area Groups to raise awareness of the service among the statutory, community and voluntary sector.</p> <p>Further work is required in respect of developing additional mental health initiatives in order to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan, and now incorporates addiction support initiatives. This action will be subject to funding.</p>
Tertiary Prevention		
33	We will explore the alignment of sustainment projects to sustain tenancies in the Private rented sector.	This action has been re-drafted in collaboration with the Tenancy Sustainment Team and will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
34	We will evaluate interventions to support access to and sustainment of tenancies in the private rented sector, including the impact of work carried out by Financial Inclusion Officers.	<p>The Housing Executive has appointed three new Financial Inclusion Managers specifically to support those who have presented as homeless. The Financial Inclusion Managers commenced working with Housing Solutions & Support Teams in December 2021.</p> <p>The aims of the Financial Inclusion Managers around homelessness prevention are to assist Housing Advisors with applicants who have presented as homeless due to financial hardship or are experiencing difficulties with financial exclusion. Applicants will be assisted to (but not exclusively):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise their income • Reduce their outgoings • Complete benefit checks to ensure applicants (both in work and out of work) are getting all benefits they are entitled to • Help with arrears • Assist with money management • Referred to other appropriate support <p>With the overall aim that they can sustain their existing housing situation and prevent homelessness.</p> <p>As of 31st March 2023 this action remains ongoing with further evaluation of the work of the Financial Inclusion Managers to continue into the Year 2 Action Plan of the Homelessness Strategy.</p>
Objective 2: Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support.		
Understanding Customer's Needs:		
35	We will link to the Experiential Evidence enabler and review all research that directly involves service users.	<p>The delivery of this action is also linked to completion of Action 4, with the review of a number of research projects. The internal report outlined subsequent recommendations for the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 Year 2 Action Plan with consideration to actions in relation to mental health and those with lived experience of homelessness.</p> <p>Following the Lived Experience Programme consultations on Tuesday 7th March 2023, in Belfast, and on Tuesday 14th March 2023 in Derry/Londonderry, it was agreed between the Housing Executive and the strategic partners that researcher Fiona Boyle (who attended both consultations) would be commissioned to write up a report based on the conversations. This report which was completed in Q1 of Year 2 provides us with a deeper understanding of customer need and will help to shape any future lived experience work.</p>
Improving Access and Inclusion:		
36	We will explore opportunities and options by which we can assist those with No Recourse to Public Funds upon the conclusion of arrangements linked to the Memorandum of Understanding.	The Housing Executive is committed to considering long term arrangements, including any requirements for legislative change, to enable support to those rough sleepers who are ineligible for housing assistance and are therefore eager to support any cross-Departmental review in this regard.

