

Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

Introduction

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. The cornerstone of recommendations is a transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach, of which Housing First is a component. Housing First provides general settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs, recognising that a safe and secure home is the best base for recovery, and offers personalised, open-ended, flexible support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address wider needs. The Scottish Government has given Local Authorities and their partners a 5 year timescale for transformation to “Rapid Rehousing by default” and requested that all Local Authorities submit a 5-year RRTP for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24. A ‘first iteration’ RRTP was required to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2018 and a finalised RRTP completed and submitted by the end of March 2019, ready for commencing implementation from April 2019.

Development of the Scottish Borders RRTP has been led by the Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership (BHHSP). The BHHSP includes senior officers from the Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders with responsibility in homelessness, health and social care, public health, social work, property management and housing strategy, and senior officers from the 4 locally based Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) who own the majority of the social rented housing stock in the Borders, Berwickshire Housing Association, Eildon Housing Association, Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) and Waverley Housing. Development of the Plan has been further informed by workshops which have also involved officers with responsibility for frontline service delivery and officers with specific remits for, for example, housing support, and drug and alcohol services.

This first Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is the start of our discussion about how to proceed with Rapid Rehousing in Scottish Borders. We will be reviewing, updating and amending the Plan on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that it serves as a focused and practical tool to help us to achieve our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders.

Our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders is:

- **Homelessness is prevented wherever possible but where homelessness cannot be prevented a settled, mainstream housing outcome is secured as quickly as possible.**
- **When temporary accommodation is needed it will be mainstream, furnished accommodation within a community, and time spent in it will be minimal, with as few transitions as possible.**
- **Housing First will be the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages. We will work in collaboration with Health and Social Care Partnership, and other relevant services, to ensure tenancies are supported and sustained.**

All the partners in the development of the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan believe that Rapid Rehousing offers opportunities to improve joint working and the quality of service for people who are threatened with homelessness or who become homeless. We all acknowledge that achieving rapid rehousing will present some significant challenges but all of the partners are fully committed to participating actively and wholeheartedly to achieving our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders.

RRTP will require a multi-agency review of the existing model, and development of a new joint model, of access to social housing across Scottish Borders, which will help homeless people to move directly into suitable mainstream housing as a normal default resolution to homelessness, reducing the need for temporary accommodation. This will include a review of RSLs' Allocations Policies, and will require the RSLs and the Council's Assets and Infrastructure Department to work together to reshape our model of temporary accommodation.

Background

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. Four sets of recommendations were made in December 2017 and in February, May and June 2018. The context for the 70 detailed recommendations is a vision of a whole-system approach whereby prevention of homelessness is paramount and the responsibility lies not just with local authorities but with housing providers, health and social care partnerships and the broad range of organisations that provide support.

When homelessness occurs, rapid rehousing should be the default position, as that will avoid the need for time in temporary accommodation. Recognising that some people need more than just a house and have multiple complex needs that must be addressed alongside their homelessness, the action group has made it clear that the Housing First model of intensive support should be available. For people who require the emergency safety net of temporary accommodation, their time there should be as short as possible. It should be spent in accommodation that is of a high standard and in a location that minimises disruption to their daily lives.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
- Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;
- When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and integrated within a community.

And for people with multiple complex support needs beyond housing:

- Housing First is the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages;
- Housing First provides general settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs;
- It recognises a safe and secure home as the best base for recovery and offers personalised, open-ended, flexible support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address wider needs;
- The model aligns the provision of housing and support, offers choice and control to tenants and works to the principles of harm reduction.

A rapid rehousing approach sees a shift away from a culture of 'tenancy readiness'. The majority of households experiencing homelessness have no, or low support needs. Some households may have higher support requirements, and for them rapid rehousing means supporting people in their own settled home rather than in temporary or supported accommodation for prolonged periods of time. Where independent living within the community is not possible or preferable for whatever reason (safety, risk to self or others, choice) and for whom residential or supported accommodation is the preferred housing option, we will work with relevant partners to secure specialist supported housing provision.

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is a new planning framework for local authorities and their partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. Each Local Authority is required to develop their plans in collaboration over a planned and costed phase of 5 years (2019/20 to 2023/24) with a 'first iteration' RRTP being submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2018 and a finalised RRTP completed and submitted by the end of March 2019, ready for commencing implementation from April 2019. RRTPs will then be an integral part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and be reviewed annually as part of the SHIP process. RRTPs will sit within the Community Planning Partners wider strategic planning framework of the Local Outcome Improvement Framework and the Local Housing Strategy, and the Strategic Plan for the delivery of objectives identified by the Health and Social Care Partnership

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is designed to be a working tool which:

- Sets out the local housing market and homelessness context in the Scottish Borders;
- Provides the baseline position of temporary accommodation supply;
- Sets out Scottish Borders Council's and partners' 5-year vision for temporary accommodation supply;
- Identifies support needs to enable rapid rehousing and action required to deliver these;
- Details the actions required to achieve our vision for temporary accommodation supply and settled housing options for homeless households; and
- Provides a rapid rehousing resource plan required to deliver the plan and evidence the co-ownership and resourcing of the Plan with wider partners, particularly Health & Social Care Partnerships and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Scottish Borders Housing Market

The Scottish Borders area is 473,614 hectares (1,827 square miles) and is located in the South East of Scotland. It has Edinburgh and the Lothians to the North, Northumberland to the South and Dumfries and Galloway to the West. Scottish Borders Council area is the fourth most sparsely-populated mainland Local Authority area in Scotland after Highland, Argyll and Bute and Dumfries and Galloway.

