

**Housing Service Improvement Plan
2024/25**

Progress Report: August 2024



1. Introduction

The [Housing Service Improvement Plan 2024/25](#) was developed in response to challenges and concerns around a number of critical service areas. Approved and implemented in April 2024, the Plan supports the mission of the Housing Service to 'create place that people are proud to call home' and the Angus Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023 – 2028 vision that 'everyone in Angus has a good quality, safe, secure and warm home that they can afford'.

A number of improvement actions were identified across three service improvement priority areas for 2024/25: Customer Excellence, Housing Quality and Place, and Prevention and Homelessness. Embedding a programme of continuous improvement and the development of a Digital Strategy were identified as enablers for the delivery of the improvements.

Service Delivery groups have been established to manage the delivery of the respective improvement activities and performance management framework. The groups are supported by additional staff resources from the Housing Service Performance and Improvement team to provide an increased focus on performance and improvement activities across the Service.

We are pleased to present the first progress report for the Housing Service Improvement Plan, covering the period 1 April 2024 – 31 August 2024. This report will highlight the progress made by each of the Service Delivery Groups, potential risks to delivery and impact against performance to date.

As we review the progress to date, we remain committed to continuous improvement and delivering high-quality and customer focussed services to our tenants and other service users.

1. Service Delivery Group Updates

Continuous Improvement

We will:

- Ensure a programme of continuous improvement is embedded within the Housing Service.

Summary of Achievements this Period:

- Governance and reporting arrangements for the delivery of the Service Improvement Plan implemented.
- Performance and Improvement Team established on temporary basis and recruitment of additional temporary staff resources completed.
- Service improvement training resources identified.
- Development of performance management framework ongoing – performance indicators agreed and development of Pentana to support performance monitoring ongoing.
- Commenced review of register of data reports.
- Programme of data validation checks implemented.
- New housing SharePoint site launched.

Potential Risks to Delivery:

- Data integrity – issues with recording, reporting and scrutiny of data. A programme of data validation checks has been implemented.
- Skills resource and ability to recruit staff with required skills and expertise to support performance reporting, data analysis and service improvement. We have introduced mandatory training for all staff within the Performance and Improvement Team, covering Business Objects reporting, Quality Improvement and Service Design.

Next Period Planned Achievements:

- Finalise performance management framework and development of performance indicators and improvement actions on Pentana.
- Complete review of register of data reports and methodology.
- Development of service wide training framework.
- Agree business case and project initiation document for development of data dashboards.
- Commence Service Review.

Customer Excellence



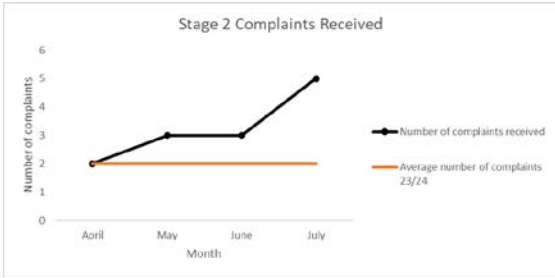

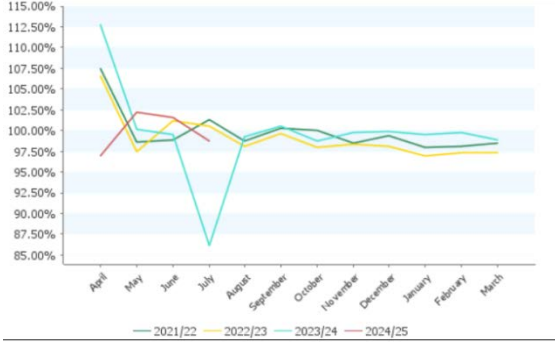

We will:

- Improve customer satisfaction and reduce complaints.
- Reduce incidents of serious rent arrears.