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
Flexible and responsive:		
37	We will continue to deliver the COVID-19 Reset Plan.	<p>The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation have been developed to build upon and/or progress the actions initiated throughout the COVID-19 homelessness response and which are set out in the Reset Plan. Thus meaning the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation facilitate the transition to the 'new normal' and ensure any actions not fully achieved in the Reset Plan will be progressed as business as usual activities, as applicable.</p> <p>The Project Steering Group has therefore agreed that any actions that may have been part of any Reset Plan Addendum will be a part of the above action plans and be delivered as business as usual and thus negating the need for a Reset Plan Addendum.</p>
Implementing Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation:		
38	We will implement the Year 1 actions in the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation.	<p>The Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation and Year 1 Actions has been published and can be found via this link.</p> <p>The delivery of the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation will continue into delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
39	We will develop local homelessness action plans based on analysis of local supply and demand issues; to include plans for prevention, rapid re-housing, and temporary accommodation and support provision.	<p>During Homelessness Local Area Group meetings held in May/June 2022, each group held a discussion on the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Local Area Action Plans to highlight emerging issues in the local area and how the group could tackle this over the course of the Strategy. The Homelessness Strategy Team updated the Terms of Reference and Local Area Action Plans based on initial feedback and it was agreed to hold workshops with further review of Local Area Action Plans in September 2022.</p> <p>Following on from initial feedback the ToR and Local Area Action Plans were updated based on the overall discussions and feedback with further review to take place. During meetings in February/March 2023, the Homelessness Strategy Team outlined the changes that have been made to the action plans and how they reflect the Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027, emerging issues and trends, and how they have been developed to outline what is achievable by each of the groups. The actions and objectives within the Action Plan are reflective of ongoing challenges in the area and the issues that affect both clients and service providers across the homelessness sector. Some of the issues listed include recognising the impact of the cost of living crisis, the increasingly complex needs of service users and challenges that exist due to a lack of housing supply and affordability.</p> <p>The groups agreed that the Local Area Action Plans highlight the work of the groups and are based on collaboration, sharing information on services, raising awareness of homelessness in the local area and homelessness prevention.</p> <p>The updated Local Area Actions plans and Terms of Reference were agreed and ratified by the Homelessness Local Area Groups.</p> <p>In addition, local supply and demand for housing and temporary accommodation is regularly discussed, with relevant data circulated and reviewed during each quarterly meeting relevant to the area. The local Housing Executive Teams discuss ongoing challenges in the respective area, the collaborative efforts with local support services with a view to highlighting best practice and good news stories. Regular updates are also provided on the efforts to secure additional temporary accommodation units in the local area.</p> <p>A variation of this action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
Objective 3 - Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation.		
Housing Supply:		
40	We will seek to expand Housing First provision.	<p>Over the course of 2022/23 work on delivery of this action has broadened to include work coordinated by a Task and Finish Group which aims to develop an interdepartmental approach to scaling up the provision of the Housing First model in Northern Ireland for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Task and Finish Group is establishing a framework that will involve the Housing Executive, DfC, DoJ and DoH in the development of a business case.</p> <p>The group will explore a range of key strands necessary to enabling the model, set out the steps required to put these in place, and provide the collective commitment to deliver these. Additionally there are ongoing discussions with Housing Policy to explore the option of Housing Executive Housing First tenancies in respect of utilising Rule 84.</p> <p>Further to the collaborative work outlined above the Housing Executive issued a procurement exercise in March 2023 that sought to establish a feasibility study on the expansion of Housing First in Northern Ireland with a researcher subsequently appointed. This work will support the development of a business case on the wider expansion of Housing First in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The ongoing development to expand Housing First in Northern Ireland will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
Support		
41	We will evaluate and extend (subject to a successful evaluation of a pilot) the Complex Lives project.	<p>The Complex Lives Project has been in place since October 2021. The whole system approach is about bringing the breadth of agencies and services across housing, health, criminal justice, employment and skills and other support together in a shared, agreed, and sustainable way of working to engage with people and improve outcomes. This includes all sectors, recognising especially the vital role that statutory and community and voluntary sectors play.</p> <p>Representatives from Belfast City Council attended the Central Homelessness Forum in November 2022 to provide an overview and the recent developments of the Complex Lives Project.</p> <p>By working together through a multi-disciplinary team approach, the aim of the project is to secure suitable accommodation and reliable wrap around support plans and in turn generate learning for the longer - term whole system approach. This is a unique opportunity to support some of the most vulnerable individuals into more positive and secure lifestyles. Further to the successful internal evaluation of the Complex Lives approach a business case was developed to fund additional capacity of the Complex Lives Project, with additional funding towards Intensive Support Workers. The Multi-Disciplinary Team is well established and meets on a weekly basis. The Housing Executive has committed to further developing the Complex Lives approach in 2023/2024.</p> <p>The ongoing work carried out by the Complex Lives Project will continue into the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
42	We will seek to support schemes focused on tenancy sustainment, such as Home Starter Packs.	<p>Housing Executive Home Starter Packs continue to be provided by Homeless Connect. The Home Starter Pack contains a number of household items to help those transitioning into settled accommodation. Over the course of 2022/23 there was a total of 4,264 Home Starter Packs distributed to those households experiencing homelessness and moved into a new social housing tenancy.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2023
Community Integration:		
43	We will work with the Housing Community Network and those Community Groups with whom they work in order to promote community integration.	This action has been brought forward to the Year 2 Action Plan.
Annual Progress Report		
44	We will publish an Annual Progress Report which outlines actions in delivering Year 5 of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22.	The Year 4 and Year 5 Annual Progress Report has been published alongside the Year 1 Annual Progress Report of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.