There are four Housing Market Areas in the Scottish Borders; Berwickshire, Central Borders, Northern and Southern Borders. Northern Borders is a sub - market in the wider Edinburgh market. Central Borders contains the larger settlements in the Scottish Borders; Hawick and Galashiels. Southern Borders is quite rural with only one main settlement, Newcastleton and Berwickshire is also a very rural and sparsely populated area.

Figure 1: Housing Market Area Maps

The estimated 2017 population for Scottish Borders was 115,020: an increase of 0.9 per cent from 114,030 in 2014. The population of Scottish Borders accounts for 2 per cent of the total population of Scotland. Since 1988, Scottish Borders's total population has risen overall. Scotland's population has also risen over this period. The Scottish Borders is a rural local authority where 30% of the population lives in settlements of under 500 people or in isolated hamlets. The largest town is Hawick with a 2016 estimated population of 13,783, followed by Galashiels with 12,601 – although, if neighbouring Tweedbank were included, Galashiels would be the largest town in Scottish Borders. The only other towns with a population of over 5,000 people are Peebles, Kelso and Selkirk.



In the Scottish Borders, 13 per cent of the population are aged 16 to 29 years. This is smaller than Scotland, where 18 per cent are aged 16 to 29 years. Persons aged 65 and over make up 24 per cent of Scottish Borders. This is larger than Scotland where 18 per cent are aged 60 and over.

The overall population of Scotland is expected to increase by 5.3% between 2016 and 2041 but the overall population of the Scottish Borders is not expected to change significantly in the same period (increase of 2.4%). However, the constitution of the population by banded age group is expected to change significantly, with a drop in the proportions of children and working-age people and an increase in the proportion of pensioners. These changes are expected to be more marked in Scottish Borders than in Scotland as a whole. In particular, proportions of the 75+ age group in Scottish Borders are projected to increase by 80%, which is even higher than the projected Scottish increase.

Of the 52,498 households that were recorded in the 2011 Census, the most typical household structure was of the married couple with no dependent children, followed by the single, working-age householder. The Scottish Borders has a slightly higher proportion of 2-person households than the Scottish average, confirming that the married couple with no children living at home is the most typical household structure in the region. All other household sizes are correspondingly slightly below the national average.

The number of households is projected to increase by 8% in the Scottish Borders, compared to 14% nationally. Within the Scottish Borders, it is projected that there will be more single person households and 3+ adults home.

66% of households in the Scottish Borders are owner-occupiers; this is the most typical tenure type in the region which is higher than for Scotland (62%). 19% of households live in the social rented sector and 12% private rented sector. The Scottish Borders has a lower level of social rented accommodation and a lower level of private rented housing, than is the case nationally (although in some years the private rented sector has been much higher: 2012 it was 17% and 2015 it was 16%).

56,400 people work in Scottish Borders. Earnings are below the Scottish average, particularly so for those working within the Scottish Borders area: people who live and work in the Scottish Borders earn just over 81% of the Scottish average wage; those who live in the Scottish Borders and work outside the area earn on average 92% of the Scottish average. This reflects the value of the employment available in the Scottish Borders economy.

In the Scottish Borders, the public services sector (public admin, education and health) is the largest employment sector (28% in the Borders and 31% for Scotland). Hotels and restaurants (including distribution) accounts as a large employment sector (22%). Fishing and agricultural accounts for 8% of the employment sector compared with Scotland (2%). There is a large amount of seasonal and part time employment in the Scottish Borders.

The proportion of working age people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and those unemployed people claiming or transferring on to Universal Credit (UC) in the Scottish Borders has consistently been below the level for Scotland. The unemployment rate in the Scottish Borders is 3.1%, below the national average of 4.1%.

The ratio of house prices compared with income levels is a key indicator of the relative affordability of owner occupation (6.3 in the Scottish Borders). Affordability varies across the Housing Market Areas, people who live and want to buy a property in the Scottish Borders will require on average over five times their income to be able to buy a home, in Southern Borders it is six times their income.

Table 1: Income and House Price 2016

Housing Market Area	Average Income*	Average House Price**	Housing affordability ratio
Berwickshire	£31,618	£184,202	5.8
Central Borders	£31,116	£157,544	5.1
Northern	£42,376	£218,586	5.2
Southern	£32,756	£206,131	6.3

*CACA Paycheck Data 2016

** Sasines data 2016

More detailed analysis of housing affordability was completed in 2016, in preparation for LHS development, using a modelling tool developed by Arneil Johnston. The model works by analysing a range of housing cost benchmarks and testing these against a range of assumptions, based on the proportion of income devoted to housing costs. The model then calculates the percentage of households that can/ cannot afford each housing tenure.

As can be seen from the housing cost profile, unsurprisingly, PRS rents are significantly higher than RSL rents, LHA rates and MMR benchmarks. Even at the LHA rate, PRS rents are unaffordable to households across all property sizes. Based on a two bedroom property households (assuming a 30% income to rent ratio) would require an annual income of £12,718 for a social rented property and £18,284 for a private rented property.

