



What you need to know an update on Rapid Rehousing

Background

The [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group](#) (HARSAG) was appointed by the Scottish Government in 2017 and tasked with making recommendations on:

- how to tackle rough sleeping that winter;
- how to eradicate rough sleeping altogether;
- ways to transform temporary accommodation; and
- how to end homelessness in Scotland.

HARSAG submitted its final report to the Scottish Government in June 2018. In total, 70 recommendations were made and all have been accepted in principle.

The recommendations included a commitment to move towards a rapid rehousing model using Housing First where appropriate.

Rapid rehousing and Housing First

The HARSAG recommendations still have a significant focus on prevention of homelessness where possible. When a person or family does become homeless, rapid rehousing means:

- The household should access settled mainstream accommodation as quickly as possible.
- Time spent in any temporary accommodation should be kept to a minimum with as few moves as possible.
- When temporary accommodation is used it should be mainstream, furnished and within a community if possible (moving away from using hostels and B&Bs).

Rapid rehousing should be the default position for all households with low or no support needs.

For people with multiple and complex needs, a Housing First approach should be taken. Housing First is usually used to help people who are, or have been, sleeping rough and who have problems with addictions, physical and/or mental health. It involves providing intensive support for as long as it is required and with no conditions attached. You can find out more about the principles and how Housing First is working across the UK and Ireland in this [CIH publication](#).

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans

Local authorities have been tasked with developing a five year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for their area by 31 December 2018. Guidance and tools have been developed to help draft the plans and is available through [Glasgow Homelessness Network](#).

Funding

The Scottish Government has [committed £21 million](#) over two years to support the transition to rapid rehousing and Housing First.

Social Bite and the Merchant House of Glasgow have established a £3.2 million fund to support Housing First projects across Scotland. The money will be used to fund the support needed for Housing First. Funds are being administered by the Corra Foundation and details of the projects that have already been established are [available online](#).

Nicola Sturgeon later [announced £6.5 million](#) to support Housing First initiatives during her speech at the SNP party conference in October.

Challenges

CIH Scotland has welcomed the ambition to end homelessness and the move towards rapid rehousing and Housing First. However, we have raised a number of concerns about how the principles will work in practice. The housing sector needs:

- an adequate supply of suitable, affordable homes to move people out of temporary accommodation quickly;
- guaranteed long term funding to be made available to cover support costs. While funding through third sector organisations such as Social Bite is very welcome, it may not be sustainable;
- clarity on how to maintain choice and balance the needs of homeless households with others in housing need;
- support from all partners including local authorities, RSLs, health and social care and the third sector; and
- support for staff to adapt to new ways of working.