Year 2 Action Plan

The Housing Executive published the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 on the 23rd March 2022 alongside its Year 1 Action Plan. During the first year of the Homelessness Strategy some of our key achievements have been;

- We delivered the fourth year of the Homelessness Prevention Fund, which supported 34 projects in 2022/23.
- Raised awareness of homelessness during Homelessness Awareness Week through a range of events and activities organised by our Homelessness Local Area Groups.
- Developed and carried out research including, Health and Homelessness Research alongside Queens University and Business Services Organisation.
- Engaged with and learned from those with lived experience of homelessness to improve our services and aid in the development of a Lived Experience Programme.

We have worked together with our partners across the sector through the various structures, including the Central Homelessness Forum and our Homelessness Local Area Groups throughout the first year of the Homelessness Strategy with our vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' at the forefront of all of our efforts.

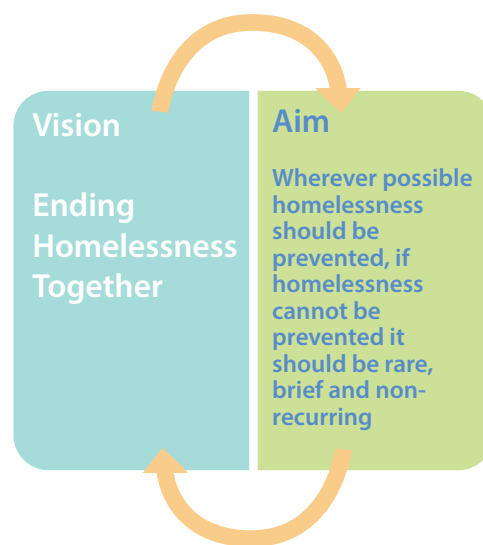
As the Homelessness Strategy enters into its second year, the development of the Year 2 Action Plan has been guided by listening to those with lived experience of homelessness, our partners and the overall achievements and actions delivered over the course of 2022/23. By working together with our Lived Experience Groups, we have included the following;

- Action 29 - 'We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the Education sector.'
- Action 40 - 'We will support the development of the Tenancy Sustainment team's 'Warm Handover Protocol' for Housing Advisors to identify clients in need of a managed case handover to their Patch Manager and possibly to the Patch Financial Inclusion Manager.'

It is important that we continue to build on the work from Year 1 with those who have lived experience of homelessness and our partners, which leads to the continuation of the following actions;

- Action 14 - 'We will continue to work with our partners to develop a Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. This work will seek to complete the outline of a Lived Experience Programme by March 2024, with a view to commencing implementation in 2024/2025.'
- Action 15 - 'As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2023/2024.'

The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 continues to be guided by the development of annual action plans that will support the Housing Executive and our partners in achieving our vision, aims and objectives.



Vision and Aim

The vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' and aim of 'Wherever possible homelessness should be prevented, if homelessness cannot be prevented it should be rare, brief and non-recurring' is supported by three key objectives, each with priority actions that will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Principles, Objectives and Enablers

At the core of this strategy there are a number of guiding principles that will underpin our approach to both the development and delivery of homelessness services throughout its lifespan. These principles, which are outlined below, have been co-produced with the wider homelessness sector and will be incorporated across each theme to achieve our vision of ‘Ending Homelessness Together’.

This strategy has been developed around three key objectives:

- Prioritise homelessness prevention;
- Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support;
- Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation.

The Homelessness Strategy will continue to evolve based on experiential evidence, emerging pressures and priorities and it is our intention to work towards the defined success criteria outlined in this document by developing the ‘enablers’ and pulling all levers available to us. These enablers are as critical to the success of the strategy as the delivery of the objectives themselves.