Figure 2: Affordability Analysis

1 bed housing costs	2 bed housing costs	3 bed housing costs	4 bed housing costs
RSL: £292 PRS: £352 LHA: £312 MMR: £265	RSL: £318 PRS: £457 LHA: £400 MMR: £340	RSL: £347 PRS: £559 LHA: £475 MMR: £404	RSL: £393 PRS: £790 LHA: £600 MMR: £510

Source: Arneil Johnston, 2016

The Local Housing Allowance levels for the Scottish Borders are as follows (2018/19):

Table 2: LHA rate 2018/19

Number of Bedrooms	2018/19 LHA rate per week
1 room - shared bathroom and kitchen	£56.96
1 bedroom	£72.00
2 bedrooms	£92.05
3 bedrooms	£109.62
4 bedrooms	£138.46

Recent national figures published on private sectors rents (Private Sector Rent Statistics, Scotland, 2010 to 2018) shows that the average rent in the Scottish Borders has increased for all sizes between 2017 and 2018. Increases ranged from 3.5% for one bedroom properties up to 25.6% for four bedroom properties, which compares to CPI inflation of 2.4% across this time period.

Table 3: Broad Rental Market Area Profile: Scottish Borders, 2018 (monthly)

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	1 shared bed
Lower Quartile	£325	£425	£495	£738	£251
Median	£350	£450	£563	£875	£294
Mean	£357	£478	£591	£942	£357
Upper Quartile	£390	£525	£675	£1,050	£541

The second SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) was undertaken in 2013/14 and was assessed as robust and credible by Scottish Government in 2015. It was undertaken to support the preparation of SDP2, as well as to inform development of the member authorities' LHS and Local Development Plans. Table 5 below sets out the total future housing need (excluding existing need) for the SESplan area from 2012-2032.

Table 4: Future Housing Need for Newly Arising Households, Excluding Net Existing Need (Constrained to SESplan Total) 2012-2032

	City of Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife SESplan	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	SESplan
Alternative Future: Steady Recovery 2	59,024	8,686	10,341	5,505	2,549	9,525	95,631
Alternative Future: Wealth Distribution 2	72,743	9,500	13,804	6,266	4,188	11,060	117,562
Alternative Future: Strong Economic Growth 2	87,452	10,563	17,006	6,617	5,863	12,412	139,913

Source: Core HMP Analysis of HNDA tool output, combined with core HMP analysis of existing need requirements, 2014

The SESplan Housing Supply Targets have been informed by a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA which identified three alternative futures based on different economic and demographic assumptions. Following analysis SESplan has concluded that the most likely outcome will fall

somewhere between the Steady Recovery and Wealth Distribution alternative futures. This means the Housing Supply Target for the Scottish Borders is 348, 128 for affordable housing and 220 for market housing.

The current SHIP (2019-2024) sets out how, when and where the Council and its partners could potentially deliver up to as many as 1,047 affordable homes over the period of SHIP and beyond. Table 5 below shows the breakdown of these proposed projects by year and Housing Market Area. If the SHIP delivers on these projects then this will meet the Housing Supply Target over the five years.

Table 5: Proposed Development Projects for SHIP 2019-2024

	2019/2020	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Berwickshire	47	114	70	12		243
Central	51	245	238	50	85	642
Northern	52	29	6	48		135
Southern						0
Scottish Borders	150	388	314	110	85	1,047

Scottish Borders Council is a stock transfer local authority, transferring all of its stock to Scottish Borders Housing Association in 2003. As of 2017/18 there were approximately 11,930 properties between nine different registered social landlords (RSLs) operating within the Borders. The four largest RSLs to operate in the Borders are; Waverley Housing Association, Berwickshire Housing Association, Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) and Eildon Housing Association. The others include national housing associations with some properties in the Borders, some of which provide specialist as well as general needs housing.

On average there are approximately over 1,200 lets every year within these four RSLs, each of these RSLs operates their own choice based lettings scheme and allocations policies.

The number of long term empty properties in the Scottish Borders in 2017 was 1,419 this figure has remained consistent over the past six years when the number of empty homes in 2011 was 1,422. This does not follow the same trend for Scotland where empty homes have continued to increase each year since 2012. Long term empty properties can impact the built environment, quality of life for neighbours, on housing need and on the sustainable use of land and resources and on the economy. The only effective way to reduce the negative impact of an empty dwelling is to occupy it.

Key points from the local Housing Market Context that impact on our approach to RRTP include:

- The Scottish Borders is a predominately large rural area which creates challenges for service delivery
- Each Housing Market Area has its own challenges – Northern HMA has very strong links with the Edinburgh housing market which creates affordability issues
- An increase in households in the Scottish Borders, particularly an increase in single households will have an impact on the housing stock required to accommodate smaller households.
- The role of the private rented sector in the Scottish Borders is very important in providing housing options but there continues to be barriers experienced by homeless households accessing the sector, through lack of choice and affordability.

- Council and RSL led developments will make a significant contribution to the delivery of affordable housing, albeit the level of this development is constrained by the availability of opportunities and other variable factors
- For households requiring larger properties the cost of housing in the PRS is considerably higher than that of social housing and for those who depend on the LHA it is simply unaffordable as a result of wider welfare reform challenges.
- The demand for social housing is greater for those on lower incomes, single households under 35 years old due to LHA rates in the Scottish Borders and the cost of the private rented sector.

