

Ending Homelessness Together

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Homelessness Strategy **2022-27**



HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2022-2027 - YEAR 2 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Housing
Executive

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Foreword

I am delighted to present the Year 2 Annual Progress Report of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. Its publication comes at a time of ongoing demand for homelessness services, and this increased need is being met through excellent partnerships across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is hugely grateful to the dedication and commitment of frontline professionals working in the homelessness field, and colleagues across a range of organisations who work with empathy and care across Northern Ireland. Despite this increase in demand, we remain committed to meeting our legal obligations; to ensuring that we reduce as much as possible the use of hotel and B&B accommodation for homeless children and ensuring that our temporary accommodation is high quality. Most importantly, the strategy's aim that homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurrent, remains our guiding principle.

At the time of publication of this report, I am aware that we will be reaching the mid-point of the five-year delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and I am optimistic that much of the foundations developed in years 1 and 2 can be built upon in order to deliver progress on a number of key priorities despite the continued challenges in respect of funding. Over the course of 2024/25, I look forward to the publication of a feasibility study on the expansion of Housing First in Northern Ireland, an intention that was much welcomed in our consultation on the strategy and a service that is vital in meeting the increasingly complex needs amongst many of those experiencing homelessness.

There is no doubt that we must build upon previous work to deliver a Lived Experience Programme, and 2024/25 will be a crucial year in this respect. Whilst acknowledging that funding will provide challenges on provision of a programme, I am determined that those who have experienced homelessness should have a role in shaping the design and delivery of services.

On publishing a strategy, I am mindful that the success of any strategy will be defined by its ability to deliver meaningful actions. In this regard, I am delighted that the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 will be supported by over 100 actions across our Year 3 Action Plan, the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation, the Domestic Abuse Action Plan, and our Youth Homelessness Action Plan. These actions have been shaped by a range of individuals and organisations at various levels across the sector, but crucially we have ensured that we have reacted and listened to those with operational experience and those with lived experience.

Despite the external funding environment, the vast majority of these actions will be delivered using existing resources. These are supported by collaboration with our statutory and voluntary partners to maximise the efficient use of resources. In the context of a waiting list of almost 30,000 households who are statutorily homeless and the provision of over 11,000 placements in temporary accommodation during 2023/24, I am mindful that we rely significantly on a range of organisations to support the most vulnerable households across Northern Ireland.



In this regard, I consider our vision of Ending Homelessness Together as being something that is both crucial and evidenced throughout the delivery of this strategy. Whilst mindful that current trends highlight increasing pressures on the homelessness system, these pressures have been met with a steadfast approach and daily evidence of organisations and individuals working together to deliver services that have the individual or household experiencing homelessness at their heart. We look forward to working with you all over the course of 2024/25 in continuing this work!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grainia Long". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Grainia Long
Chief Executive

Introduction

The Housing Executive is identified in the Housing (NI) Order (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 2023/24 in meeting this duty, and 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 key impact of a range of challenges over the past four years is evidenced by the continued and sustained increase in demand for temporary accommodation. The table below details placements over the past five years, with a percentage comparison with the pre-pandemic total provided for each year from 2020/21 onwards.

Year	Total Number of Placements	Percentage Increase from 2019/20
2019/20	4,527	N/A
2020/21	9,752	115.4%
2021/22	9,265	104.7%
2022/23	10,253	126.5%
2023/24	11,368	151.1%

The above demand has been driven by a range of external factors ranging from the initial impact of the pandemic, to the significant increase in utilities contributing to a cost of living crisis, with these factors exacerbated by wider economic challenges and an associated period of recession.

There are also increasing challenges with the complexity of households presenting as homeless with mental health and addictions, continuing to be flagged by our partners across the sector. This results in challenges in sustaining both permanent and temporary accommodation, and highlights why the vision of Ending Homelessness Together is absolutely vital as the Housing Executive is reliant on external partners to assist with the many non-accommodation based issues that are impacting upon the current homelessness situation in Northern Ireland.

As was the case with 2022/23, 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.

In the context of the increasing complexity of households presenting as homeless and current budget challenges, it is vital to highlight the impact that homeless services have on savings across other public services. An equality impact assessment by the Department for Communities on the 2024/45 budget, published in June 2024, highlighted the impact of budgetary challenges and noted *'There will be a disproportionate impact on health and justice services by people who are genuinely roofless and desperate.'*

Whilst this report presents a very challenging overview of the current homelessness challenges in Northern Ireland, it is important to note that we are not unique when compared to neighbouring jurisdictions. Many, if not all, of the issues noted in this report are consistent with challenges faced by local authorities, with the demand for temporary accommodation which is a constant challenge regardless of location.

Accountability

In response to feedback from our governance structures, the Housing Executive has introduced a RAG¹ status for each of the 42 actions delivered during 2023/24. Whilst the RAG status noted that the majority of actions are green, the Housing Executive recognises that this reflects actions within our control and therefore is not reflective of the many external factors which impact upon homelessness demand in Northern Ireland. At the conclusion of the Year 2 Action Plan, actions were categorised as following:

Red – 5

Amber – 2

Green – 35

There are challenges such as housing supply, and increasing complexity of individuals, which will not be reflected in many of these actions, however the Housing Executive seeks to collaborate with partner agencies in influencing those issues which are beyond the remit of this strategy. This will include working with the Department for Communities to support the delivery of the Inter-Departmental Homelessness Action Plan. The Inter-Departmental Homelessness Action Plan has been developed to complement the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. It focuses on addressing gaps in those non-accommodation services that have the most impact, or have the potential to more positively impact, on the lives and life chances of people who are homeless and those who are most at risk of homelessness.

¹ A RAG status is a traffic light system which defines progress on actions, with RAG being an acronym for Red, Amber, Green.

The Year Ahead

This report concludes with our Year 3 Action Plan. Future iterations of the Annual Progress Report will also include updates on the Youth Homelessness Action Plan and the Domestic Abuse Action Plan, both of which will be published in 2024/25.

As was the case with our Year 2 Action Plan, 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

Whilst a later section of this report provides a summary of all 42 actions in our Year 2 Action Plan, this section provides additional detail on a number of the key achievements. Some of these actions, such as work to develop the provision of Housing First, were highlighted as key priorities during our public consultation in developing the strategy, whilst others such as work to improve homelessness awareness have evolved in response to feedback from those with lived experience.

Action 1 - We will commission independent research on a feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland

Over the course of 2023/24, the Housing Executive has been working with an independent researcher in the delivery of research around the practicability of a Housing First approach in Northern Ireland. The Housing Executive have sought to replicate the Housing First Feasibility Study for the Liverpool City Region, 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;

- 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;
- The delivery of this project has been guided by a Research Advisory Group which brought together key sectoral representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies over the course of 2023/24.

The evolution of this action is reflected in Action 1 of the Year 3 Action Plan which commits to the publication of independent research on the feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland. Upon publication, we will explore the development of further actions arising from the recommendations. We will continue to explore all available options to assist with development and implementation of Housing First for Northern Ireland.

Action 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.

The Housing Executive and the Centre for Homelessness Impact have continued to work closely together as part of the Year 2 Action Plan to develop the following outcomes:

- 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.

The delivery of this action was guided by initial engagement with sectoral partners in a workshop co-hosted by the Housing Executive and Centre for Homelessness Impact on 3rd March 2023. Following this workshop, and over the course of 2023/24, the Centre for Homelessness Impact have been developing the ‘Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland’ together with the Homelessness Strategy Team.

Action 6 - We will publish a report on the Street Needs Audits carried out in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry

The Street Needs Audit was carried out in three 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.

Due to the reported levels of street activity in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, the audit took place over a 6 week period, commencing 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.

Over the course of 2023/24 there have been a number of Steering Group meetings to allow the groups to discuss the qualitative data, demographics, findings of the audit and street activity with all representatives. Collaboration has been key in this report, and this is evidenced in the recommendations which were shaped by the range of statutory and voluntary partners who sit on the Steering Groups.

The Steering Groups consist of representatives from local Housing Solutions teams, District Council, the Public Health Agency, Health and Social Care Trusts, Police Service of Northern Ireland and Belfast Complex Lives Team.

The final report was completed as part of the Year 2 Action Plan and the evolution of this action is represented in Action 8 of the Year 3 Action Plan. This action commits the Housing Executive to exploring ways in which we can address the themes outlined in the Street Needs Audit Report, published as part of the Year 2 Action Plan. The Housing Executive recognises that many of the findings of the Street Needs Audit relate to non-accommodation based issues and it is for that reason, that the action in Year 3 seeks to explore ways in which we can engage with partners, particularly health, in addressing the findings of the report.

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.

Following on from the 'Experts by Experience' consultations, which took place in March 2023, an independent researcher who was present at both sessions drafted 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.

In July 2023, the Homelessness Strategy Team issued a thank you letter to all participants with a copy of the report included in this correspondence. The email thanked individuals for their time, acknowledging the expertise in the room and committed to continuing to explore the development of a Lived Experience Programme.

The Homelessness Strategy Team have been working together with partners including Housing Rights and Homeless Connect to continue the process of developing a Lived Experience Programme. A paper was submitted to the Executive Team during September 2023 which summarised all of the work delivered regarding Lived Experience to date. The paper noted the continuation of the Lived Experience Groups during 2023/24.

The Homelessness Strategy Team have been working alongside key partners to commence a Lived Experience Programme in 2024/25 as per the commitment in Action 17 of the Year 3 Action Plan which notes we will continue work on the further development of our Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out within our Year 1 and 2 Action Plans. We will seek to implement and begin delivery of our Lived Experience Programme in 2024/2025.

The Housing Executive have been working with Housing Rights and Homeless Connect, whilst also seeking to utilise relationships developed as part of the Homewards project to develop an options paper to guide delivery of a Lived Experience Programme. The delivery of any Lived Experience Programme in 2024/25 recognises that such a programme will have to be delivered within a difficult funding environment.

Action 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.

Homelessness Awareness Week is a week of events aimed to raise the public's awareness of homelessness across Northern Ireland, and seeks to challenge stereotypes surrounding

homelessness, highlight the work of the sector and aims to build links between services, service users and the public.