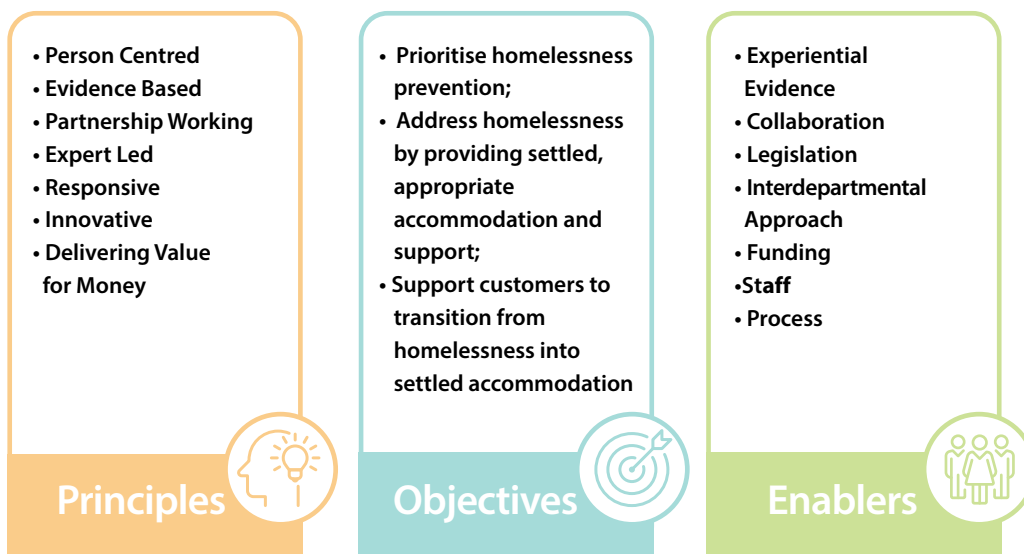
Year 2 Action Plan

With the enablers being critical to the success of the strategy, the Year 2 actions have once again been developed around the enablers and the three objectives. The table below outlines actions that the Housing Executive and our partners will seek to deliver over the course of 2023/24.

As part of the consultation on the draft Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 a number of stakeholders noted the need for an easy read version of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and this action plan seeks to provide a concise summary of what we and our partners will do to address homelessness in Northern Ireland.

The Housing Executive recognises the funding challenges associated with delivering some of the actions outlined in the Action Plan below, and therefore to help our partners and those with lived experience of homelessness to understand the challenges that the Housing Executive has in delivering some of these actions, it is important that we highlight the actions that can be and will be delivered, but also the actions that we would like to deliver but are subject to funding. To reflect this each of the actions under the enablers and the objectives have been broken into the two following sections;

- Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan - This section includes actions that can be completed without the need for additional funding and/or resources. It is therefore anticipated that delivery of these actions have minimal associated risks.
- Actions subject to securing funding - This section includes actions that we would like to deliver during 2023/24 however, they are reliant on securing funding and therefore there are associated delivery risks.