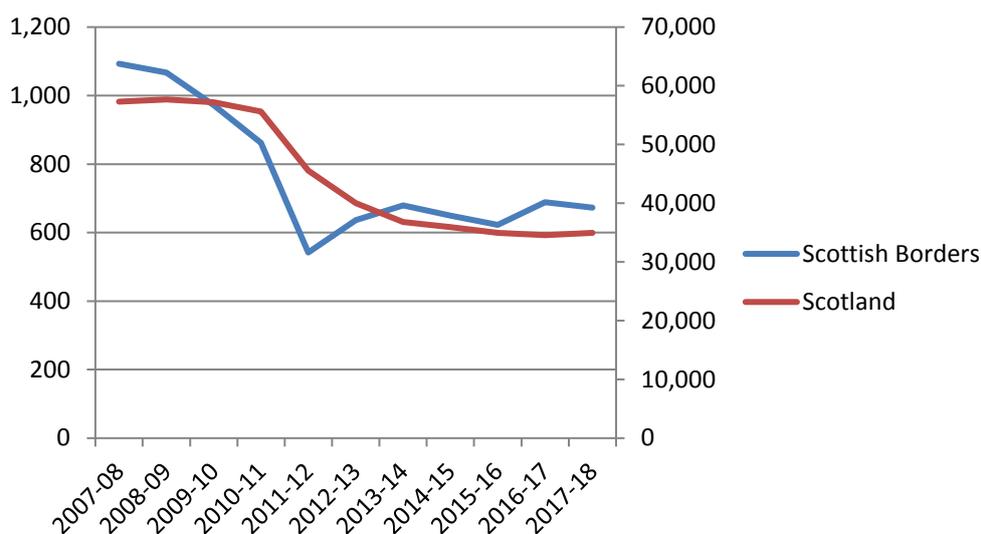
Homelessness

Following the introduction in 2011 of a housing options approach to homelessness prevention, and an initial significant fall of 37% in 2011/2012, the number of homelessness applications in Scottish Borders has remained largely stable at around the 650 mark per year since 2012/2013. This has been in contrast with the national picture which has seen year on year decreases in the number of applications until 2017/2018 when a 1% increase in applications nationally contrasted with a 2% decrease in Scottish Borders. The 673 applications received in 2017/2018 were 38% fewer than in 2007/2008 when the number of applications peaked at 1093. The number of applications received in each of the most recent years accounts for about 1% of households in the Scottish Borders.

Table 6: Homeless applications in the Scottish Borders Year	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Total	1093	1067	972	862	542	637	679	650	623	689	673

Source: Scottish Government Homelessness in Scotland 2017-18

Figure 3: Number of applications under the Homeless Persons legislation



The relative stability of the number of homelessness applications in the Scottish Borders is set against a very challenging local landscape in terms of housing affordability, welfare reform and economic fragility. A shortage of some house types in the social rented sector places pressure on the private rental market, where high rents are driven by demand from the buy-to-let, second homes, holiday rentals and commuter market. Settled accommodation options for homeless people are in short supply and demand continually exceeds supply. This brings specific challenges to homelessness services, will continue to do so, and places an increasing emphasis on the private sector and alternative tenures to provide long term housing solutions.

While rough sleeping in the Scottish Borders is not necessarily as visible as it is in the cities, of the 673 homeless applications made in 2017/2018, 30 applicants advised that they had slept rough at least once during the last 3 months and 10 had slept rough the night before.

Single people make up the majority of applicants (62%) and those under 35. The number of statutory homelessness applications received from young people aged 24 or under fell by 8% in 2017/2018 and, as a proportion of the total number of applications received, has fallen from 30% in 2015/2016 to 27% in 2016/2017 and to 24% in 2017/2018.

The reasons that households become homeless in the Borders largely mirrors the national picture with housing crisis most commonly underpinned by households (i) asked to leave their current accommodation; (ii) experiencing a dispute within the household; or (iii) as a result of action by landlord

In 2017/18, 590 households were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness under the homelessness legislation, of which 578 households were assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness. These figures are slight increases of 1.7% and 0.5% respectively in comparison with 2016/2017 and on a par with the rate of increase nationally during the year.

The level of repeat homelessness applications in Scottish Borders remains low, with only 4.5% of new applications in 2017/2018 having already made an application within the previous year in comparison with the national average of 6%.

In 2017/18, 63% of households assessed as unintentionally homeless secured settled accommodation. This was a slight decrease in comparison with the previous year and remains lower than the national average of 69% in 2017/2018.

220 households entered temporary accommodation during 2017/2018. 7% (15) of these households contained children. This compares with the national average of 10% of households in temporary accommodation containing children. 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the quality of temporary accommodation provided. And the use of bed and breakfast as a temporary accommodation option in Scottish Borders remains minimal with only 2 households in bed and breakfast during the year.

The average length of stay in temporary accommodation in the Scottish Borders increased in 2017/2018 to 119 days from 115 days in 2016/2017. This compares with a national average of 97 days and a 'East HUB' average of 140 days.

The proportion of all social lets by RSLs to statutory homeless households in 2017/2018 was 22%, a decrease from the previous year at 24%.

