

**HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

**FOR**

**EAST AYRSHIRE**

**2003-2006**

## **INTRODUCTION**

East Ayrshire Council's Homelessness Strategy has been prepared by the Council and its partners, to outline and clarify our approach to improving services in order to prevent homelessness, minimise its incidence and harmful impacts and to respond better when homelessness does occur.

Progress on delivering the strategy will be reviewed, alongside the accompanying Action Plan, on a structured basis over its life-span.

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## SECTION ONE

### CONTEXT AND AIMS

#### 1.1 OVERVIEW OF EAST AYRSHIRE

##### 1.1.1 Population and economy

East Ayrshire is a mixed urban and rural authority with some 123,268 residents (Voluntary Population Survey 1998). It covers a significant area and a diverse range of urban and rural settlements. Kilmarnock in the north, with a population of just under 45,000 is the largest town and has a range of smaller settlements clustered around it. Cumnock, in the south, is the second largest town with a population of under 10,000 and is surrounded by more dispersed and rural settlements than is the case in the north of the area.

The settlement distribution within the area, along with its geography, transport links and employment base, affects the economy. Settlements such as Stewarton, the third largest town in the local authority area, has for example, links to the Glasgow commuter market, reflecting easy access to main roads.

The economy of East Ayrshire performed relatively poorly during the 1990s, and full time employees in East Ayrshire are among the lowest paid in Scotland, regularly earning 10 percent less than the Scottish national average. Furthermore, poverty is a more significant feature of the south of the local authority area, in the Cumnock and Doon Valley area with its former mining communities. At October 2001, there were over 3,700 unemployed claimants across the local authority area, an unemployment rate of 6.1 percent compared to the Scottish figure of 4.2 percent.

It is projected that over the period 1996 to 2013, population decline in the local authority area as a whole will be 10.2 percent, well above the Scottish average of 1.6 percent. Most of the population loss is forecast to be in the Cumnock and Doon valley area and particularly in the former mining communities and more rural parts of the local authority area. On the other hand the population of the northern area is expected to remain fairly stable.

While the overall population has been declining, the number of households increased from 50,700 in 1998 to 51,200 in 2001. The projected increase in households of 2% (from 1998 to 2012), is however, below the Scottish average of 12% (HSG/2000/4.)

In 2001, 30% of households consisted of *single people (compared with 33% in Scotland overall)*. The proportion of single person households is projected to rise 34% by 2010, compared with a rise of 37% for Scotland overall.

##### 1.1.2 Social rented housing and waiting lists

**Council housing** comprises 35% of the total stock in East Ayrshire, compared to 25% at Scottish level. However, the stock is unevenly spread across local housing market areas with the highest percentage in Cumnock and Doon Valley and the lowest in Kilmarnock and Loudoun.

Overall, the evidence on supply and demand indicates a clear mismatch between the size of available housing and the characteristics of waiting list applicants. Fifty per cent of waiting list applicants are single people. By contrast, only 18% of the council stock consists of properties with one bedroom. However, East Ayrshire Council's allocation policy allows houses with more than one bedroom to be let to single applicants.

Alongside high levels of expressed demand, 9.7 percent of all stock stood vacant at April 2000, including a significant stock zoned for demolition<sup>1</sup>. Voids are prevalent in areas with a high incidence of council stock (such as Kilmarnock Central and New Farm Loch), or where there has been significant population loss, reflecting declining employment opportunities (for example in Auchinleck, New Cumnock and surrounding settlements)<sup>2</sup>.

**Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)** provided 5.8% of all housing, in 2000. Overall, RSL properties are larger than the typical council house size, with 49% of their houses having 3 bedrooms. As well as general needs accommodation, now built to 'barrier free' standards, 14% of the RSL stock aims to meet community care needs.

## 1.2 WHY A HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY?

### 1.2.1 The national policy context

In August 1999 the Scottish Executive appointed a Homeless Task Force to:

*“Review the causes and nature of homelessness in Scotland; to examine current practice in dealing with cases of homelessness; and to make recommendations on how homelessness in Scotland can best be prevented and, where it does occur, tackled effectively.”*

Initial recommendations made by the Task Force for improving the homelessness legislation have been enacted in The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 which, in particular, places a statutory duty on local authorities to:

- carry out an assessment of homelessness in its area and
- prepare and submit a strategy for preventing homelessness in its area.