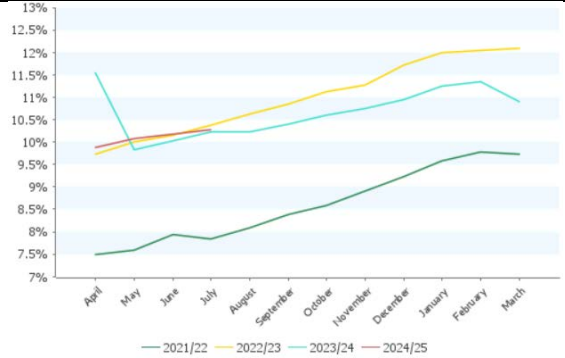
Summary of Achievements this Period:

- Development and launch of Customer Charter and Service Standards.
- Thematic review of complaints completed to identify priorities for improvement.
- Review of tenant satisfaction survey results and engagement with staff to identify further areas for improvement.
- Implementation of revised internal complaints handling process ensuring stage one complaints are resolved at the front line, where possible, and lessons learned are captured and shared.
- Implementation of revised elected member enquiry process.
- Re-introduced paper housing application form, for applicants who request it, and promoted support available for customers applying for housing.
- Consultation on revised Common Allocation Policy undertaken with applicants, tenants and stakeholders.
- Implementation of revised Community Housing Team delivery model (coastal and landward teams) to increase consistency in service delivery.
- Duty working group established and data gathering exercise completed to inform test of change and role of Senior Clerical Officer resource.
- Reviewed learning from rent arrears eviction cases to identify areas for improvement.
- Tenant Participation Strategy under development – initial engagement with tenants undertaken and Strategy on a Page developed.

Key Performance Indicators

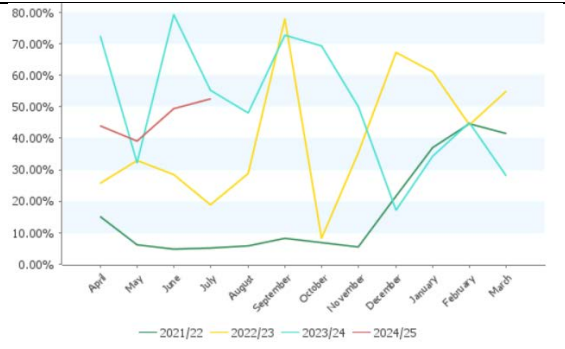
Indicator	Chart	Trend	Commentary																																																																	
Number of complaints (stage 1) received	 <table border="1"> <caption>Stage 1 Complaints Received</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Number of complaints received</th> <th>Average number of complaints 23/24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>34</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May</td> <td>26</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>15</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>12</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Number of complaints received	Average number of complaints 23/24	April	34	20	May	26	20	June	15	20	July	12	20		The number of stage 1 complaints received has decreased since April 2024 and has remained below the 2023/24 average since June 2024.																																																		
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Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as a percentage of rent due



While gross rent arrears have seen a slight increase in recent months, performance has improved compared to the same period in 2023/24 and remains below target of 10.5%.

Percentage of tenancy offers refused



The percentage of tenancy offers refused has increased over recent months and is sitting above target (30%). This correlates with an increase in direct matches and use of auto bid however further work is required to understand the reasons for refusals and identify potential improvements.

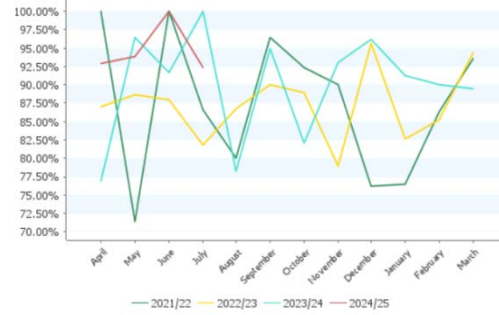
Average number of bids per property (CBL)



Info only

There has been an increase in the average number of bids made on properties advertised on CBL which highlights increasing demand for social housing in Angus. The reduction of bids in July correlates with an exercise undertaken to match available properties to existing homeless waiting list applicants.

[Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year \(all sources of let\)](#)



This percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than one year has remained above target (91.5%) since April 2024.