Rapid Rehousing Baseline Position

As a housing stock transfer authority, Scottish Borders Council has only a small number of properties available for its own use. Consequently, a strong partnership approach between the Council and Registered Social Landlords has been essential to ensure the provision of a sufficient supply of good quality temporary accommodation. The success of this partnership approach is reflected in the low level of reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation.

RRTP will require a multi-agency review of the existing model, and development of a new joint model, of access to social housing across Scottish Borders, which will help homeless people to move directly into suitable mainstream housing as a normal default resolution to homelessness, reducing the need for temporary accommodation. This will include a review of RSLs' Allocations Policies, and will require the RSLs and the Council's Assets and Infrastructure Department to work together to reshape our model of temporary accommodation.

There is clear evidence that particular groups are at high risk of homelessness. A HARSAG recommendation is that pathway plans are always agreed (or agreed as quickly as possible) to prevent homelessness for the groups who are predictably at highest risk of homelessness including:

- People leaving public institutions or with previous experience of public institutions such as prison, mental health services, armed forces;
- Groups with particular needs such as women who have experienced domestic violence, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, people experiencing relationship breakdown, LGBT groups and people with experience of the care system or on leaving the care system;
- People who have experienced or are experiencing poverty and/or adverse childhood experiences; and
- Those facing potential eviction from the private rented sector, or the social rented sector including particular approaches on rent arrears.

We will build on existing local joint pathway arrangements such as the SHORE (Sustainable Housing On Release for Everyone) standards for prisoners, the multi-agency 'Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers in the Scottish Borders', and the Safer Housing Options Service, MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk

Assessment Conference arrangements), and CEDAR (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) services for victims of domestic abuse, to ensure that effective pathways are developed and implemented for all of the groups who are predictably at highest risk of homelessness. The Safer Housing Options Service, MARAC and CEDAR services already provide evidence for how strong local partnership connections at both a strategic and operational level across a wide range of agencies can produce positive outcomes for vulnerable people.

In addition, HARSAG recommends building on the above recommendation about high risk groups by offering additional recommendations in relation specifically to children and young people. As indicated in the Scottish Borders 2017-2022 Local Housing Strategy, the Scottish Borders has had a relatively high level of homelessness young people. This picture has been improving year on year since 2014/2016, however, addressing the needs of young people continues to be, and will continue to be, a priority for the RRTP partners in the Scottish Borders. We will build on the success of the specialist supported accommodation for care experienced young people at Albert Place in Galashiels and our multi-agency 'Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers in the Scottish Borders'. During 2018/2019, the Council has started working with Aberlour to deliver a flexible, intensive and highly responsive support service to families at the edge of care. In 2018, the Council commissioned a study on the housing needs and aspirations of young people in the Scottish Borders which included face to face surveys with young people. The findings of the study will help us to shape pathways and interventions meet the particular needs of young people, prevent them from becoming homeless, and support them in sustaining accommodation

The majority of temporary accommodation stock in the Scottish Borders is in mainstream properties based within the community. The properties vary in type and size, are a mix of flatted and cottage type accommodation and are fully furnished. They are located within the main towns and villages across the Scottish Borders and so have access to shops, schools, GP practices, support providers and other services. Nevertheless, provision of temporary accommodation over such a wide rural area presents significant challenges, particularly to ensure that the right size and type of accommodation is available at the right time to meet the needs of each homeless household.

They provide temporary accommodation to single applicants, couples and families. The average stay in this type of accommodation in 2017/18 was 119 days at an average cost of £96.36 per week.

At 31 March 2018, this stock of temporary accommodation consisted of 108 properties. 18 of the properties were Council owned and 90 were leased by the Council from RSLs and sublet to homeless households.

4 of the properties are adapted, including 1 which is fully adapted for use by people with wheelchairs.

With the exception of the Council owned accommodation in Hawick, which includes a part-time concierge service, these properties do not have any integral support provision. Floating support is offered to every household who is assessed as having a need for it.

In addition, the Council continues to make occasional use of B+B. There is no stock of Bed and Breakfast places reserved for use by homeless households: the Council secures Bed and Breakfast on a spot-purchase basis when required. Action by the Council to continually improve the management of temporary accommodation has reduced the rate of use of B+B in the Scottish Borders year on year from 124 households in 2012/2013 to only 2 households in 2017/2018.

Exit surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with 90% of those surveyed in 2017/2018 expressing satisfaction with the overall quality of the temporary accommodation with which they were provided.

At 31 March 2018, there were 83 households in the Scottish Borders living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council and its RSL partners. This included 21 households with pregnant women or dependant children. All of this temporary accommodation provision was in the form of mainstream, furnished properties. There were no households staying in B+B at 31 March 2018.

We have previously piloted “flipping” temporary accommodation into RSL permanent tenancies, which has produced successful results. It is a tool we are looking to develop and utilise further where this outcome would benefit the tenant and reduce disruption on the household.