To build on the success of Homelessness Awareness Week 2022, the Housing Executive worked to develop a communications plan that supported the overall sectoral approach to Homelessness Awareness Week. This was to ensure appropriate media coverage of all relevant activities happening across Northern Ireland, with the aim to promote the positive work carried out by the Housing Executive, all Homelessness Local Area Groups, alongside our relevant partners.

Homelessness Awareness Week took place from Monday 4th December to Sunday 10th December 2023.

There was a variety of events across the week, which were organised by all Homelessness Local Area Groups and ranged from coffee mornings, raising donations, volunteering, advice clinics, open days, meeting the teams, podcasts, videos created and released with those sharing their experience of homelessness, and those outlining their roles and the support that they provide.

In addition to events organised by Homelessness Local Area Groups, several Local Area Teams organised events including a coffee morning, a bake-off competition, and a big breakfast to raise monetary and food donations.

Following on from a successful communications campaign in 2022, a multi-channel communications campaign was designed, in collaboration with partners in the homelessness sector.

The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of homelessness in Northern Ireland, challenge stereotypes of homelessness and promote the ongoing work of Housing Executive and partners to 'turn the tide' of homelessness.

The campaign included an extensive week-long social media campaign across Facebook, Instagram and X, media promotion of events held in local areas, a feature media article on youth homelessness, photography and videos highlighting partnership work, lived experience and the Housing Executive.

The campaign achieved a total reach of 86,224 with 6,571 engagements and 11,499 video views. This compared favourably to the previous year with an increased reach of 25,724 and increased engagements of 4,934.

The Housing Executive continue to promote and raise awareness of homelessness with conversations and planning already taking place to develop a range of ideas and activities for Homelessness Awareness Week 2024.

Action 29 - We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the Education sector.

The All Party Group on Homelessness met on 26th June 2023. One part of the meeting focused on the importance of multi-agency working between Executive Departments,

statutory agencies and the voluntary sector in homelessness prevention. Raising awareness of homelessness within schools was one of the concerns raised during the discussion, with an action to seek clarification from the Department of Education, if they have a strategic plan to deliver awareness raising of homelessness in schools across Northern Ireland.

Based on this, a follow up meeting took place between the Housing Executive, Department of Education and Education Authority in November 2023. The Department and Education Authority talked through the preventive curriculum which incorporates all of the links and root causes of homelessness. The discussion also included other pieces of work that could be carried out to improve communications and relationships between local schools and local Housing Executive Offices. The Homelessness Strategy Team also linked both Communications Teams from the Housing Executive and the Department of Education to share key messaging during the year and especially during Homelessness Awareness Week 2023.

The Homelessness Strategy Team has been working alongside Action for Children in developing and arranging networking events in South Region to promote Homelessness Awareness materials circulation, presentation on Homelessness Awareness in Schools, Youth Clubs and other relevant channels. The next event is scheduled to take place in June 2024.

There has been significant engagement from our Homelessness Local Area Groups in developing methods to promote Homelessness Awareness throughout the Education Sector and very positive feedback received from the wider Homelessness Sector. This action has been carried forward to our Year 3 Action Plan.

Homelessness Data

2023/24

The following section provides an overview of key homelessness data recorded over 2023/24. 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 the overall progress of the Homelessness Strategy.

Homelessness presentations increased by 6.1% from 2022/23.

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 accommodation not reasonable, with a particular increase in the physical health and financial hardship sub-categories. There was a 16.1% increase in presentations for accommodation not reasonable from 2022/23, with this reason accounting for almost 35% of all presentations in 2023/24.

In 2023/24 there was a total of 11,368 placements in temporary accommodation, an increase of 10.9% from the previous year.

The number of single males accepted as homeless increased 22.5%, from 2,559 in 2022/23 to 3,134 in 2023/24.

Number of repeat homelessness presenters decreased by 9.3% from 2022/23.

The average length of stay in temporary accommodation increased by 5.7% in comparison to 2022/23.

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

The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 outlined that the baseline figures for these indicators will be for 2021/22, the concluding year of the Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 or the earliest year for which figures are available for any figures which are not currently published/collated.

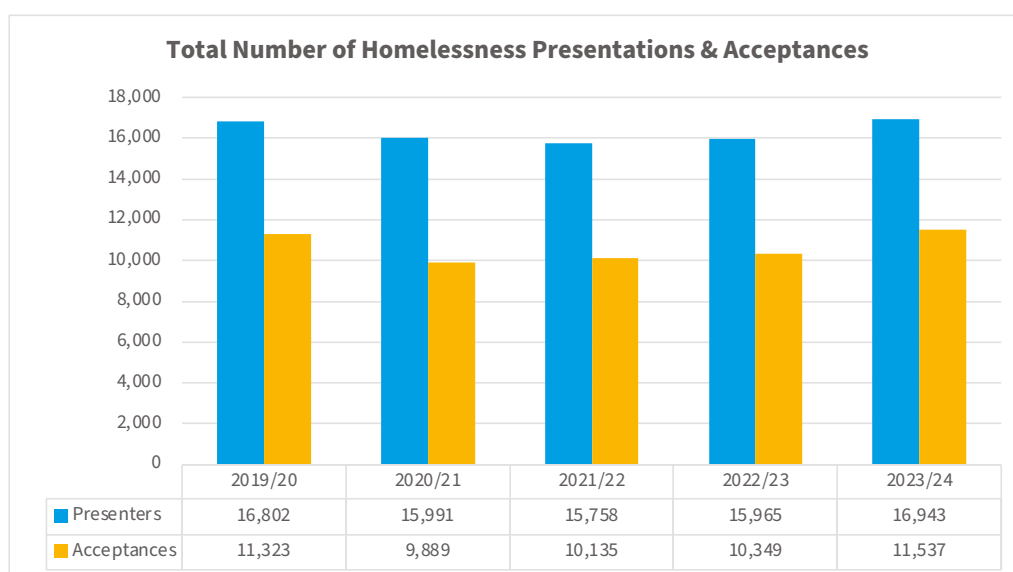
Outcome 1 - We have support that prevents us from becoming homeless

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.

The total number of 16,943 homelessness presentations in 2023/24 shows an increase of 6.1% from the 15,965 presentations 2022/23 and a 7.5% increase from the baseline of 15,758 presentations in 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 total of 11,537 acceptances for 2023/24 highlights that approximately 68.1% of all homeless presentations have been accepted as statutorily homeless by the Housing Executive. The number of acceptances in 2023/24 represents highlights a 11.5% increase from the 10,349 acceptances in 2022/23 and a 13.8% increase from the 10,135 baseline acceptances in 2021/22.



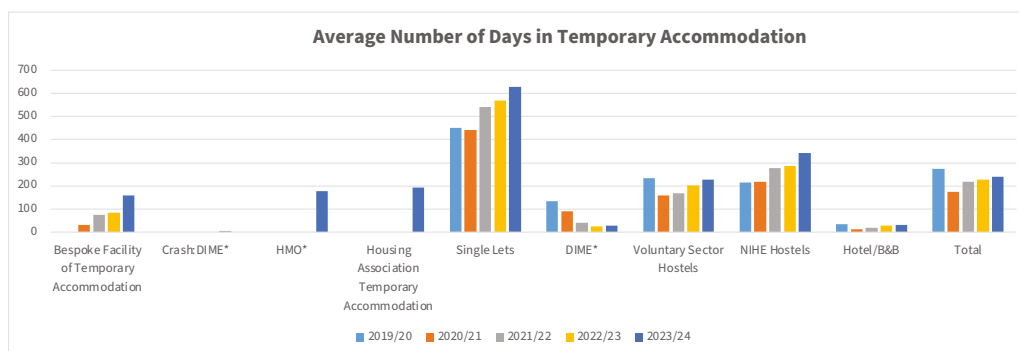
An additional indicator added for 2023/24 is the number of cases recorded as homelessness prevention. This is based on the P1E definition used by local authorities in England and represents the total number of cases prevented by the Housing Executive and Partner agencies funded by our outside agencies funding. The baseline figure for this indicator will be the 913 cases of homelessness prevention in 2023/24.

Outcome 2 – We live in suitable homes

The following graph highlights the indicator ‘average length of stay in temporary accommodation’. From 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, the average time spent in temporary accommodation was 241 days, equating to 34.4 weeks. This represents an overall increase of 5.7% from the 228 days in 2022/23 and an increase of 11.1% from the baseline of 217 days in 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. The figure of 5,159 for 2023/23 represents a 9.1% increase.



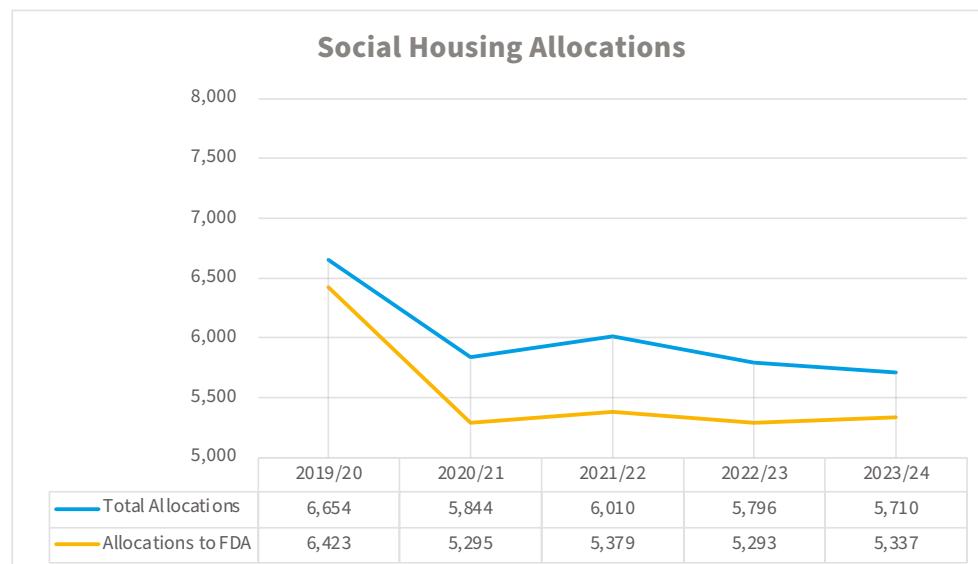
***DIME refers to Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation**

***HMO refers to House in Multiple Occupation**

Please note from April 2024, the reporting of average length of stay in temporary accommodation now includes three new scheme descriptions, 'HMO', 'Crash: DIME' and 'Housing Association Temporary Accommodation'. 'Crash: DIME' was previously recorded under 'DIME' and 'Housing Association Temporary Accommodation' was previously recorded under 'Private Single Lets'.