Year 2 Action Plan

Action	Enablers
Experiential Evidence:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
1	<p>We will continue to carry out independent research on a feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland. This research will assist with the scaling up of Housing First and create a Northern Ireland scale model including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing; • Property requirements; • Timescales and; • Associated costs and comparative analysis with existing portfolio, identifying value for money potential as appropriate.
2	<p>We will continue to work with the Centre for Public Health (QUB) and Business Services Organisation as part of the ongoing investigation, 'Using administrative data to better understand the antecedents, needs and outcomes of people who are homeless in Northern Ireland'.</p> <p>Furthermore, we will explore the potential to carry out similar investigations using other data sets for client groups who may be adversely affected by homelessness.</p>
3	We will evaluate the delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Fund 2022/23, and where appropriate use lessons from this evaluation to guide future preventative work.
4	We will work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to develop 'The Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'. This will consider how we make best use of data across the homelessness sector in Northern Ireland with initial consideration to be given to Housing Executive data. As part of this work with CHI we will also explore the delivery of a Value For Money exercise in respect of temporary accommodation.
5	We will update on progress as to the ongoing review of Housing Executive policies and procedures relevant to homelessness.
6	We will publish a report on the Street Needs Audits carried out in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry.
7	We will review the Chronic Homelessness criteria after one year of data collection on the Housing Executive's Housing Management System.
	Actions subject to securing funding
8	We will commission independent research that seeks to provide a comparison of homelessness funding between Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions.
9	We will commission independent research on local efforts to address chronic homelessness.
Collaboration:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
10	We will continue to work on the development of protocols and Data Sharing Agreements with partner agencies across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, including the Complex Lives initiative which will facilitate the development of interagency working and further embed the multidisciplinary approach to addressing the needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness.
11	We will routinely communicate performance, budgetary and trend information to stakeholders in user friendly formats.
12	We will continue to implement the homelessness Local Area Action Plans which were developed as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. A key focus of the actions plans is to deliver the vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' at a local level.
13	We will work with key partners to develop an Options Paper on the implementation of a Housing Advice Quality Standard for frontline staff offering housing advice in Northern Ireland.

Action	Enablers
	Actions subject to securing funding
14	We will continue to work with our partners to develop a Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. This work will seek to complete the outline of a Lived Experience Programme by March 2024, with a view to commencing implementation in 2024/2025.
15	As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2023/2024.
Legislation:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
16	We will continue to liaise with the Department for Communities in identifying and advocating for potential legislative amendments, including considering the benefits of additional duties such as co-operation and prevention.
17	We will continue to support the implementation of the Fundamental Review of Allocations, particularly any actions relevant to homelessness.
Interdepartmental Approach:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
18	We will liaise with and support the Department for Communities in the development and delivery of the Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan.
Funding:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
19	We will support others in accessing funding opportunities. This will involve supporting and publicising those schemes currently delivered by the Community Foundation Northern Ireland, along with relevant schemes that the homelessness sector may be able to access.
20	We will support effective commissioning of services to prioritise funding via structures such as the Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee.
Staff:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
21	We will continue to provide opportunities for staff to input to Homelessness research.
22	We will build upon the collaborative co-location of services and case management approach developed through projects such as the Belfast Complex Lives Project.
	Actions subject to securing funding
23	We will explore options to deliver a rolling training programme for staff across the sector to equip staff to deliver psychologically informed responses.
24	We will consider staff training needs to reflect development in legislation such as the Domestic Abuse Civil Proceedings Act and the impact of this legislation on the nature and demand on homelessness services.
Process:	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
25	We will continue to develop specification for digital solutions to support implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, provision of bed availability information, producing meaningful measures and data analysis.

Action	Objectives
Objective 1 - Prioritise homelessness prevention	
	Actions subject to securing funding
26	We will seek to continue the Homelessness Prevention Fund.
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
Primary Prevention:	
27	We will target Homelessness Prevention via provision of awareness sessions to the Community Sector.
28	We will seek to deliver a public awareness campaign to shift mind-sets towards, and raise awareness of homelessness prevention. This will include support and promotion of Northern Ireland's Homelessness Awareness Week.
	Actions subject to securing funding
29	We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the Education sector.
Secondary Prevention:	
30	We will target homelessness prevention initiatives to those at most risk and prioritise funding to projects most strategically aligned.
31	We will seek to work with health partners to develop mental health and addiction support initiatives aimed at homelessness prevention.
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan
Tertiary Prevention:	
32	We will consider potential for alignment between homelessness prevention services, tenancy sustainment and financial inclusion activities - including funding of pilots and shared initiatives through engagement with relevant policy areas, functions and internal steering groups.
33	We will implement a homelessness prevention definition within the Housing Executive and we will review the outcomes of homelessness prevention activities in order to support staff in prevention work.