Potential Risks to Delivery:

- Staff resource issues impact ability to deliver customer charter and service standards. Resources to be reviewed as part of service review. Review of process and procedures to identify opportunities to streamline activities.
- Resistance to change and new ways of working. Ongoing support for staff from team leaders and managers. Regular team briefings and team meetings introduced.

Next Period Planned Achievements:

- Recruitment of additional Senior Clerical Officers to support Community Housing Teams with duty enquiries and administrative tasks.
- Complete and implement Redress, Compensation and Tenant Allowance Policy.
- Implement a consistent approach to recording customer contacts, to enable us to monitor whether the service standards are being met.
- Implement revised Common Allocation Policy.
- Finalise and implement Tenant Participation Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Launch Housing E-Newsletter.
- Review rent collection and rent arrears recovery approaches - undertake mapping of customer journeys, involving key stakeholders, to understand what is working well, what is challenging and areas for improvement.
- Review and implement revised year end rent arrears write off process.
- Review and implement revised sequestration year end rent arrears write off process.
- Continue to review internal processes and procedures.

Quality of Housing and Place

We will:

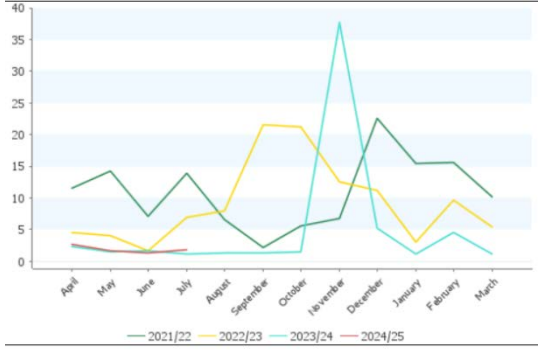

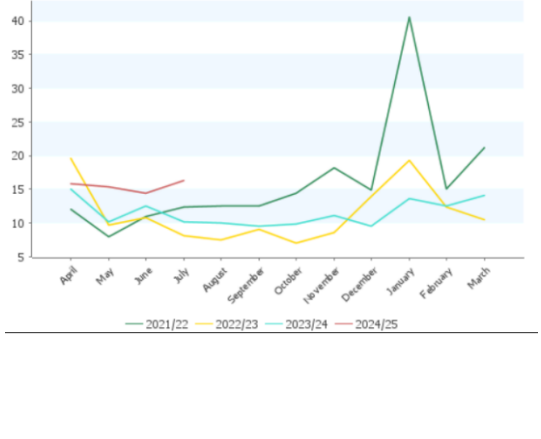

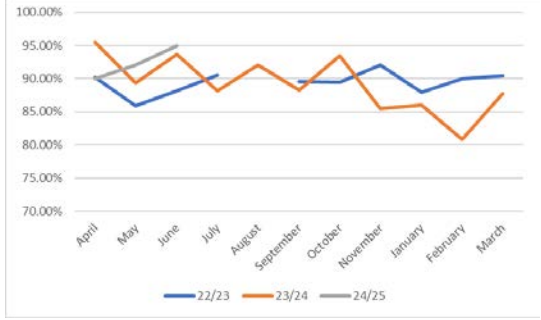

- Ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).
- Develop our approach to asset management to ensure we have a comprehensive understanding of our assets as well as the needs and aspirations of our tenants to inform future investment decisions.
- Ensure the contracts for voids and unplanned repairs are delivered successfully.
- Improve customer satisfaction in the quality of our neighbourhoods.