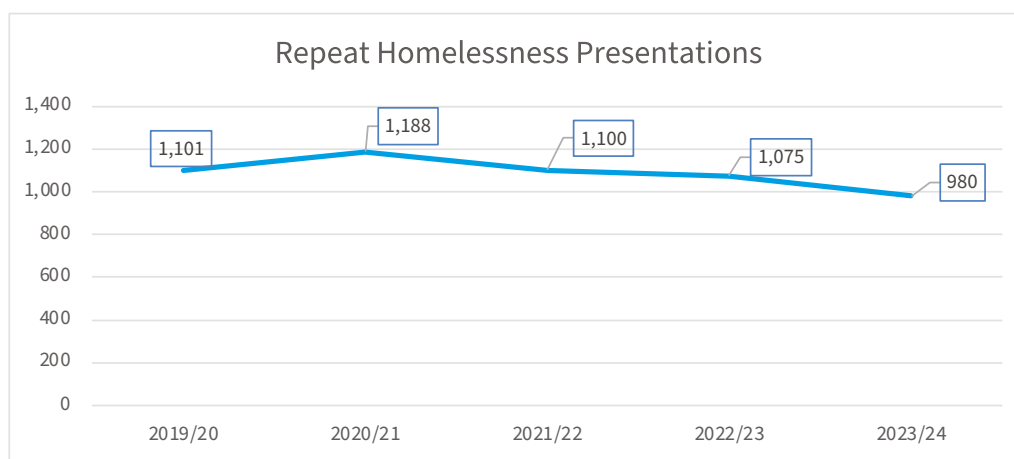
These schemes have been added as new scheme descriptions for reporting purposes and to provide a more accurate description of the units to help the Housing Executive improve our understanding of temporary accommodation units.

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 above outlines the number of Full Duty Applicants who have had their statutory homelessness duty discharged through the allocation of a social rented property. In 2023/24 a total of 5,337 Full Duty Applicants (FDA) have been allocated a social rented property out of 5,710 allocations. The total of 5,337 allocations to Full Duty Applicants represents an increase of 0.83% from the 5,293 allocations to Full Duty Applicants in 2022/23 and a decrease of 0.78% from the 5,379 allocations to Full Duty Applicants in 2022/23 which represents the baseline.

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 2023/24, a total number of 980 repeat homelessness presentations was recorded highlighting an overall decrease of 8.8% from the 1,075 repeat presentations in 2022/23 and a decrease of 10.9% from the 1,100 repeat presentations in 2021/22.

The Housing Executive recognises the need to accurately measure chronic homelessness as an indicator in the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 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
 - o *Mental Health Problems*

- o Addiction: Alcohol*
- o Addiction: Drugs*
- o Addiction: Other*
- o Street activity: Rough Sleeping*
- o Street Activity: Drinking/Begging*
- o Violence/Risk: From Others*
- o Violence/Risk: To Others*
- o Violence/Risk: To Self*
- o Left Prison within the last 12 months,*
- o Left Youth Custody within the last 12 months*
- o Defined as 'looked after child'*

In January 2023, the Housing Executive began recording chronic homelessness when processing new homeless applications. We will seek to record the baseline figure for those experiencing chronic homelessness from 2024/25.

2023 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 Wednesday 29th November 2023 leading into the morning of Thursday 30th November 2023.
- Newry – night of Wednesday 29th November 2023 leading into the morning of Thursday 30th November 2023.
- Derry/Londonderry – night of Wednesday 29th November 2023 leading into the morning of Thursday 30th November 2023.

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.

² Homeless Link, 'Rough Sleeping Estimates Toolkit 2021 – A guide for Local Authorities' - <https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/rough-sleeping-snapshot-estimates-toolkit-2023/>

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 Wednesday 29th November 2023 leading into the morning of Thursday 30th November 2023.

Headline Figures

A total of 45 people were estimated to be rough sleeping in Northern Ireland across the street counts/estimates outlined above. This represents a 36.3% increase from the 2022 figure of 33.

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 3,898³ people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2023.

³ [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2023)

Rough sleeping by area

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

Council	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	4	0	1	1	1
Belfast	16	28	10	18	26	32
Causeway Coast & Glens	4	0	0	0	0	0
Derry City & Strabane	13	1	2	0	2	3
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0	2
Mid & East Antrim	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0	1	0
Newry, Mourne & Down	5	1	6	4	3	7
Total	38	36	18	23	33	45

Acknowledgements

The Housing Executive would like to note the assistance of the 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 2023/24

The table below details actions taken to deliver each of the 42 actions in the Year 2 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 3 Action Plan which is included later in this document. The RAG status for each action has been categorised as follows:

- **Red – Action has not been completed in line with the aspirations of the Year 2 Action Plan.**
- **Amber – Whilst there has been significant progress on this action, as of 31st March 2024, the action was not fully complete in line with the aspirations of the Year 2 Action Plan**
- **Green - Action has been fully completed in line with the aspirations of the Year 2 Action Plan.**

Enablers		Progress at 31st March 2024	RAG Status
Experiential Evidence			
Action 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. 	<p>Over the course of 2022/23 and 2023/24 the Housing Executive has been seeking to develop research around the feasibility of a Housing First approach in Northern Ireland. The Housing Executive have sought to to replicate the Housing First Feasibility Study for the Liverpool City Region⁴, where appropriate and relevant. The Housing Executive has appointed an independent researcher to deliver the following objectives;</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 delivery of this project has been guided by a Research Advisory Group which brought together key sectoral representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies over the course of 2023/24.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the final report will be published in Q2 of 2024/25. The evolution of this action is reflected in Action 1 of the Year 3 Action Plan which commits to the publication of independent research on the feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland. Upon publication we will explore the development of further actions arising from the recommendations. We will continue to explore all available options to assist with the development and implementation of Housing First for Northern Ireland.</p>	

⁴ [The Housing First Feasibility Study for the Liverpool City Region](#)

Action 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>	<p>The Housing Executive continues to work 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>During 2022/23, the data sharing agreement was finalised and the Housing Executive shared case level data, which consisted of 205,330 homeless applications with Business Services Organisation. This project seeks to deliver the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To measure the incidence, prevalence, and duration of homelessness over time and place, and in subgroup analysis by the reason for homelessness, special populations, domestic violence and pregnant women • To describe the characteristics of people who have been homeless, overall, and in subgroup analysis by the reason for homelessness, compared to the Northern Ireland population. • To investigate the risk factors for homelessness including personal characteristics, geographical factors, health-related factors, and social factors (for example, being a looked-after child or child in the care of social services). • To investigate the association between homelessness and health and social outcomes, including physical and mental health, and the use of health and social care services. <p>Over the course of 2023/24 work has focused on a significant data matching exercise. Over the course of 2024/25, a Project Steering Group will be established as the data matching exercise provides scope for sharing of initial findings of the project.</p> <p>This action will continue to be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
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Action 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.	<p>From 1st November 2022/23, 24 projects had been awarded Homelessness Prevention Funding to 31st March 2023. An additional 10 projects had been granted funding via further award in December 2022, delivering projects from 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023.</p> <p>All final project evaluation reports were submitted to the Homelessness Prevention Team, and an analysis was carried out on all projects. All information has been collated into a Final Evaluation Report detailing total number of beneficiaries supported via the Homelessness Prevention Fund, homeless outcomes and the overall impact of the Fund. This report will assist the Housing Executive in guiding future prevention work, and particularly where any prevention work is supported by funding.</p> <p>Due to insufficient funding during 2023/24 the Housing Executive was unable to deliver a Homelessness Prevention Fund and therefore this action will not be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 4	We will work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to develop <i>'The Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'</i> . 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.	<p>The Housing Executive and the Centre for Homelessness Impact have continued 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. <p>The delivery of this action was guided by initial engagement with sectoral partners in a workshop co-hosted by the Housing Executive and the Centre for Homelessness Impact on 3rd March 2023. Following this workshop, and over the course of 2023/24, the Centre for Homelessness Impact have been developing the <i>'Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'</i> together with the Homelessness Strategy Team.</p>	

Action 4		<p>After the workshop with stakeholders on 3rd March 2023, the Centre for Homelessness Impact have been developing the <i>'Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'</i> together with the Homelessness Strategy Team and from feedback submitted by partners who attended the workshop in March.</p> <p>To follow on from the workshop in March, CHI travelled across again in May for a 3-day visit to Northern Ireland to carry out a Value for Money exercise in relation to Temporary Accommodation. During the first two days, CHI met with operational teams in Causeway and Belfast, visited a number of temporary accommodation sites, and engaged with a range of stakeholders including individuals with lived experience of homelessness.</p> <p>On the third day, CHI organised a workshop with the wider Homelessness Team to map the temporary accommodation system, identify challenges and opportunities and identify next steps on how to move forward and improve the value for money of our temporary accommodation provision. The Housing Executive continue to work with CHI in the development of a final report with this work reflected in the Year 3 Action Plan.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy Team and CHI continue to work together in the continued development of the <i>'Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'</i>. CHI joined the Central Homelessness Forum in August 2023 to update the group of the ongoing development of the framework taking into account all feedback submitted by partners earlier in the year. All members of the Central Homelessness Forum were offered the opportunity to join a working group to help further develop and implement the framework.</p> <p>A workshop took place in November 2023, with representation from across the homelessness sector. The workshop was facilitated by CHI and the purpose was to build on the work completed to date on articulating how Northern Ireland might apply the CHI's 'ending homelessness framework' to the Northern Ireland data context. Discussions included which Indicators would be applicable and/or useful in Northern Ireland, if they would be meaningful, and how data could be measured and collected.</p>	
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Action 4		<p>In addition, the session helped CHI to further develop their understanding of what indicators would be suitable to track progress towards the goal of homelessness being prevented or otherwise rare, brief, and non-recurring in Northern Ireland. The framework is in draft format and subject to approval. However the draft framework has been circulated to the homelessness sector for discussion and feedback.</p> <p>The Housing Executive continue to work alongside CHI to progress both projects and this action has been brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan with specific actions related to the two strands of work noted above.</p>	
Action 5	We will update on progress as to the ongoing review of Housing Executive policies and procedures relevant to homelessness.	<p>The Housing Executive continue to develop and review policies as and when appropriate. Over the course of 2023/24, there has been a significant focus on both youth homelessness and domestic abuse.</p> <p>This work has included the development of an action plan on youth homelessness which supports the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27. The Youth Homelessness Action Plan will have a primary focus on prevention and early intervention, with an acknowledgement of the importance of collaborative working. The role also includes working together with key partners such as the Department of Health on the Review of Jointly Commissioned Supported Accommodation Projects for Young People.</p> <p>Additionally, an action plan on domestic abuse is currently being developed with a view to implementing recommendations from the Sanctuary Scheme Research and legislative developments over recent years. This will ensure the Housing Executive's policies and procedures regarding domestic abuse are reflective of the need to address current challenges.</p> <p>This action will continue to be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan with further standalone actions added to reflect the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Action Plan and Youth Homelessness Action Plan.</p>	