Action	Objectives
Objective 2 - Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support	
Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan	
Understanding Customer's Needs:	
34	We will continue to embed the Common Assessment Framework as the main tool to assess and record needs on an ongoing basis and work with the homelessness sector to further refine understanding and terminology in relation to customer support needs.
Improving Access and Inclusion & Flexible and Responsive:	
35	We will work with all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies in supporting households who are refugees and/or displaced from their home countries for reasons such as war. For example, those supported via the various Ukrainian Assistance Schemes.
Implementing Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation:	
36	We will implement the Year 2 actions in the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation.
Objective 3 - Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation	
Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan	
Housing Supply:	
37	We will seek to expand Housing First provision, including supporting the delivery of the Housing First Task and Finish Group.
Support:	
38	We will continue to support the delivery of the Complex Lives Project.
39	We will continue to support schemes focused on tenancy sustainment, such as Home Starter Packs.
40	We will support the development of the Tenancy Sustainment team's 'Warm Handover Protocol' for Housing Advisors to identify clients in need of a managed case handover to their Patch Manager and possibly to the Patch Financial Inclusion Manager.
Community Integration:	
41	We will work with the Housing Community Network and those Community Groups with whom they work in order to promote community integration.
Annual Progress Report:	
42	We will publish an Annual Progress Report, which outlines actions in delivering Year 1 of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.

Appendix

Appendix One - Homelessness Data

Table 1 - Presenters by Reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/family dispute	Marital/relationship breakdown	Domestic abuse	Loss of rented accommodation	No accom in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accom 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
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
2019/20	3,650	1,683	1,147	2,327	1,304	335	4,239	361	44	89	46	1,415	88	74	16,802
2020/21	4,166	1,752	1,222	1,689	1,012	286	3,576	366	63	37	53	1,639	81	49	15,991
2021/22	3,606	1,611	1,110	2,463	966	180	3,781	311	30	47	45	1,435	47	126	15,758
2022/23	3,505	1,559	1,128	2,892	1,107	167	3,732	315	60	56	38	1,221	56	129	15,965

Table 2 - Presenters by Households

Household Type	Single males				Single females				Couples	Families	Pensioner H'holds	Undefined	Total
	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total					
2018/19	66	1,429	4,353	5,848	89	1,252	1,874	3,215	794	5,843	2,502	0	18,202
2019/20	68	1,322	4,245	5,635	90	1,195	1,722	3,007	751	5,093	2,237	79	16,802
2020/21	50	1,457	4,312	5,819	84	1,285	1,673	3,042	687	4,595	1,802	46	15,991
2021/22	46	1,233	4,096	5,375	50	1,133	1,623	2,806	658	4,733	2,090	96	15,758
2022/23	39	1,042	4,170	5,251	42	1,063	1,585	2,690	658	5,014	2200	152	15,965

Table 3 - Top Three Reasons (Presenters)

Presenters Top 3 Reasons			
Year	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Loss of Rented Accommodation
2018/19	25.2%	21.4%	15.3%
2019/20	25.2%	21.7%	13.8%
<i>NB - Top 3 reasons changed during 2020/21 and 2021/22 as noted below</i>			
Year	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Marital/Relationship breakdown
2020/21	26.0%	22.4%	11.0%
Year	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Sharing Breakdown/Family Dispute	Loss Of Rented Accommodation
2021/22	23.9%	22.8%	15.6%
2022/23	23.4%	22.0%	18.1%

Table 4 - Acceptances by Reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/family dispute	Marital/relationship breakdown	Domestic abuse	Loss of rented accommodation	No accom in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accom 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
2018/19	2,307	929	1,124	1,681	710	374	3,955	236	38	65	31	931	131	12,512
2019/20	2,135	846	1,088	1,375	707	255	3,606	240	24	51	27	899	70	11,323
2020/21	2,173	748	1,101	985	430	256	2,794	217	30	21	26	1,067	41	9,889
2021/22	1,956	734	1,006	1,586	481	171	3,096	190	19	15	22	830	29	10,135
2022/23	1,929	704	1,061	1,808	561	212	3,099	196	33	26	27	653	40	10,349