Summary of Achievements this Period:

- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Plan for 2023-28 was reviewed in late July 2024 by a panel including the Service Leaders for Housing and Assets, Community Housing Team Managers, Housing Assets Manager and Finance staff. This has now been finalised and will be monitored to ensure it is delivered successfully. A similar exercise is underway for Planned Maintenance.
- Additional resources recruited to the Housing Asset team to ensure robust management of electrical and fire safety contracts.
- Measures introduced to address access issues to properties.
- Successful procurement of new contracts to ensure ongoing compliance with Electrical Installations and Smoke and Heat Alarms requirements.
- Property elements on NEC Housing updated to include all adaptations – ensuring the best use of adapted housing stock.
- Implementation of roof inspection programme for properties affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC).
- Options appraisal for flood damaged housing stock in Brechin has commenced and is ongoing.
- Repairs and Voids Board established – ensuring robust governance arrangements for repairs contract monitoring and performance management.
- Training delivered to Housing Officers on contract administration processes.
- Introduced simplified schedule of rates for kitchen and bathroom replacements.
- Testing revised void process in Forfar and Kirriemuir.
- Approval received to appoint energy supply management service provider to support management of utilities in void properties and free up Housing Officer time.
- New contracts for voids and unplanned repairs for Forfar and Kirriemuir commenced 5 August 2024. Ongoing engagement with previous contractor to resolve incomplete works and tender being prepared to procure contractor to support completion of all overdue works.

- Information gathering ongoing to review lessons learned from the current and previous unplanned repairs contracts and will be used to inform the options appraisal ahead of tendering future contracts.
- Approval of proposed 5-year roof replacement programme.
- Implementation of calendar of estate walkabouts and guidance for officers.

Indicator	Chart	Trend	Commentary
Percentage of stock meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)			Continuing to see improvements in the percentage of stock meeting SHQS and on track for reaching full compliance within the next 1 – 3 months.
Percentage of rent lost through properties being empty			Performance against this indicator continues to be improving following a steady reduction in performance at the end of 2023/24 and reduced to below target (1.7%) in July 2024.
Average number of days to relet properties			The number of days to relet properties is seeing signs of improvement however still remains above the target of 60 days.

<p>Average length of time to complete emergency repairs (hours)</p>			<p>The time taken to complete emergency repairs has remained within target (2 hours) since May 2024.</p>
<p>Average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs (days)</p>			<p>Performance in relation to time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has declined and remains above target (8 days). Actions identified to ensure robust monitoring of Contractor performance are progressing.</p>
<p>Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out who are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service</p>	 <p>Note: Surveys are not completed in December each year and no data was received for August 2022.</p>		<p>Tenant satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is improving. Undertaken by an external researcher, a total of 100 interviews are completed every month with representative cross section of tenants who have had a repair completed the preceding month.</p>

Potential Risks to Delivery:

- Tenants do not facilitate access to their homes to allow necessary work to be completed to ensure compliance with heat and smoke alarm and electrical safety requirements. Measures in place to address access issues to properties.

- Inability to tender contractor to pick up outstanding repairs from previous contractor in Forfar & Kirriemuir. Contract currently being tendered.
- Property elements for SHQS monitoring not fully updated on NEC impacting on performance monitoring and monitoring of SHQS requirements. Housing Asset team reviewing and updating. This indicator is also included within the programme of data integrity checks.
- New contractor for unplanned repairs in Forfar and Kirriemuir is unable to appoint workforce required to deliver contracts. Regular performance review meetings and controls in place.
- Failure to deliver asset management system within timescale. Project management arrangements in place and additional software development resource recruited to support delivery and administration of system.

Next Period Planned Achievements:

- Finalise options appraisal for flood damaged stock in Brechin.
- Implementation of energy supply management service to support management of utilities in void properties.
- Evaluate voids test of change and implement revised void process to all areas.
- Review lessons learned from current and previous contracts and complete options appraisal to agree delivery method for future voids and unplanned repairs contracts (commencing April 2026).
- Share guidance on how to escalate non-compliance issues with repairs contract via contract management.
- Implement robust systems and processes for quality assuring repair work and responding to concerns about work completed.
- Continue planned estate walkabouts to identify environmental improvements, involving Housing Asset team and other appropriate services and community partners.
- Review service level agreements with Parks, Waste and Environmental Health to ensure values for money and agreed outcomes are achieved.
- Develop further guidance for staff on alternative options and approaches for addressing neighbour complaints where enforcement action is not a suitable option.