Action 6	<p>We will publish a report on the Street Needs Audits carried out in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry.</p>	<p>The Street Needs Audit was carried out in three 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.</p> <p>Due to the reported levels of street activity in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry the audit took place over a 6 week period, commencing in Belfast on 3rd February 2023 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.</p> <p>In February and March 2023, the Housing Executive assembled steering groups for each respective city, which were set up to guide the data collection, and ratify the findings. The steering groups consist of representatives from local Housing Solutions teams, District Council, the Public Health Agency, Health and Social Care Trusts, Police Service of Northern Ireland and Belfast Complex Lives Team.</p> <p>Over the course of 2023/24, there have been a number of Steering Group meetings to allow the groups to discuss the qualitative data, demographics, findings of the audit and street activity with all representatives. Collaboration has been key in this report and this is evidenced in the recommendations which were shaped by the range of statutory and voluntary partners who sit on the steering groups.</p> <p>The final report will be published in Q2 of 2024/25, after the Westminster election. The evolution of this action is represented in Action 8 of the Year 3 Action Plan which commits the Housing Executive to exploring ways in which we can address the themes outlined in the Street Needs Audit Report published as part of the Year 2 Action Plan.</p> <p>The Housing Executive recognises that many of the findings of the Street Needs Audit relate to non-accommodation based issues and it is for that reason that the action in Year 3 seeks to explore ways in which we can engage with partners, particularly health, in addressing the findings of the report.</p>	
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Action 7	We will review the Chronic Homelessness criteria after one year of data collection on the Housing Executive's Housing Management System.	<p>From the 7th January 2023, the Chronic Homelessness Indicators have been added to the Housing Executive's Housing Management System (HMS) to allow operational staff to collect this information when carrying out a housing solutions assessment. Following this, an Advice Note was issued on 16th January 2023 to all staff involved in the administration and management of homelessness, which provided guidance on data collection.</p> <p>The Housing Executive have been reviewing and delivering internal training and discussion sessions with front-line staff in order to improve data collection on these indicators.</p> <p>A variation of this action has been brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 8	We will commission independent research that seeks to provide a comparison of homelessness funding between Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions.	<p>Due to budget constraints, the Housing Executive's Research Unit are only able to take forward work on a limited number of projects and those projects with existing contractual commitments during 2023/24. In the absence of being able to progress this research during 2023/24, this piece of research has been submitted as part of the draft Research Programme for 2024/25.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
Action 9	We will commission independent research on local efforts to address chronic homelessness.	<p>The Housing Executive would like 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 Review⁵ report, where appropriate and relevant.</p> <p>Due to budget constraints, the Housing Executive's Research Unit are only able to take forward work on a limited number of projects and those projects with existing contractual commitments during 2023/24. In the absence of being able to progress this research during 2023/24 this piece of research has been submitted as part of the draft Research Programme for 2024/25.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	

⁵ 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>

Collaboration			
Action 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.	Over the course of 2022/23, the Housing Executive has been 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, is anticipated to provide a template for sharing data with other councils. As of 31st March 2024, the development of the Data Sharing Agreement is ongoing.	
		The Complex Lives initiative continues with the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) continuing to meet weekly. The MDT is made up of statutory partners and key delivery partners from the Voluntary and Community sector and has provided support to over 100 people as of 31st March 2024. With the aim of embedding the multidisciplinary approach further the MDT have begun work on the next stage of development which involves collocating key partners and working more closely with City Centre Tasking to more fully address city centre issues.	
		During 2022/23, partners jointly invested in a group of intensive support workers and coordination resources to enable increased capacity to manage cases and provide support to a greater number of individuals. The aim for 2023/24 and beyond is to further develop this model and closely align it to the scaling up of the Housing First model, so as to ensure there are effective pathways to suitable accommodation solutions and also with the right wrap around support tailored to individual needs. In the longer term, it is the intention to introduce this approach to other geographical areas.	
		A Complex Lives Training and Development programme is under development with initial sessions scheduled for February 2024.	
		Work is ongoing in relation to developing a case management system and online outcomes measurement tool.	
		This action will continue to be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan.	

Action 11	We will routinely communicate performance, budgetary and trend information to stakeholders in user friendly formats.	<p>The Housing Executive attend and continue to share and deliver homelessness information and data to various strategic and local groups.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy Team chair quarterly meetings of the Central Homelessness Forum which consider homelessness trends, including accommodation updates. Relevant homelessness data continues to be shared, delivered and discussed at all quarterly meetings of the Homelessness Local Area Groups.</p> <p>Additionally, the Senior Management Team of the Housing Executive has attended a number of the All Party Groups on Homelessness meetings and delivered updates regarding homelessness trends and challenges.</p> <p>In addition, the Homelessness Strategy Team attend a range of meetings and forums, providing information on homelessness data and trends. The team deliver updates regarding the Homelessness Strategy and the work delivered to date. Groups and forums include but are not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Forum • Derry City & Strabane Civic Forum • Causeway Community Planning Partnership • Fermanagh & Omagh District Council • GSS Homelessness Data Working Steering Group <p>This action will continue to be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 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.	<p>Over the course of 2023/24, all 8 Homelessness Local Area Groups discussed and reviewed the Homelessness Local Area Action Plans. The ToR and all Local Area Action Plans have been updated based on feedback in order to reflect the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27, and emerging trends and issues in the local area. The actions and objectives are reflective of what is achievable by each specific group. The updated Local Area Actions Plans were agreed and ratified by each of the groups.</p> <p>All Homelessness Local Area Groups have agreed to review the Local Area Action Plans annually to ensure they are up to date and allow the groups to react and address emerging challenges.</p>	

Action 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.	<p>The Housing Executive continue to liaise with Housing Rights on the development of an options paper, around the implementation of a Housing Advice Quality Standard (HAQS) for frontline staff.</p> <p>The options paper will review the joint work undertaken by the Housing Executive and Housing Rights in 2015 and update considerations on the quality standard to reflect the current issues across the housing and homelessness sector, and outline the potential benefits of implementing a Housing Quality Advice Standard in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Work between Housing Rights and the Housing Executive has included the initial development of a working group to guide this work. The purpose of the working group will be to identify key priorities and in doing so, through discussion and analysis of key issues, challenges, and opportunities from the members' professional experience, provide feedback and strategic advice. In particular, this work is expected to input into the scoping of options, identification of areas which ought to be included in any HAQS and issues connected with its application.</p> <p>This action will continue to be delivered as part of Action 15 in the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
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.	<p>Following on from the '<i>Experts by Experience</i>' consultations, which took place in March 2023, an independent researcher who was present at both sessions drafted 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.</p> <p>In July 2023, the Housing Executive issued a thank you letter to all participants with a copy of the research report attached. The email thanked individuals for their time, acknowledging the expertise in the room and committed to continuing to explore the development of a Lived Experience Programme.</p> <p>The Housing Executive have subsequently been working together with partners to continue the process of developing a Lived Experience Programme. A paper was submitted to the Executive Team during September 2023 which summarised all of the work delivered regarding Lived Experience to date. The paper noted the continuation of the Lived Experience Groups during 2023/24 and the proposal of the Housing Executive</p>	

Action 14		<p>to continue to work with key partners to consider the creation of a Lived Experience Working Group to further deliver this work.</p> <p>Over the course of 2023/24, the working group has met to discuss and agree the Terms of Reference of the working group and potential ways on how to move forward. The group have engaged with Homewards as part of the delivery of the Homewards project in Northern Ireland. As Homewards have access to other organisations with links to Lived Experience, the working group agreed it would be beneficial to have an insight to other Lived Experience models and pull on the expertise of other organisations. Homewards reached out to Ipsos and Groundswell to ask if they would be available to deliver a session to the Lived Experience Programme Working Group to outline their background knowledge of Lived Experience, discuss several good practice models, with an added opportunity for a Q&A session.</p> <p>Ipsos and Groundswell delivered a Lived Experience Seminar to the Lived Experience Programme Working Group on 6th February 2023 and discussed different models that could be applicable to the current developments and work already carried out in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Housing Executive have taken into consideration all feedback to date and have developed a draft options paper outlining proposed next steps, with a view to commencing implementation during 2024/25. This action is listed as amber, as the agreement of a preferred option is still under development at the time of publication of this report. Work with key partners on the development and implementation of the Lived Experience Programme will continue throughout 2024/25.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
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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.	<p>The Housing Executive met with Homeless Connect to discuss how to bring the groups forward during 2023/24.</p> <p>Together with colleagues from the Fundamental Review of Allocations Team, a Lived Experience Group was hosted on the 18th October 2023. This group provided participants with the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on two of the proposals under the Fundamental Review of Allocations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal 4 – The Housing Executive can meet their duty to homeless applicants on a tenure-neutral basis, provided that the accommodation meets certain conditions. • Proposal 9 - The removal of interim accommodation points from the Selection Scheme. <p>Colleagues from the Fundamental Review of Allocations Team were able to collate extensive feedback provided from the Lived Experience Group and utilise this for consideration of the above proposals.</p> <p>This Action has been aligned with others and will continue in to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Legislation			
Action 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.	<p>The Department for Communities hosted a meeting with representatives from the Housing Executive, Housing Rights and Homeless Connect on 3rd October 2023 as per an action point from the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group.</p> <p>This action will continue in to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 17	We will continue to support the implementation of the Fundamental Review of Allocations, particularly any actions relevant to homelessness.	<p>The delivery of the Fundamental Review of Allocations is guided by a Project Board, which includes senior representation from staff involved in the delivery of homelessness services.</p> <p>This approach ensures that ongoing implementation of recommendations provided appropriate consideration of issues relevant to homelessness. Engagement on the Fundamental Review of Allocations included a Project Board on 31st August 2023.</p>	