Table 7: Temporary Accommodation Provision and Voids in the Scottish Borders at 31 March 2018

Accommodation	Provider	Capacity	Occupied	Vacant	Average weekly charge (incl. service charges)
Kelso	SBC	14	10	4	£249.97
Hawick	SBC	4	4	0	£233.36
Dispersed	SBHA	50	42	8	£175.87
Peebles	SBHA	4	2	2	£159.88
Dispersed	Berwickshire Housing Association	7	6	1	£198.03
Dispersed	Waverley Housing	14	10	4	£188.34
Dispersed	Eildon Housing Association	11	8	3	£195.56
Dispersed	Link Housing Association	4	3	1	£163.39
Total		108	85	23	

In addition, specialist supported accommodation at Albert Place in Galashiels, provides 4 self-contained flats for care experienced young people and includes a training flat. The accommodation is owned by SBHA and managed by the Council’s Throughcare and Aftercare team. The allocation of flats is agreed through a multi-disciplinary panel. High level intense support tailored to the individual is provided by the Throughcare and Aftercare team.

In addition, Border Women’s Aid manage a property which provides refuge accommodation and support for up to 4 women or families at risk of domestic abuse or fleeing domestic abuse. The cost per week in 2017/2018 was £287.25 and the average length of stay was 54 days.

To date, there is no Housing First provision in the Scottish Borders. However, we believe that the strong local partnership connections which we have at both a strategic and operational level in relation to, for example, the Scottish Borders Justice Service and MAPPA, and the Safer Housing

Options Service, MARAC and CEDAR services for victims of domestic abuse, provide us with a strong foundation upon which to develop a Housing First principles.

Rapid Rehousing 5 Year Vision / Projections

Our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders is:

- Homelessness is prevented wherever possible but where homelessness cannot be prevented a settled, mainstream housing outcome is secured as quickly as possible.
- When temporary accommodation is needed it will be mainstream, furnished accommodation within a community, and time spent in it will be minimal, with as few transitions as possible.
- Housing First will be the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages. We will work in collaboration with Health and Social Care Partnership, and other relevant services, to ensure tenancies are supported and sustained.

To achieve this vision over the period to March 2024 we aim to do the following:

- We will continue to improve the quality and integration of our housing, homelessness, social care and health and other support services to maximise housing sustainment, optimise housing options, and prevent homelessness occurring wherever possible.
- We will seek to do so in such a way that allows us to reduce our stock of temporary accommodation by 75% on a year by year basis to a maximum of 30 properties by 2024.
- When homelessness cannot be prevented time spent in temporary accommodation will aim to a maximum of 60 days by 2024
- Our temporary accommodation provision will continue to be high quality, mainstream, fully furnished accommodation within the community which meets the needs and choice of homeless households as far as is possible in a rural context.
- We will continue to make minimal use of B&B and, if possible, not use it at all.
- We will seek to develop and implement a Housing First model that meets the needs of people with multiple needs in the Scottish Borders and which, as far as is possible in a rural context, conforms with the 7 principles of Housing First.

Below are initial projections for the change in temporary accommodation supply over the forthcoming 5 years:

Table 8: Initial Projections of Temporary Accommodation Capacity (No. of Households) at 31 March

Accommodation	Provider	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Kelso	SBC	14	0	0	0	0	0
Hawick	SBC	4	4	0	0	0	0
Dispersed	SBHA	50	50	45	37	25	16

Peebles	SBHA	4	4	2	0	0	0
Dispersed	Berwickshire Housing Association	7	7	7	6	4	3
Dispersed	Waverley Housing	14	14	12	10	7	4
Dispersed	Eildon Housing Association	11	11	10	8	6	4
Dispersed	Link Housing Association	4	4	4	3	2	1
Total		108	94	80	64	44	28

The above are initial projections for our first Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. It is important to stress that the aims, targets and projections described above will be subject to continual review and, therefore, possible amendment, as our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan develops over the forthcoming years: this first Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is just the start of our discussion about how to proceed with Rapid Rehousing and achieve our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders.

Identifying Support Needs

The Guidance for Local Authorities and Partners on Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans emphasises that a critical part of the shift to a position of rapid rehousing will be to remove “tenancy readiness” culture and language. The evidence is clear that the majority of households experiencing homelessness have no, or low support needs and will easily move into mainstream housing with day to day housing management advice and assistance.

Our initial analysis of support needs in the Scottish Borders indicates the following:

Table 9: Support Needs

Estimated Support Needs	Estimated %age of current homeless cases	Estimated number of current homeless cases
No/low support needs - proportion of current homeless cases with no/low support requirements who will easily move into mainstream, settled housing with no need for specific support other than sign-posting and low level housing management support provided by housing providers. This also include concierge based services.	57%	143
Medium support needs - proportion of current homeless cases with medium support needs, whether visiting housing support, or multi-professional wrap-around support to enable people to live independently in mainstream	32%	80

housing. May include concierge in addition to visiting housing support and other professional support services.		
SMD/Complex needs - proportion of current homeless cases with severe and multiple disadvantage or complex needs who would benefit from intensive wrap-around support and a Housing First approach to re-housing	11%	28
Residential/Supported Accommodation - proportion of current homeless cases where independent living within the community is not possible or preferable for whatever reason (safety, risk to self or others, choice) and for whom shared and supported accommodation is the preferred housing option.	0%	0

Our initial analysis indicates that, in common with the national picture, the majority of households experiencing homelessness in the Scottish Borders, have no, or low support needs and will easily move into mainstream housing with day to day housing management advice and assistance.