Prevention and Homelessness

We will:



- Deliver statutory duties in relation to homelessness and ensure the service contributes to the aims of 'Ending Homelessness Together'.
- Ensure the housing service is meeting the needs of vulnerable groups.

Summary of Achievements this Period:

- Relaunch of multi-agency Section 11 Case Management group – this group considers different approaches to prevent homelessness for tenants and home-owners subject to eviction/ repossession action.
- Implementation of revised Rent Deposit Scheme.
- Implementation of revised Housing Options for Care Leavers protocol.
- Work undertaken to identify suitable accommodation for emergency prison releases who were homeless on release.
- Recruitment of additional housing resource to support Whole Family Wellbeing project and coordinate implementation of service wide approach to trauma informed practice.
- Commenced evaluation of Homelessness Prevention and Solutions Team – review of all existing homeless cases completed.
- Commenced analysis of supply and demand of temporary accommodation - exercise undertaken to review all households in temporary accommodation and flip / match to suitable permanent accommodation.
- Implementation of assurance framework to ensure ongoing compliance with recommendations from Significant Case Reviews.

Indicator	Chart	Trend	Commentary																																																																	
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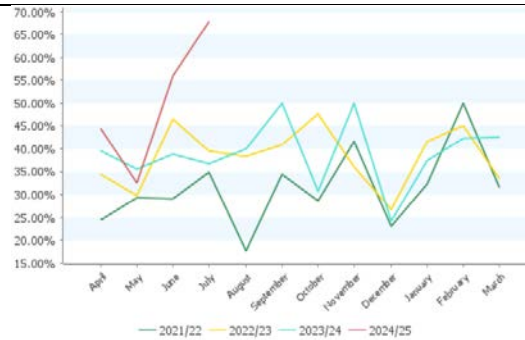
		<p>as homeless between April and July 2024. 92.59% of those who applied were found to be unintentionally homeless or unintentionally threatened with homelessness.</p>
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<p>Number of homeless waiting list applications</p>	 <p>The chart shows a steady increase in the number of homeless waiting list applications from September 2022 to August 2024. The y-axis represents the number of applications, ranging from 0 to 300. The x-axis shows monthly intervals from Sep-22 to Aug-24. A blue line starts at 77 in Sep-22 and rises to 269 by Aug-24.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Number of Applications</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Sep-22</td><td>77</td></tr> <tr><td>Oct-22</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Nov-22</td><td>125</td></tr> <tr><td>Dec-22</td><td>150</td></tr> <tr><td>Jan-23</td><td>175</td></tr> <tr><td>Feb-23</td><td>200</td></tr> <tr><td>Mar-23</td><td>225</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr-23</td><td>250</td></tr> <tr><td>May-23</td><td>255</td></tr> <tr><td>Jun-23</td><td>260</td></tr> <tr><td>Jul-23</td><td>265</td></tr> <tr><td>Aug-23</td><td>268</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-23</td><td>269</td></tr> <tr><td>Oct-23</td><td>270</td></tr> <tr><td>Nov-23</td><td>271</td></tr> <tr><td>Dec-23</td><td>272</td></tr> <tr><td>Jan-24</td><td>273</td></tr> <tr><td>Feb-24</td><td>274</td></tr> <tr><td>Mar-24</td><td>275</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr-24</td><td>276</td></tr> <tr><td>May-24</td><td>277</td></tr> <tr><td>Jun-24</td><td>278</td></tr> <tr><td>Jul-24</td><td>279</td></tr> <tr><td>Aug-24</td><td>269</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Number of Applications	Sep-22	77	Oct-22	100	Nov-22	125	Dec-22	150	Jan-23	175	Feb-23	200	Mar-23	225	Apr-23	250	May-23	255	Jun-23	260	Jul-23	265	Aug-23	268	Sep-23	269	Oct-23	270	Nov-23	271	Dec-23	272	Jan-24	273	Feb-24	274	Mar-24	275	Apr-24	276	May-24	277	Jun-24	278	Jul-24	279	Aug-24	269	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>There are currently 269 homeless applicants on the common housing register. This is a significant increase from 77 homeless waiting list applications in September 2022. The gap between demand and supply is increasing and we continue to focus on and consider measures to prevent homelessness and increase access to alternative housing options.</p>
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May-24	277																																																			
Jun-24	278																																																			
Jul-24	279																																																			
Aug-24	269																																																			