		<p>Together with colleagues from the Fundamental Review of Allocations Team, a Lived Experience Group was hosted on the 18th October 2023. This group provided participants with the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on two of the proposals under the Fundamental Review of Allocations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal 4 – The Housing Executive can meet their duty to homeless applicants on a tenure-neutral basis, provided that the accommodation meets certain conditions. • Proposal 9 - The removal of interim accommodation points from the Selection Scheme. <p>Colleagues from the Fundamental Review of allocations were able to collate extensive feedback provided from the Lived Experience Group and utilise this for consideration of the above proposals.</p> <p>Homelessness Policy & Strategy are also part of a Research Advisory Group for a project commissioned in respect of Proposal 7, the removal of intimidation points.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Interdepartmental approach			
Action 18	We will liaise with and support the Department for Communities in the development and delivery of the Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan.	<p>The Year 4 Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan was published on 21st September 2023 and can be found via this link⁶.</p> <p>The Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team liaised with the Department for Communities as part of exploratory work for the Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan and will support the delivery of the IDHAP as and when appropriate.</p> <p>The Housing Executive and Department of Justice are currently working together on a test and learn pilot to develop a Housing Advisor Custodial Role, in Maghaberry Prison. This pilot had initially begun in April 2024 and ongoing work is taking place to develop the supporting infrastructure for the pilot.</p> <p>Collaboration with the Department for Communities continues and this action will follow into the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

⁶ 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>

Funding			
Action 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.	<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 Programme⁷ 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>Representatives from the Housing Executive attended a Participatory Budgeting Decision Making Event⁸, organised by the Community Foundation N.I in July 2023. The decision making event brought together Experts by Experience, to decide how the overall funding pot would be allocated. Six projects were awarded £25k per project, with a further two projects awarded £5k.</p>	
		<p>The Housing Executive continue to liaise with the Community Foundation Team and have been exploring ways that the Housing Executive can support the 2023 project teams to develop their new innovation project. Plans include linking up projects with local Housing Executive Offices and offering projects the opportunity for their organisation and/or project to be represented in Homelessness Local Area Groups, where appropriate. A shared training and learning session with all projects has been arranged for April 2024 to provide organisations with information and insights into the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and the structures available to support communication, engagement, and development.</p>	
		<p>Representatives from the Housing Executive attended a further Imagine! Session on Participatory Budgeting, hosted at Queens University Crescent Arts Centre in March 2024, which provided additional learning and implementation opportunities.</p> <p>Tranche 1 of the Housing Executive Sustaining Tenancies Grant Funding Programme 2023-2025 was open to expressions of interest from Monday 2nd October 2023. Details of the Funding Programme were circulated to all relevant groups.</p>	

⁷ The Community Foundation Northern Ireland, Community Solutions to Housing and Homelessness

⁸ The Community Foundation Northern Ireland, Community Solutions to Housing and Homelessness Programme, Participatory Budgeting Decision Making Event - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-solutions-to-housing-and-homelessness-pb-decision-making-event-tickets-648174927657>

Action 19		<p>Please note: The Funding Programme is to specifically support Housing Executive tenants.</p> <p>Comic Relief Funding offers Grant Funding to support UK based (including N.I.) not-for-profit organisations that work to empower young people (aged 16 – 25 years) who are at immediate risk of, or experiencing homelessness, to access the right support at the right time.</p> <p>All funding information was circulated to the Rural & Regeneration Team in order to circulate to all relevant rural groups and forums.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 20	We will support effective commissioning of services to prioritise funding via structures such as the Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee.	<p>The Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee/ Clearing Group was established in July 2019. The Committee acts 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.</p> <p>These groups continue to meet on a quarterly basis and continue to consider the development of any relevant services or models.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Staff			
Action 21	We will provide opportunities for staff to input into Homelessness research.	<p>Following the Centre for Homelessness Impact's (CHI) visit in May 2023 (as mentioned under Action 4). The 'Value for Money' report on Temporary Accommodation in Northern Ireland is in draft format as of 31st March 2024.</p> <p>This report will contain input from both the Causeway and Belfast operational teams, which was gathered over several days through presentations, interviews and discussions. Causeway and Belfast operational staff have had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft report and it is intended that their feedback will be included in the final report, which will be published in due course.</p>	

Action 21		<p>Staff across various teams in Housing Services have had the opportunity to feed into research as per Action 1 and the Fundamental Review of Allocations research as mentioned in Action 17.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 22	<p>Build upon the collaborative co-location of services and case management approach developed through projects such as the Belfast Complex Lives Project.</p>	<p>The Housing Executive, continue to work with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and Housing Rights to build upon the work during 2022/23, where the Youth Apprentices attended a Housing Induction Module Training Day in the Housing Centre. The module provided an overview of the Housing Executive's Housing Division, with a focus on governance structures.</p> <p>The Housing Executive is working in collaboration with The Royal Foundation and five other UK locations on the Homewards programme, the aim of which is to build coalitions of committed people and organisations at a local and national level, to try new things to prevent homelessness, rather than just manage it. As part of this arrangement the NI Local Homewards Lead is utilising the Housing Executive's Housing Centre, Belfast location as a base, as and when required.</p> <p>As part of the Housing Executive's initial response to assist households presenting from Ukraine, there was co-location of services delivered via walk-in Ukraine Assistance Centres, which offered face to face engagement in the provision of essential support in relation to the resettlement scheme, including GP registration, financial support, legal advice and housing assistance.</p> <p>The Complex Lives Project continues and consists of an established multi-disciplinary team to help improve outcomes using a case management approach, to address the full spectrum of an individual's needs. The Housing Executive has committed to further developing the Complex Lives approach in 2024/25.</p> <p>This action has been brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Action 23	<p>Explore options to deliver a rolling training programme for staff across the sector to equip staff to deliver psychologically informed responses.</p>	<p>Members from the Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team attended the ‘Easy as PIE - Psychologically Informed Environments in the Homelessness Sector’⁹ event hosted by Homeless Connect in June 2023, which will help to inform the Housing Executive’s exploratory work in developing a rolling training programme. This action has been identified by the Homeless Strategy Team as a priority.</p> <p>Queens University, Belfast have commissioned the Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland (SBNI) to undertake research to provide recommendations for the advancement of Trauma Informed Approaches across Northern Ireland. In Q4 of 2023/24, the Housing Executive attended the launch event of ‘Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland’.</p> <p>The Housing Executive’s Tenancy Sustainment Team are developing a 3-day Mental Health Training course for front line operational staff. The training will focus on the wellbeing of tenants, and it will include an element of trauma informed practice and staff resilience. It is expected that the training will commence roll out during 2024/25.</p> <p>As part of the Complex Lives initiative, Housing Executive staff and Intensive Support Workers completed training on trauma informed practice in Q4 of 2023/24.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy Team attended an internal meeting with colleagues from Housing, Equality and Human Resources to discuss Trauma Informed Practice and further areas for development within the organisation.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
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⁹ Homeless Connect, Easy as PIE – Psychologically Informed Environments in Homelessness Sector - <https://homelessconnect.org/event/easy-as-pie-psychologically-informed-environments-in-homelessness-sector/>

Action 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.	<p>Staff training needs have been considered in the development of the Domestic Abuse Action Plan, which is expected to be published in Q2 of 2024/25. Further updates regarding this action will be provided upon approval of the action plan.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
Process			
Action 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 Housing Executive stakeholders to develop a specification for a new Homelessness and Housing Solutions/Allocations system.</p> <p>The project is in five phases, with an estimated completion date of December 2026. The Central Access Point (CAP) 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. A statement of works in relation to the CAP element of the new system is being drafted. The CAP element will be the focus of phase 5 of the project.</p> <p>The ongoing development will continue into the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Objective 1 – Prioritise homelessness prevention			
Action 26	We will seek to continue the Homelessness Prevention Fund.	The Housing Executive was unable to deliver a Homelessness Prevention Fund as there was insufficient funding during 2023/24.	
Primary Prevention:			
Action 27	We will target Homelessness Prevention via provision of awareness sessions to the Community Sector.	<p>The Housing Executive have drafted and finalised a Communications Action Plan for 2023/24. This Action Plan sets out how the Housing Executive plan to promote the awareness sessions through various channels using various materials. This will be subject to review during 2024/25.</p> <p>The Housing Executive have critically reviewed the materials, and these are in the process of being redrafted and updated to ensure the information is clear and easily accessible for the Community Sector. The awareness sessions and the informational resources will be delivered throughout 2024/25.</p> <p>The Housing Executive have been liaising with Causeway Community Planning Partnership and have delivered presentations and information sessions alongside the Local Causeway Office.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 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.	<p>The Communications Action Plan for 2023/24 (as mentioned above) seeks to deliver a public awareness campaign to raise awareness of homelessness prevention. The Action Plan tailors its approach to 3 specific audiences: the general public, the voluntary / community sector and elected representatives. The strategic approach to raising awareness among the public is outlined below:</p> <p><i>Provide information to the general public regarding homelessness and agencies that can assist in ways that are open and easily accessed.</i></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a range of materials that can be used to publicise support agencies 	