Our initial analysis indicates that the proportion of homeless cases with severe and multiple disadvantages (SMD) or complex support needs who would benefit from a Housing First approach to rehousing is currently around 11%. Currently there is no Housing First provision in the Scottish Borders. Introducing this model of intensive support in the Scottish Borders will ensure households with complex needs can access personalised, open-ended, flexible support to minimise their risk of repeat homelessness and address their wider needs. Accordingly, we will be seeking to develop and implement a Housing First model that meets the needs of people with multiple needs in the Scottish Borders, which is responsive, joined-up, delivered locally and effective, and which, as far as is possible in a rural context, conforms with the 7 principles of Housing First. We believe that the strong local partnership connections which we have at both a strategic and operational level in relation to, for example, the Safer Housing Options Service, MARAC and CEDAR services for victims of domestic abuse, already provide us with a strong foundation upon which to do so.

Our initial analysis of current homelessness cases has not identified any households who currently would require residential or supported accommodation, however, we know that this is a need for some households. Consequently, we will be looking demand for and availability of suitable supported accommodation for homeless households in the Scottish Borders for whom independent living within the community is not possible or preferable for whatever reason (safety, risk to self or others, choice) and for whom residential or supported accommodation is the preferred housing option. We shall aim to ensure that such accommodation is appropriate for the individual person including, where necessary, highly specialist provision in a psychologically informed environment.

We are conscious that our analysis of support needs at this point is just a first step to better understanding the need for support services and the impact of support services on homeless households in Scottish Borders. Consequently, we are doing work across partner agencies to map existing support services in order to better understand what works best, where there might be gaps in service provision, and project likely future support needs.

Rapid Rehousing Plan

Using the analysis undertaken above, the Plan sets out how Scottish Borders Council and partners are going to move from the current position to the future vision of rapid rehousing. The *Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20-2023/24: Action Plan* identifies 6 high level actions with sub-actions detailed against each:

1. Develop, implement and monitor the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
2. Increase focus on homelessness prevention to stop homelessness happening in the first place.
3. Ensure homeless households can access existing housing quickly.
4. Ensure homeless and potentially homeless households can access the right type of support.
5. Review Temporary Accommodation model.
6. Increase affordable housing supply to meet needs of homeless households.

Key actions include:

Short Term - December 2018 to March 2019:

- Prepare of First iteration of RRTP and submit it to Scottish Government.
- Seek Scottish Borders Council Members approval of RRTP.
- Establish formal links for RRTP with all relevant partners and strategies and develop governance map of same including:
 - Local Housing Strategy (LHS)
 - Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)
 - Health and Social Care Strategic Plan
 - Integration Joint Board (IJB)
 - Borders Housing Alliance
 - Health and Social Care Integration Strategic Planning Group
 - Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership
 - Public Protection
 - Adult Protection
 - Child Protection
 - Borders Drug and Alcohol Services
 - Scottish Borders Violence Against Women Partnership
- Complete Equality Impact Assessment.
- Develop resource plan which will assess the staffing and other costs required to develop and implement the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and how these staffing and other costs may be resourced.
- Undertake further local modelling to continue to better understand the whole picture of homelessness in the Scottish Borders including with regard to homelessness demand, housing supply, range and availability of housing options, housing options advice and assistance services, access to housing, homelessness prevention, housing sustainment, support services.

Medium Term – April 2019 to March 2020:

- Implement Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- Develop and implement an engagement and communications plan for Rapid Rehousing.
- Develop and implement comprehensive local modelling framework to build on existing evidence base and ensure that we continually improve our understanding of the whole picture of homelessness in the Scottish Borders including with regard to homelessness demand, housing supply, range and availability of housing options, housing options advice and assistance services, access to housing, homelessness prevention, housing sustainment, support services.
- Develop and implement a Housing First model that meets the needs of people with multiple needs in the Scottish Borders and which, as far as is possible in a rural context, conforms with the 7 principles of Housing First:
- Review Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan including aims, targets and projections.

Long Term – April 2020 to March 2024:

- Review model of access to social housing across Scottish Borders, including RSLs' Allocations Policies review.
- Develop new model of access to social housing across Scottish Borders, including RSLs' Allocations Policies review.
- Conduct annual review Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan including aims, targets and projections and make adjustments to Plan as necessary.

Resource Plan

The *Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20-2023/24: Action Plan* describes in detail the 6 high level actions and sub-actions which Scottish Borders Council and its partners are going to take to achieve rapid rehousing over the forthcoming 5 years. Resourcing the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is critical to its successful delivery. We can achieve much within existing resources, however, without securing additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government's 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund', it will not be possible to achieve rapid rehousing in full.

All the partners in the development of the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan believe we can make significant progress towards achieving our vision for Rapid Rehousing from within existing resources.

We can do so by continuing to further strengthen already successful partnerships, continue to build on existing local joint pathway arrangements, and develop a new joint model of access to social housing across Scottish Borders which will help homeless people to move directly into suitable mainstream housing as a normal default resolution to homelessness thereby reducing the need for temporary accommodation.

Council and RSL led housing developments will make a significant contribution to the delivery of affordable housing and, accordingly, our ability to provide suitable housing for people who become homeless. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018-2023 describes a very ambitious and aspirational 1177 new affordable homes over the life of the SHIP.

The positive impacts arising from implementation of rapid rehousing have the potential to reduce expenditure in crisis, emergency, and acute service delivery over the medium to long term. If these expenditure reductions can be realised and evidenced then it may be possible to use them to offset a proportion of ongoing rapid rehousing and Housing 1st operational costs in the long term.