Table 5 - Acceptances by Households

Household Type	Single males				Single females				Couples	Families	Pensioner H'holds	Undefined	Total
	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total					
2018/19	33	655	2373	3,061	53	828	1,351	2,232	545	4,535	2,139	0	12,512
2019/20	32	666	2248	2,946	44	776	1,198	2,018	492	3,979	1,888	0	11,323
2020/21	17	594	2,096	2,707	36	781	1,092	1,909	440	3,451	1,374	8	9,889
2021/22	27	559	2,045	2,631	21	706	1,105	1,832	406	3,643	1,621	2	10,135
2022/23	17	464	2,078	2,559	26	697	1,055	1,778	433	3,838	1,729	12	10,349

Table 6 - Top Three Reasons (Acceptances)

Year	Presenters Top 3 Reasons		
	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Loss of Rented Accommodation
2018/19	31.6%	18.4%	13.4%
2019/20	31.8%	18.8%	12.1%
<i>NB - Top 3 reasons changed during 2020/21 and 2021/22 as noted below</i>			
Year	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Marital/Relationship breakdown
2020/21	28.3%	22.0%	11.1%
Year	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Sharing Breakdown/Family Dispute	Loss Of Rented Accommodation
2021/22	30.5%	19.3%	15.6%
2022/23	30.0%	18.6%	17.5%

Table 7 - Presentations by Council Area

Council	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,336	1,201	1,353	1,199	1,341
Ards & North Down	1,565	1,276	1,276	1,228	1,233
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1,253	1,099	1,144	1,127	1,217
Belfast	5,747	5,270	4,573	4,553	4,433
Causeway Coast & Glens	1,001	949	885	1,064	1,052
Derry & Strabane	2079	1,994	2,084	2,049	2,073
Fermanagh & Omagh	672	669	609	563	614
Lisburn & Castlereagh	946	1,034	845	894	875
Mid & East Antrim	1,516	1,427	1,298	1,319	1,296
Mid Ulster	843	669	659	685	749
Newry, Mourne & Down	1,244	1,214	1,265	1,077	1,082
Total	18,202	16,802	15,991	15,758	15,965

Table 8 - Acceptances by Council Area

Council	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,052	936	952	873	1,012
Ards & North Down	1,156	947	931	880	898
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	790	694	608	606	641
Belfast	3,790	3,325	2,686	2,820	2,683
Causeway Coast & Glens	689	690	579	746	758
Derry & Strabane	1,315	1,222	1,146	1,212	1,305
Fermanagh & Omagh	467	467	353	366	414
Lisburn & Castlereagh	716	756	552	569	568
Mid & East Antrim	1,088	1,051	928	895	853
Mid Ulster	542	388	362	419	466
Newry, Mourne & Down	907	847	792	749	751
Total	12,512	11,323	9,889	10,135	10,349

Table 9 - Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Presentations)

Reason	Accomm Not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Over-crowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
2018/19	719	193	460	227	162	2,548	162	117	4,588
2019/20	22	233	572	260	169	2,660	168	155	4,239
2020/21	0	190	628	194	206	2,028	148	182	3,576
2021/22	2	160	636	193	199	2,261	162	168	3,781
2022/23	0	240	522	189	171	2,243	151	216	3,732

**It should be noted that the introduction of sub-categories for Accommodation Not Reasonable in 2018/19 resulted in a subsequent decrease in the use of Accommodation Not Reasonable to the point that it is no longer used.*

Table 10 - Intimidation Breakdown (Presentations)

Reason	Intimidation - ASB	Intimidation - Disability	Intimidation - Paramilitary	Intimidation - Racial	Intimidation- Sectarian	Intimidation - Sexual Orientation	Total
2018/19	60	3	377	15	19	7	481
2019/20	51	0	246	18	14	6	335
2020/21	27	1	236	6	9	7	286
2021/22	17	1	142	4	14	2	180
2022/23	27	0	124	6	10	0	167

Table 11 - Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Acceptances)