Action 28		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and utilise options for promotion within the business sector through corporate social responsibility mechanisms • Explore and utilise options for promotion within the public and private service sector • Promote Homelessness Awareness Week <p>The delivery of this action has been subject to collaboration between Homelessness Policy and Strategy Team and Housing Executive's Communications Team.</p> <p>Communications staff attended a number of the Homelessness Local Area Groups during August/ September and fed into group discussions regarding Homelessness Awareness Week. All groups discussed a range of ideas and activities that they could potentially organise during Homelessness Awareness Week.</p> <p>During Homelessness Awareness Week 2023 (4th December – 10th December) there was a variety of events organised by all groups which ranged from coffee mornings, raising donations, volunteering, advice clinics, open days, meeting the teams, podcasts, videos created and released with those sharing their experience of homelessness, and those outlining their roles and the support that they provide.</p> <p>All events and activities set out to not only raise awareness of homelessness, but also to raise awareness of the support and assistance that is available in the local area. The Housing Executive Corporate Communications Department developed and finalised a Communications and Social Media Plan which covered all activities and events across the week to ensure appropriate media coverage of all relevant activities happening across Northern Ireland, with the aim to promote the positive work carried out by the Housing Executive, all Homelessness Local Area Groups, alongside our relevant partners.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy Team continue to work closely with the Housing Executive Communications Team to promote and increase awareness of homelessness in local areas via the Homelessness Local Area Groups. The Homelessness Local Area Group meetings in March 2024, were posted via social media to increase awareness of the multi-agency partnership working of all groups.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
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Secondary Prevention:			
Action 29	We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the education sector.	<p>The All Party Group on Homelessness met on 26th June 2023. One part of the meeting focused on the importance of multi-agency working between Executive Departments, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector in homelessness prevention. Raising awareness of homelessness within schools was one of the concerns raised during the discussion, with an action to seek clarification from the Department of Education if they have a strategic plan to deliver awareness raising of homelessness in schools across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Based on this, a follow up meeting took place between the Housing Executive, Department of Education and the Education Authority on 20th November 2023. The Department and the Education Authority talked through the preventive curriculum which incorporates all of the links and root causes of homelessness. The discussion also included other pieces of work that could be carried out to improve communications and relationships between local schools and local Housing Executive offices. The Homelessness Strategy Team also linked both Communications Teams from the Housing Executive and the Department of Education to share key messaging during the year and especially during Homelessness Awareness Week 2023.</p> <p>This particular action was discussed during Q4 meetings of the Homelessness Local Area Groups, with a number of organisations asking to discuss further with the Homelessness Strategy Team, to develop initiatives in the local area.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
Action 30	Target homelessness prevention initiatives to those at most risk and prioritise funding to projects most strategically aligned.	<p>The Housing Executive was not in a position to deliver a Homelessness Prevention Fund during 2023/24.</p> <p>The Complex Lives Project has been in place since October 2021, and seeks to prevent homelessness and in particular repeat homelessness for some of the most complex homeless customers through a multi-agency approach. The Housing Executive has committed to further developing the Complex Lives approach in 2023/24. Please see Action 38 for further details regarding the Complex Lives Project.</p>	

		<p>The Housing Executive will continue to promote and circulate information to the wider homelessness sector on existing initiatives available to those most at risk through our Homelessness Local Area Groups.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 31	We will seek to work with health partners to develop mental health and addiction support initiatives aimed at homelessness prevention.	<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 has been undertaken and the Housing Executive’s Tenancy Sustainment Team are developing a 3-day Mental Health Training course for front line operational staff. The training will focus on the wellbeing of tenants, and it will include an element of trauma informed practice and staff resilience. It is expected that the training will commence roll out during 2024/25.</p> <p>This particular action was discussed at the Central Homelessness Forum in June 2023 and members requested that it was escalated to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group, given the challenges that accessing mental health and support initiatives was causing. This item was discussed at the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group on 6th December 2023.</p> <p>The themes highlighted within the Street Needs Audit Report 2023 identified a requirement for closer partnership working between Health and Social Care Trusts and the wider homelessness sector. This was escalated to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group in March 2024 and there was positive discussion around this.</p>	

		<p>Further work is required in respect of developing additional mental health initiatives in order to prevent homelessness. Additional addiction support initiatives are being implemented across Northern Ireland through Extern's Needle Exchange Programme and further information to promote awareness of this has been shared with our Homelessness Local Area Groups.</p> <p>The themes highlighted within the Street Needs Audit Report 2023 identified a requirement for closer partnership working between Health and the wider homelessness sector. This was escalated to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group in March 2024 and there was positive discussion around this. A presentation of the findings of the 2023 Street Needs Audit will also be delivered to the Central Homelessness Forum scheduled in June 2024.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
Tertiary Prevention:			
Action 32	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.	<p>The Housing Executive's Tenancy Sustainment Team plan to establish and provide secretariat to a new joint Investments Steering Group, has been delayed due to recruitment challenges and delays.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy Team collaborated with the Tenancy Sustainment Team to provide feedback on the homelessness prevention training tool. Work on the tool is progressing to ensure that it meets the I.T requirements to be embedded in the internal e-learning platform.</p> <p>The Tenancy Sustainment Team hosted a meeting between representatives of the Homelessness Prevention Forum and Area Management Teams (Patch) in Belfast Region. The outcome of this meeting is that the Homelessness Prevention Forum will have delivered in-person awareness sessions to Patch Teams at a number of local Housing Executive offices including; Dundonald, Shankill Wellbeing Centre and, Lisburn Antrim Street. These sessions will increase awareness of support providers, encouraging service user engagement and referral routes to the Homelessness Prevention Forum members.</p>	

		<p>There have been several other initiatives developed, including the Homeless Projects Team development of the Prevention Toolkit, which is currently subject to internal approval and there are ambitions to develop an app for this.</p> <p>There are currently three Financial Inclusion Managers across all three regions who assist customers of Housing Solutions and Support Teams with money worries, debt advice and/or benefits, with an overall aim of assisting them to maximise their income, reduce money worries and thereby sustain current accommodation and/or prepare for a new permanent home, thus assisting in preventing homelessness/ repeat homelessness.</p> <p>The Financial Inclusion Managers have continued working alongside the local Housing Solutions Team and there is significant shared engagement with policy areas and local offices. The Financial Inclusion Managers are due to attend the Homelessness Local Area Groups during 2024/25 and deliver updates and relevant information on the services and support they provide.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Action 33	<p>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.</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 the Housing Management System (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>The LSAN was implemented on 1st May 2023 and the Homelessness Policy & Strategy Team continue to monitor and review the data. The Homelessness Policy & Strategy Team continue to liaise with Local Area offices in relation to ensuring that capturing of homelessness prevention activities are recorded appropriately.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Objective 2 - Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support			
Understanding Customer's Needs and Improving Access and Inclusion			
Action 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.	<p>The Housing Executive's Homeless Projects Team hosted sessions with temporary accommodation providers in September 2023 to review the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) referral form.</p> <p>Similar sessions were held with Housing Executive staff in January and February 2024. An updated version of the CAF form will be issued based on provider and staff feedback. Housing Executive staff training has been enhanced to include greater focus on the CAF form and additional material in training packs.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Flexible and responsive:			
Action 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.	<p>During 2023/24, at the ECHO (Enhancing Health Care for People Affected by Homelessness) Steering Group, a Lead Nurse from the Northern Trust, shared information regarding the support provided by Red Cross to Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Northern Ireland. This information was also circulated to all relevant groups.</p> <p>The Housing Executive continues to play a key role in the delivery of functions linked to various schemes offering humanitarian protection to Ukrainian nationals.</p> <p>As of March 2024, it was estimated that 3,170 Ukrainians have arrived in Northern Ireland, with 2,376 here under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, 324 under the Ukraine Families Scheme and 470 under the Ukraine Visa Extension Scheme. The Housing Executive continues to assist Ukrainians and hosts where a sponsorship arrangement breaks down under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. There were 386 breakdowns of sponsorship and the Housing Executive assisted 168 of these households to a rematch with a new host. 40 households were sustained with their current host and there was an active caseload of 32 households.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Implementing Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation:			
Action 36	We will implement the Year 2 actions in the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation.	<p>The Year 2 Action Plan for the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation was published on the Housing Executive's website and can be found via the following link¹⁰.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Objective 3 – Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation			
Housing Supply:			
Action 37	We will seek to expand Housing First provision, including supporting the delivery of the Housing First Task and Finish Group.	<p>Over the course of 2022/23, work on delivery of this action was 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 continues to meet and 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. Work is ongoing to refine and further develop a high level 3 year plan.</p> <p>The Homeless Projects Team liaised with relevant internal stakeholders and subsequently drafted a Rural Needs Assessment and Equality Screening for the Application of Rule 84 for the purpose of a Housing First Supply Pilot. As of 31st March 2024, the Housing Executive continue to explore the option of Housing Executive Housing First tenancies in respect of utilising Rule 84*.</p>	

¹⁰ Housing Executive, Ending Homelessness Together, Homeless to Home, Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation - <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/e95603ed-bad9-47ca-90a2-1aef23659665/Year-2-Actions-Strategic-Action-Plan-for-Temporary-Accommodation-2022-27.pdf>