<p>Number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order</p>	 <p>The chart displays the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order from January 2024 to June 2024. The y-axis ranges from 0 to 9. A blue line shows the number of breaches, which starts at 3 in Jan-24, rises to 5 in Feb-24, peaks at 8 in Mar-24, falls to 4 in May-24, and ends at 5 in Jun-24. An orange horizontal line represents the 2023/24 median, which is constant at 1.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Breaches</th> <th>2023/24 Median</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Jan-24</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Feb-24</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Mar-24</td><td>8</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr-24</td><td>6</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>May-24</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Jun-24</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Breaches	2023/24 Median	Jan-24	3	1	Feb-24	5	1	Mar-24	8	1	Apr-24	6	1	May-24	4	1	Jun-24	5	1	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Increasing demand for temporary accommodation and significant increases in the number of homeless households awaiting rehousing has led to pressures on the availability of temporary accommodation and increased use of Bed</p>
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			<p>and Breakfast accommodation. Work is ongoing to review temporary accommodation provision.</p>																																
<p>Percentage of Prevention approaches where outcome is 'made a homeless application'</p>			<p>The number of people seeking advice to prevent homelessness who go on to make a homeless application has increased over recent months. This is likely to be caused by a lack of alternative housing options available to prevent homelessness.</p>																																
<p>Average Case Duration (weeks) - Unintentionally Homeless Households in Priority Need</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Average Case Duration by Quarter of Case Closure - Unintentionally Homeless Households in Priority Need</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Average Case Duration (Weeks)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2009/2010</td><td>23.62</td></tr> <tr><td>2010/2011</td><td>23.25</td></tr> <tr><td>2011/2012</td><td>19.1</td></tr> <tr><td>2012/2013</td><td>24.11</td></tr> <tr><td>2013/2014</td><td>23.49</td></tr> <tr><td>2014/2015</td><td>20.49</td></tr> <tr><td>2015/2016</td><td>22.29</td></tr> <tr><td>2016/2017</td><td>27.6</td></tr> <tr><td>2017/2018</td><td>31.87</td></tr> <tr><td>2018/2019</td><td>37.27</td></tr> <tr><td>2019/2020</td><td>28.7</td></tr> <tr><td>2020/2021</td><td>33.51</td></tr> <tr><td>2021/2022</td><td>25.45</td></tr> <tr><td>2022/2023</td><td>26.54</td></tr> <tr><td>2023/2024</td><td>29.44</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Average Case Duration (Weeks)	2009/2010	23.62	2010/2011	23.25	2011/2012	19.1	2012/2013	24.11	2013/2014	23.49	2014/2015	20.49	2015/2016	22.29	2016/2017	27.6	2017/2018	31.87	2018/2019	37.27	2019/2020	28.7	2020/2021	33.51	2021/2022	25.45	2022/2023	26.54	2023/2024	29.44		<p>This data is reported quarterly from Scottish Government publications. The data reported for Q1 has not been released to date.</p>
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[Percentage of lets to homeless households \(all CHR landlords\)](#)



It was agreed to prioritise lets to homeless applications for the month of July as a focussed exercise to reduce the backlog of homeless applications and increase capacity in temporary accommodation. A review of the allocations policy has been completed to support more allocations to homeless households.