Reason	Accomm Not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Over-crowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
2018/19	269	104	468	203	140	2,540	130	101	3,955
2019/20	0	134	541	195	141	2,375	96	124	3,606
2020/21	0	91	561	146	146	1,647	72	131	2,794
2021/22	1	85	571	133	156	1,902	98	150	3,096
2022/23	0	140	494	118	143	1,945	82	177	3,099

**It should be noted that the introduction of sub-categories for Accommodation Not Reasonable in 2018/19 resulted in a subsequent decrease in the use of Accommodation Not Reasonable to the point that it is no longer used.*

Table 12 - Intimidation Breakdown (Acceptances)

Reason	Intimidation - ASB	Intimidation - Disability	Intimidation - Paramilitary	Intimidation - Racial	Intimidation- Sectarian	Intimidation - Sexual Orientation	Total
2018/19	49	2	297	7	12	7	374
2019/20	13	0	212	13	11	6	255
2020/21	12	1	230	4	5	4	256
2021/22	9	0	149	4	6	3	171
2022/23	10	0	194	2	6	0	212

Table 13 - Acceptances by Priority Need

Year	Dependent Children	Emergency	Pregnant	Violence	Vulnerable	Total
2018/19	3,516	63	454	1,591	6,888	12,512
2019/20	2,992	36	384	1,634	6,277	11,323
2020/21	2,702	95	377	1,644	5,071	9,889
2021/22	2,811	27	385	1,490	5,422	10,135
2022/23	3,034	39	330	1,549	5,397	10,349

Table 14 - Social Housing Allocations

Year	Total Number of Allocations	Allocations to Full Duty Applicants	% of allocations to Full Duty Applicants
2018/19	7,696	6,949	90.3%
2019/20	6,654	6,423	96.5%
2020/21	5,844	5,295	90.6%
2021/22	6,010	5,379	89.5%
2022/23	5,796	5,293	91.3%

Table 15 - Number of Instances of Repeat Homelessness

Year	Number
2018/19	1,088
2019/20	1,101
2020/21	1,188
2021/22	1,100
2022/23	1,075

Appendix Two - Temporary Accommodation

Table 16 - Average Length of Stay in Temporary Accommodation

The table below outlines the average length of stay in temporary accommodation in days by type of accommodation

Year	Bespoke Facility of Temporary Accom	Crash: Voluntary Sector	Single Lets	DIME*	Voluntary Sector Hostels	Housing Executive Hostels	Hotel/ B&B	Total
2018/19	N/A	N/A	437	128	231	208	18	281
2019/20	N/A	N/A	451	135	233	216	36	275
2020/21	32	20	443	91	160	219	14	175
2021/22	76	63	541	43	169	277	21	217
2022/23	85	42	568	27	202	287	28	228

*DIME refers to Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation

Table 17 - Placements in Temporary Accommodation

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total	3,354	4,527	9,752	9,265	10,253

Appendix Three - Financial Investment

Table 18 - Financial Investment in Homelessness

	Temporary Accom	Homelessness Services	Voluntary Sector Funding	Supporting People	Private Rental Sector Access Scheme	Misc	COVID-19 Funding	Total
	Top Up and Supporting People Costs	Furniture Storage & Taxi	Homelessness Services	Floating Support for homelessness projects & schemes	Facilitate creation and sustainment of private sector tenancies	Misc		
2018/19	£25.8m	£1.8m	£2.3m	£6.0m	£360k	N/A	N/A	£36.2m
2019/20	£28.2m	£1.8m	£3.35m	£6.1m	£10k	£100k	N/A	£39.6m
2020/21	£29.2m	£1.6m	£3.6m	£6.1m	£46k	£43k	£6.6m	£47.2m
2021/22	£29.0m	£2.0m	£4.4m	£6.3m	£0	£56k	£14.3m	£56.1m
2022/23	£41.7m	£2.4m	£5.2m	£7.0m	£0	£173k	£900k	£55.6m

The following caveats are applicable to the above table:

- Figures above are rounded to one decimal place which may result in overall total not aligning to figures of various funding streams
- COVID funding represents all costs across the programme that were funded through COVID specific funding and therefore include temporary accommodation costs, furniture storage etc.

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