		<p>Additionally, the research carried out by Action 1 will support the development of a business case on the wider expansion of Housing First in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>* Rule 84 (Authority of the Department/Board) of the Housing Selection Scheme states:</p> <p><i>“The Board of the Housing Executive may, after consultation with the Department, make allocations otherwise than in accordance with this Scheme. (The Landlord may, with the prior approval of the Department, make allocations otherwise than in accordance with this Scheme).”</i></p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan and will be subject to funding.</p>	
Support:			
Action 38	We will continue to support the delivery of the Complex Lives Project.	<p>As of 31st March 2024, the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) has offered some level of support to over 100 people. At present, the majority of these individuals have been supported to access and sustain a stay in a more appropriate form of accommodation or engage with support. While the number of individuals with diverse support needs are growing significantly, Complex Lives continue to see a positive engagement level of around 80%.</p> <p>To effectively manage the growth of the project, partners have begun work in segmenting the cohort of people supported, to ensure that the differing needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness are addressed and that the approach remains person centred. Specific MDT's for those in tenancies, those with Intensive Support Workers and those with complex physical health needs are being held regularly. Work is ongoing to begin a MDT specifically for release planning for those leaving prison.</p> <p>These involve accessing support from other organisations and specialisms as required further developing and expand our network of support.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Action 39	We will continue to support schemes focused on tenancy sustainment, such as Home Starter Packs.	<p>Home Starter Packs continue to be provided by Homeless Connect to Housing Executive tenants via funding delivered by Housing Services.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
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.	<p>At the conclusion of the Year 2 Action Plan the 'Warm Handover Protocol' is in the early stages of development. This internal protocol will be triggered when applicants receive an offer of a Housing Executive tenancy. It should be noted that not all applicants will require a managed handover and referrals will be based on tenancy sustainment risk assessed as part of the protocol.</p> <p>The Tenancy Sustainment Team attended the November 2023 meeting of the Central Homelessness Forum and provided members with an update regarding the development of the protocol, with the aim to seek feedback from members. The Warm Handover Protocol will be consulted internally within the Housing Executive and then piloted in a specific area during 2024/25.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	
Community Integration:			
Action 41	We will work with the Housing Community Network and those Community Groups with whom they work in order to promote community integration.	<p>The Housing Executive continue to work alongside the Housing Community Network and internal steps have been taken to further establish this relationship and promote community integration.</p> <p>The Housing Executive will be presenting information materials to the Housing Community Network. The Homelessness Strategy Team are working alongside the Race Work Stream and The Housing Executive's Race Relations Officer to promote awareness and integration initiatives.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

Annual Progress Report			
Action 42	We will publish an Annual Progress Report, which outlines actions in delivering Year 1 of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.	<p>The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 Year 1 Annual Progress Report was approved by the Tenant and Customer Services Committee on 11th September 2023. The Report outlines key achievements, homelessness data 2022/23, Rough Sleeping Counts 2022, a detailed update on the progress of the 44 actions delivered over the course of 2022/23 and a first look at the Year 2 Action Plan.</p> <p>As of 31st March 2024, the Year 1 Annual Progress Report has been published and is available via the following link¹¹.</p> <p>This action will be brought forward to the Year 3 Action Plan.</p>	

¹¹ Housing Executive, Ending Homelessness Together, Homelessness Strategy 2022-27, Year 1 Annual Progress Report
- <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/2bdc28ae-cc67-4ab5-842e-0b3908188971/Year-1-Annual-Progress-Report-2022-2023.pdf>

Year 3 Action Plan

The Housing Executive published the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 on the 23rd March 2022 alongside its Year 1 Action Plan. We subsequently published the Year 2 Action Plan which covered April 2023 to March 2024 and during the second year of the Homelessness Strategy some of our key achievements have been;

- We worked with key partners to carry out a Street Needs Audit in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry and published a report on our findings. The themes and outcomes of the report has provided a comprehensive understanding of the scale of street activity including rough sleeping in Northern Ireland and will be instrumental in guiding preventative work and informing policy and practice provisions.
- We continued to raise awareness of homelessness during Homelessness Awareness Week through a range of events and activities organised with a range of our voluntary and statutory partners who sit on our Homelessness Local Area Groups. We continued to work in partnership with our Communications Team to promote events in Local Areas and raise awareness of homelessness.
- We engaged with partners across the sector in developing a Youth Homelessness Action Plan and Domestic Abuse Action Plan, both of which will be published during 2024/25.
- We sought to continue to ensure those with lived experience of homelessness were provided with opportunities to shape the development and delivery of our services.

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 its third year, the development of the Year 3 Action Plan has been guided by the significant work undertaken in the first two years of the strategy. It is important to reflect that several actions will be carried forward to our Year 3 Action plan as the work is still ongoing and the action has now either directly carried forward or evolved slightly and has been reworded accordingly to ensure the action builds on progress delivered during Year 2.

The Housing Executive recognises the importance of listening to those who have lived experience of homelessness, and a specific focus of one of our Lived Experience Groups provided an opportunity to those with lived experience to have their voices heard in actions such as the Fundamental Review of Allocations and particularly Proposals 4 and 9.

Furthermore, engagement with individuals who have lived experience of homelessness in respect of the NICCY Report: '*A Place to Call Home*'¹² has directly contributed to the development of our Youth Homelessness Action Plan.

¹² Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People: A Place to Call Home, 2023 : <https://www.niccy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/NICCY-Homelessness-A-Place-to-Call-Home-Main-Report.pdf>

It is important that we continue to work together and listen to those who have lived experience of homelessness and our key partners, which leads to the continuation of the following actions;

- Action 17 – ‘We will continue work on the further development of our Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out within our Year 1 and 2 Action Plans. We will seek to implement and begin delivery of our Lived Experience Programme in 2024/2025.’
- Action 18 – ‘As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2024/2025 and the format of these groups will be considered as the Lived Experience Programme evolves.’

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

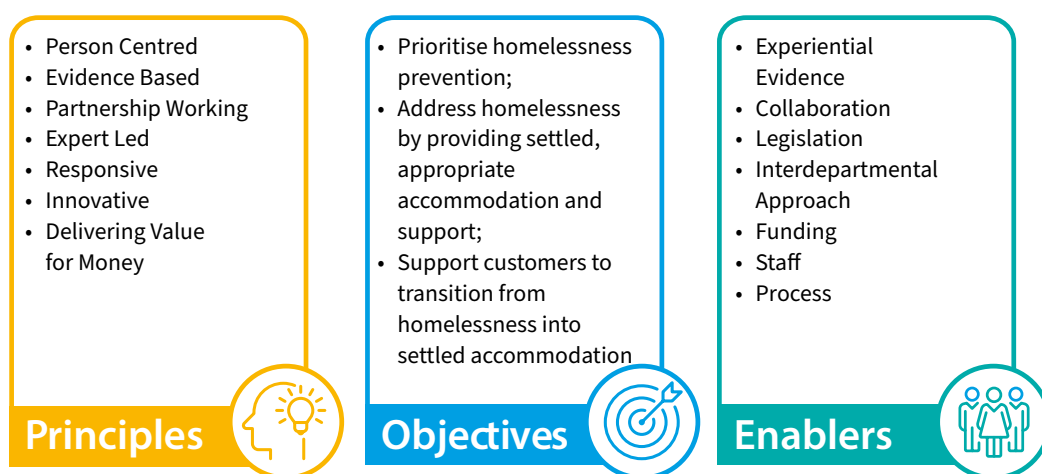
The vision of ‘Ending Homelessness Together’ and aim of ‘Wherever possible homelessness should be prevented, if homelessness cannot be prevented it should be rare, brief and non-recurring’ is supported by three key objectives, each with priority actions that will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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 3 Action Plan

With the enablers being critical to the success of the strategy, the Year 3 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 2024/25.

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 objectives have been broken into the two following sections;

- **Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 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 2024/25 however, they are reliant on securing funding and therefore there are associated delivery risks.

Year 3 Action Plan

Actions	Enablers
Experiential Evidence	
Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan	
Action 1	<p>We will publish independent research on the feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland. Upon publication we will explore the development of further actions arising from the recommendations.</p> <p>We will continue to explore all available options to assist with development and implementation of Housing First for Northern Ireland.</p>
Action 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'. We will explore potential options to carry out similar investigations for different client groups who may be adversely affected by homelessness. In addition, we will set up a Project Steering Group and where appropriate use this data to guide further research and delivery of our services.</p>
Action 3	<p>We will continue to work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to develop '<i>The Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland</i>'. We will critically analyse homelessness data held by the Housing Executive and others across the Homelessness Sector, to consider comparability with other UK jurisdictions.</p>
Action 4	<p>We will continue to work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to develop a report regarding Value for Money in respect of temporary accommodation and we will explore ways to address the recommendations within the Report.</p>
Action 5	<p>We will update on progress as to the ongoing review of Housing Executive policies and procedures relevant to homelessness.</p>
Action 6	<p>We will publish our Domestic Abuse Action Plan and we will work with key partners to implement the actions outlined within.</p>
Action 7	<p>We will publish our Youth Homelessness Action Plan and we will work with key partners to implement the actions outlined within.</p>
Action 8	<p>We will explore ways in which we can address the themes outlined in the Street Needs Audit Report published as part of the Year 2 Action Plan.</p>
Action 9	<p>We will continue to review our internal data on Chronic Homelessness and explore the criteria to ensure ongoing recording of Chronic Homelessness across Northern Ireland.</p>
Actions subject to securing funding	
Action 10	<p>We will commission independent research that seeks to provide a comparison of homelessness funding between Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions.</p>

Action 11	We will commission independent research on local efforts to address chronic homelessness.
Collaboration	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 12	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.
Action 13	We will routinely communicate performance, budgetary and trend information to stakeholders in user friendly formats.
Action 14	We will continue to implement the Homelessness Local Area Action Plans and work closely with each Area Group to review the Action Plans and continuing to promote collaborative engagement. A key focus of the actions plans is to deliver the vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' at a local level and we will have a particular focus on ensuring the action plans reflect the prevention work being delivered at a local level.
Action 15	We will build on work carried out as part of the Year 2 Action Plan and continue working with key partners to develop our programme for a Housing Advice Quality Standard for frontline staff offering housing advice in Northern Ireland.
Action 16	We will work with our Internal Communications Department to highlight and showcase ongoing collaborative work in the sector to raise awareness of Homelessness across a variety of media and channels and this will also focus on Homelessness Prevention.
Action 17	We will support the delivery of Year 1 Programme of the Royal Foundation 'Homewards' Programme.
	Actions subject to securing funding
Action 18	We will continue work on the further development of our Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out within our Year 1 and 2 Action Plans. We will seek to implement and begin delivery of our Lived Experience Programme in 2024/2025.
Action 19	As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2024/2025 and the format of these groups will be considered as the Lived Experience Programme evolves.
Legislation	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 20	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.
Action 21	We will continue to support the implementation of the Fundamental Review of Allocations, particularly any actions relevant to homelessness. Recommendations of note in respect of Homelessness include Proposals 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and Proposal 9.