Further, we are committed to developing rapid rehousing and Housing First in such a way that, in due course, Rapid Rehousing and Housing First become, as far as possible, a part of mainstream service delivery across all the partners.

Nevertheless, there are aspects of rapid rehousing resourcing which remain uncertain at this stage.

The reduction in the 'backlog' of homelessness cases which rapid rehousing aims to achieve and, correspondingly, in the number of units of temporary accommodation should lead to a reduction in direct temporary accommodation costs. However, the continuing ongoing changes in welfare reform, particularly in regard to Universal Credit, and the Scottish Government's current review of temporary accommodation financing mean that there remains considerable uncertainty over how the financial framework for temporary accommodation will develop over the forthcoming years.

There is a need for further assessment of how best to meet the need for residential or supported accommodation for homeless households for whom independent living within the community is not possible or preferable. It is important that this assessment is not conducted related to other ongoing assessment work that is being done under LHS Priority 4 'More People are Supported to Live Independently in Their Own Homes'.

In addition, it is clear that additional resources will be required in order to support the transformation and achieve in full our vision for rapid rehousing. Without this it will not be possible to achieve our vision for rapid rehousing in the Scottish Borders.

A critical need identified by the Scottish Borders RRTP partners is for dedicated staffing resources which can take forward the significant volume of developmental work which will be needed to achieve the transformation to rapid rehousing and Housing First across all the partner agencies. It is envisaged that this would include:

- 1 fte Rapid Rehousing Development Officer over the duration of the RRTP.
- 0.75 fte Housing 1st Development Officer over the duration of the RRTP.
- 0.5 fte Rapid Rehousing Private Sector / Empty Homes Officer for 18 months in years 1 and 2 of the RRTP.

In particular, however, it appears likely that significant additional resources will be needed, not just to develop a Housing 1st model, but to implement a Housing 1st model on an ongoing basis. At this very early stage in the development of the Housing 1st model nationally, it is very difficult to be sure how the demand for Housing 1st and the resourcing of it will develop. However, it appears reasonable to assume that (1) the demand for Housing 1st will include a 'backlog' of current cases which will reduce as Housing First develops, and (2) the cost of Housing 1st for each client is normally likely to reduce over the first 1 to 3 years. On the basis of these assumptions and of the existing research on Housing

1st, the following table describes initial estimated projections of numbers and costs for implementing Housing 1st in Scottish Borders:

(Period of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan)					(Post RRTP)	
2019/20	2020/21 (H1st Yr 1)	2021/22 (H1st Yr 2)	2022/23 (H1st Yr 3)	2023/24 (H1st Yr 4)	2024/25 (H1st Yr 5)	2025/26 (H1st Yr 6)
	8 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £48,000	22 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £132,000	28 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £168,000	12 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £72,000	12 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £72,000	12 new H1st clients at £6.0k per client p.a. = £72,000
		7 yr 1 clients b/f at £3.5k per client p.a. = £24,500	6 yr 1 clients b/f at £2.0k per client p.a. = £12,000	5 yr 1 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £7,500	4 yr 1 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £6,000	3 yr 1 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £4,500
			22 yr 2 clients b/f at £3.5k per client p.a. = £77,000	20 yr 2 clients b/f at £2.0k per client p.a. = £40,000	18 yr 2 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £27,000	16 yr 2 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £24,000
				22 yr 3 clients b/f at £3.5k per client p.a. = £77,000	20 yr 3 clients b/f at £2.0k per client p.a. = £40,000	18 yr 3 clients b/f at £1.5k per client p.a. = £27,000
					22 yr 4 clients b/f at £3.5k per client p.a. = £77,000	20 yr 4 clients b/f at £2.0k per client p.a. = £40,000
						22 yr 5 clients b/f at £3.5k per client p.a. = £77,000
Total Annual Cost of Housing 1st	£48,000	£156,500	£257,000	£196,500	£222,000	£244,500
Cumulative Cost of Housing 1 st Over Period of RRTP	£48,000	£204,500	£461,500	£658,000	-	-

A further additional resource would be the creation of a Crisis Intervention Fund to allow the application of creative and immediate service responses to cases of homelessness risk which do not fit into established pathways in order to improve the chances of positive outcomes for individual households and to develop practical new solutions and new ways of working.

The following table summarises the estimated key additional resources required to support the required transformational change needed to develop and implement the RRTP:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Rapid Rehousing Development Officer from April 2019 (1.0 fte).	£39,073	£39,073	£39,073	£39,073	£39,073
Housing First Development Officer from September 2019 (0.75 fte)	£14,652	£29,305	£29,305	£29,305	£29,305
Rapid Rehousing Private Sector / Empty Homes Officer from September 2019 to March 2021 (0.5 fte)	£9,768	£19,537	Nil	Nil	Nil
Develop and implement a Crisis Intervention Fund from December 2019	£6,500	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
Implementation of Housing 1st	Nil	£48,000	£156,500	£257,000	£196,500
Total Annual Additional RRTP cost	£69,993	£160,915	£249,878	£350,378	£289,878

It must be emphasised that this resource plan will require to be subject to continual review and, therefore, possible amendment, as our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan develops over the forthcoming years. We are confident that we can achieve a lot of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan within existing resources, however, it is clear that without securing additional resources we will not be able to complete the Plan in full.