Potential Risks to Delivery:

- Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) do not have adequate staffing resources to meet statutory homeless requirements. Regular meetings are being held to monitor the Service Level Agreement between Housing and AHSCP. Support provided to review existing homeless cases. Budget bid being prepared for additional funding.
- Rising housing costs, increasing homeless applications and reductions in funding for affordable housing delivery will put further pressure on social housing supply and increase breaches of the unsuitable accommodation order. Ongoing review of the supply of temporary accommodation is underway. Temporary accommodation taskforce to be established to review households in temporary accommodation. Allocations to homelessness increased.
- Housing First funding ends in March 2025 – funding not yet identified to continue the service. Review of supported homeless accommodation underway, led by AHSCP, which may identify funding to be redirected to Housing First. Exploring potential funding from Alcohol & Drug Partnership.

Next Period Planned Achievements:

- Review of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Budget to inform business proposal for youth homelessness resource.
- Finalise and implement youth homelessness strategy.

- Complete analysis of supply and demand to ensure adequate supply of temporary accommodation.
- Review and implement revised prison protocol.
- Complete evaluation of Homelessness Prevention and Solutions Team implementation and identify areas for improvement.
- Review and implement revised Domestic Abuse Policy.
- Agree and implement Harassment Policy.
- Review and implement revised process for assessing rehousing needs for people with a physical or mental health need, which is impacted by their housing.
- Develop and implement a service wide approach to trauma informed practice.

Digital

We will:

- Develop a digital strategy and implementation plan for the Service.
- Monitor the Operational Level Agreement for the delivery of supportive housing applications.

Summary of Achievements this Period:

- Agreed the Operational Level Agreement with Digital Enablement & IT for 2024/25.
- Launch of the new ASB case management system on NEC Housing Customer Services module. Learning shared for future development of Customer Services module on NEC Housing.
- Development of Housing Online (rents and repairs).
- Development of CBL on NEC Housing.
- Ongoing review of opportunities for digital developments within NEC including those which can streamline work processes, task management and record keeping: agreed project to automate work order process currently undertaken by Business Support and a new change of tenancy void process has been developed in NEC Housing for testing in Forfar and Kirriemuir.
- Demonstrations of data dashboards provided by Perth & Kinross Council for Power BI and NEC Housing for their dashboard solution.

Potential Risks to Delivery:

- There are insufficient internal and external resources to support the development, testing and implementation of digital solutions and improvements. Agreed projects to be discussed at Corporate Digital Strategy Board to support identification of resource allocation. Internal system users

identified to support testing and testing checklist to be developed. Exploring external consultancy options, if required.

- Access to Business Objects software updates will end on 31 December 2025 resulting in security issues. NEC expected to provide viable solution, we will continue to engage with NEC and monitor position.
- Changes to allocation policy and associated work to deliver functionality in NEC: policy build in NEC cannot be delivered internally and NEC have yet to confirm if they can provide consultancy to deliver. Existing CBL software provider have agreed to extend the contract on month-to-month basis. Exploring external consultancy options in event NEC are unable to provide consultancy to develop the new policy in NEC.

Next Period Planned Achievements:

- Phase 1 launch of Housing Online (rents and repairs).
- Phase 2 launch of Housing Online (Choice Based Lettings).
- Progress development of data dashboards.
- Implementation of ADAX (Paperless Direct Debits).
- Repairs module health check to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Continue to review opportunities for digital solutions / developments in NEC and Housing Online – project proposal template being developed to support Delivery Groups to submit requests.
- Agree priorities for future development of NEC in line with service requirements and resources.
- Commence development of Digital Strategy.

2. Conclusion

The progress made on our Service Improvement Plan over the past 5 months demonstrates our commitment to improvement and delivering high-quality, customer focussed services. While we have achieved significant milestones, we recognise that continuous improvement is essential to meeting the needs of our tenants and other customers and improving performance. We also continue to experience significant challenges due to the ongoing housing crisis, rising housing costs, an insufficient supply of affordable housing and increasing homelessness.

As we move forward, we will maintain our focus on the areas identified in this report, addressing any remaining challenges and risks, and building on our successes. The insights gained from this period will guide our next steps, ensuring that improvements remain aligned with the priorities and principles of the Service Improvement Plan and are responsive to ongoing performance monitoring and feedback from our tenants and stakeholders.