Interdepartmental Approach	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 22	We will continue to liaise with and support the Department for Communities in the development and delivery of the Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan.
Action 23	We will continue to work alongside Housing Rights and the Department of Justice to deliver: 'A protocol for the management of the accommodation and related support needs of people in custody in Northern Ireland (Prisons Protocol)'. This will include continued engagement with the Operation Group and Strategic Advisory Group to ensure appropriate delivery of the protocol.
Funding	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 24	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.
Action 25	We will support effective commissioning of services to prioritise funding via structures such as the Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee. A particular priority in the coming year will be the procurement of increased provision.
Staff	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 26	We will continue to develop upon actions completed throughout our Year 2 Action Plan and will continue to provide opportunities for staff to input to Homelessness research.
Action 27	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
Action 28	We will continue to work with relevant internal departments to support the development and delivery of a rolling training programme for internal staff to equip staff to deliver psychologically informed responses.
Process	
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
Action 29	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
Action 30	We will seek to continue the Homelessness Prevention Fund.
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
<i>Primary Prevention:</i>	
Action 31	We will target Homelessness Prevention via provision of awareness sessions to the Community Sector. We will continue to engage with the Community Sector to improve Homelessness awareness and support services available. We will work alongside Supporting Communities to promote engagement and a cohesive working approach.
Action 32	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.
Action 33	We will utilise a team of Financial Inclusion Managers to assist with homelessness prevention.
	Actions subject to securing funding
Action 34	We will continue to explore methods and work alongside key partners to raise awareness of homelessness in the education sector. This will involve exploring how we can work with the Young Person's Peer Support Project on how we can raise awareness in schools.
<i>Secondary Prevention:</i>	
Action 35	We will seek to work with health partners to develop mental health and addiction support initiatives aimed at homelessness prevention. This will build on aspects delivered in Year 2 such as continuing to support the Complex Lives initiative, and engaging with the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG).
Action 36	Target homelessness prevention initiatives to those at most risk and prioritise funding to projects most strategically aligned.
	Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 3 Action Plan
<i>Tertiary Prevention:</i>	
Action 37	We will continue to support homelessness prevention services and we continue to support the delivery of tranche 2 of the Sustaining Tenancies Grant Funding Programme. We will continue to support the development and delivery 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.
Action 38	Explore options for measurement and benchmarking in respect of homelessness prevention.

Objective 2 – Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support	
<i>Understanding Customer's Needs:</i>	
Action 39	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.
<i>Improving Access and Inclusion & Flexible and Responsive:</i>	
Action 40	We will work with all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies in meeting the accommodation and support needs of refugee households or those offered humanitarian protection, having been displaced from their home countries for reasons such as war.
<i>Implementing Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation:</i>	
Action 41	We will implement the Year 3 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 3 Action Plan	
<i>Housing Supply:</i>	
Action 42	We will seek to expand Housing First provision, including supporting the delivery of the Housing First Task and Finish Group.
<i>Support:</i>	
Action 43	We will aim to further develop the Complex Lives' Model and closely align it to the scaling up of the Housing First model, so as to ensure there are effective pathways to suitable accommodation solutions and also with the right wrap around support tailored to individual needs.
Action 44	We will support The Executive Office in implementing the Period Product (Free Provision) NI Act 2022 and we will seek to promote and raise awareness of the support available.
<i>Community Integration:</i>	
Action 45	We will work with the Housing Community Network, Race Relations Officer, and other key partners to promote community integration.
<i>Community Integration:</i>	
Action 46	We will publish an Annual Progress Report, which outlines our actions in delivering Year 2 of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.

Appendices

Appendix One – Homelessness Data

Table 1 – Presenters by reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/ family dispute	Marital/ relationship breakdown	Domestic abuse	Loss of rented accomm	No accomm in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accommodation not reasonable	Release from hospital/ prison/other institution	Fire/ flood other emergency	Mortgage default	Bomb/ fire damage civil disturbance	N’hood harassment	Other reason	No data	Total
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
2023/24	3,657	1,506	1,199	2,710	1,401	204	4,355	346	62	77	31	1,218	49	128	16,943

Table 2 – Presenters by household

Household	Single males				Single females			Total	Couples	Families	Pensioner Households	Undefined	Total
Type	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total					
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	2,200	152	15,965
2023/24	37	1,188	4,610	5,835	35	1,028	1,747	2,810	709	5,067	2,414	108	16,943

Table 3 – Top Three Reasons (Presenters)

	Presenters Top 3 Reasons		
Year	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Loss of Rented Accommodation
2019/20	25.2%	21.7%	13.8%
NB – Top 3 reasons changed during 2020/21 and 2021/22 as noted below			
	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Marital/ relationship breakdown
2020/21	26.0%	22.4%	11.0%
	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%
2023/24	25.7%	21.6%	16.0%

Table 4 – Acceptances by Reason

Reason	Sharing breakdown/ family dispute	Marital/ relationship breakdown	Domestic abuse	Loss of rented accomm	No accomm in Northern Ireland	Intimidation	Accommodation not reasonable	Release from hospital/ prison /other institution	Fire/ flood other emergency	Mortgage default	Bomb/ fire damage civil disturbance	N’hood harassment	Other reason	Total
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
2023/24	2,097	727	1,146	1,773	934	226	3,601	216	39	42	21	693	22	11,537

Table 5 – Acceptances by Household

Household Type	Single males				Single females				Couples	Families	Pensioner Households	Undefined	Total
	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total	16-17 yrs	18-25 yrs	26-59 yrs	Total					
2019/20	32	666	2,248	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
2023/24	15	626	2,493	3,134	16	674	1,239	1,929	473	4,071	1,926	4	11,537

Table 6 – Top Three Reasons (Acceptances)

Acceptances Top 3 Reasons			
	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Loss of Rented accommodation
2019/20	31.8%	18.8%	12.1%
NB – Top 3 reasons changed during 2020/21 and 2021/22 as noted below			
	Accommodation Not Reasonable	Family/Sharing Breakdown	Domestic Abuse
2020/21	28.3%	22.0%	11.1%
	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%
2023/24	31.2%	18.2%	15.4%

Table 7 – Presentations by Council Area

Council	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,201	1,353	1,199	1,341	1,377
Ards & North Down	1,276	1,276	1,228	1,233	1,322
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1,099	1,144	1,127	1,217	1,273
Belfast	5,270	4,573	4,553	4,433	4,993
Causeway Coast & Glens	949	885	1,064	1,052	1,110
Derry & Strabane	1,994	2,084	2,049	2,073	2,041
Fermanagh & Omagh	669	609	563	614	717
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1,034	845	894	875	926
Mid & East Antrim	1,427	1,298	1,319	1,296	1,288
Mid Ulster	669	659	685	749	717
Newry, Mourne & Down	1,214	1,265	1,077	1,082	1,179
Total	16,802	15,991	15,758	15,965	16,943

Table 8 – Acceptances by Council Area

Council	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Antrim & Newtownabbey	936	952	873	1,012	1,013
Ards & North Down	947	931	880	898	1,012
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	694	608	606	641	749
Belfast	3,325	2,686	2,820	2,683	3,226
Causeway Coast & Glens	690	579	746	758	842
Derry & Strabane	1,222	1,146	1,212	1,305	1,352
Fermanagh & Omagh	467	353	366	414	501
Lisburn & Castlereagh	756	552	569	568	615
Mid & East Antrim	1,051	928	895	853	920
Mid Ulster	388	362	419	466	505
Newry, Mourne & Down	847	792	749	751	802
Total	11,323	9,889	10,135	10,349	11,537

Table 9 – Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Presentations)

Reason	Accommodation not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Overcrowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
2019/20	13	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
2023/24	0	478	589	243	211	2,398	138	298	4,355

***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
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
2023/24	24	1	160	6	11	2	204

Table 11 – Accommodation Not Reasonable Breakdown (Acceptances)

Reason	Accommodation not reasonable*	ANR: Financial hardship	ANR: Mental health	ANR: Other	ANR: Overcrowding	ANR: Physical health/ Disability	ANR: Property unfitness	ANR: Violence	Total
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
2023/24	0	322	540	183	178	2,051	88	239	3,601

***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
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
2023/24	6	1	214	2	3	0	226

Table 13 – Acceptances by Priority Need

Year	Dependent Children	Emergency	Pregnant	Violence	Vulnerable	Total
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
2023/24	3,118	49	350	1,744	6,276	11,537

Table 14 – Social Housing Allocations

Year	Total Number of Allocations	Allocations to Full Duty Applicants	% of allocations to Full Duty Applicants
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%
2023/24	5,710	5,337	93.5%

Table 15 – Number of Instances of Repeat Homelessness

Year	Number
2019/20	1,101
2020/21	1,188
2021/22	1,100
2022/23	1,075
2023/24	980

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 Accommodation	Crash: DIME*	HMO*	Housing Association Temporary Accommodation	Crash: Voluntary Sector	Single Lets	DIME*	Voluntary Sector Hostels	Housing Executive Hostels	Hotel/ B&B	Total
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
2023/24	158	1	177	195	41	627	28	228	342	32	241

*DIME refers to Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation

*HMO refers to house in multiple occupation

Please note from April 2024, the reporting of average length of stay in temporary accommodation now includes three new scheme descriptions, 'HMO', 'Crash: DIME' and 'Housing Association Temporary Accommodation'. 'Crash: DIME' was previously recorded under 'DIME' and 'Housing Association Temporary Accommodation' was previously recorded under 'Private Single Lets'.

These schemes have been added as new scheme descriptions for reporting purposes and to provide a more accurate description of the units to help the Housing Executive improve our understanding of temporary accommodation units.

Table 17 – Placements in Temporary Accommodation

Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total	4,527	9,752	9,265	10,253	11,368

Appendix Three – Financial Investment

Table 18 – Financial Investment in Homelessness


	Temporary Accommodation	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		
2019/20	£28.2m	£1.8m	£3.35m	£6.1m	£10k	£100k	£0	£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	£ (0.9m)	£55.6m
2023/24	£50.9m	£2.8m	£4.1m	£7.2m	£0	£489k	£0	£65.5m

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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