Homelessness strategies require to be submitted to Scottish Ministers by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003, with a view to becoming effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

In February 2002, the Task Force delivered its final report which contained 59 recommendations, all of which Scottish Ministers have accepted. Building on the 2001 legislation, which increased rights of access to temporary accommodation and expanded local authority responsibilities for information,

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<sup>1</sup> Local Housing System Analysis 2001

<sup>2</sup> Void Management Report to East Ayrshire Council Housing Committee, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2001

advice and assistance, further legislative changes are set out in the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Bill 2002. Key elements include:

- The gradual removal of the priority need test by 2012.
- The duty to allocate a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) to most applicants found to be intentionally homeless, with appropriate support.
- The duty to provide accommodation on a basis to which Section 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 applies, for those households who are not entitled to a SSST. This will apply primarily to people who have failed to sustain a short tenancy in the past 12 months, who have been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years, or who are subject to an anti-social behaviour order).
- Suspension of the test of local connection.
- Changes to the approach to repossessions and notifying authorities of possession procedures.

To facilitate the development of homelessness strategies and related improvements in services for homeless people at local level, the Scottish Executive has issued a number of guidance papers and regulations. These include guidance on:

- Assessments of homelessness (September 2001).
- The form and content of homelessness strategies (March 2002).
- The form and content of advice and information to be provided (March 2002).
- Developing Health and Homelessness Action Plans as integral parts of local health plans (September 2001).

Regulations have also been produced, including in respect of the types of advice and assistance to be provided to both those who are threatened with homelessness and those who are homeless.

The above legislative requirements clearly have resource implications for East Ayrshire Council and its partners and must be considered in this strategy. To date however, the Scottish Executive has increased its homelessness allocation to assist the process of strategy development and its initial implementation.

### **1.2.2 Developing the homelessness strategy in East Ayrshire**

An underpinning element of East Ayrshire Council's strategy is to clarify the ways in which joint working will be improved in order to respond better to the needs of people threatened with homelessness and those who become homeless, in the local authority area. The strategy builds on the foundation of an assessment of homelessness carried out in East Ayrshire in 2001, which was commissioned jointly by the local authority, Communities Scotland and NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

A key element of the Assessment was that service users were consulted on current provision and priorities for improvement, as were partner providers in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

The assessment process and the development of the strategy brought about additional benefits, including:

- a shared understanding of the causes, extent and nature of homelessness locally;
- a shared assessment of service responses to homelessness which identified priorities for action;
- a review of homelessness-related policies and plans produced by the local authority and partner agencies and the linkages between these;
- the foundation for a partnership approach to addressing the prevention and alleviation of homelessness - strategically, operationally and reflectively.

### 1.2.3 Relevant plan and policies

East Ayrshire Council and partners endorse the view of the Homelessness Task Force as detailed within “Helping Homeless People – An Action Plan for Prevention and Effective Response”. The document states that while homeless people need reasonable, quality, affordable housing in places where they want to live, people affected by homelessness have diverse needs, characteristics and experiences. This means we will adopt a corporate approach across the local authority to addressing homelessness in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies. Homeless people will themselves be involved in this partnership.

Existing and developing policies and plans impacting on addressing homelessness include:

- **Equal Opportunities** - East Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring equal opportunities and recognises its obligations to promote and mainstream equalities through all areas of policy and service development and practice, and related monitoring of needs and outcomes, as required by The Scotland Act 1998 (schedule 5) and related equalities guidance. In addition, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 section 106 extends the same responsibility to our housing association partners.

The Council has adopted as its key values:

#### **Quality, Equality, Access and Partnership**

In serving the people of East Ayrshire, this Council will seek:

- to eliminate poverty, deprivation and unemployment
- to protect the weak and the vulnerable in every community

- to secure a quality environment for living and working
- to strive for a society based on equality and equal opportunities
- **East Ayrshire Community Plan** – Community planning is about a range of partners in the public and voluntary sectors working together to plan, find resources for and deliver quality services that will meet the needs of people who live and work in Ayrshire over the next 12 years. The strength of community planning lies in the way in which it links together social, economic and environmental actions that will improve the quality of life of people who live in East Ayrshire. Together, we have consulted on and developed six themes around which to develop the plan.
  - Improving community learning
  - Improving opportunities
  - Promoting community safety
  - Improving health
  - Eliminating poverty
  - Improving the environment

Within each of these themes, the needs of the homeless population are identified and targeted

- **Local Housing Strategy** – aims to understand the current housing system/market and establish appropriate responses to meet the housing needs of the area over the next five years. The strategy is currently being developed and this Homelessness Strategy will directly link to aims and objectives of Local Housing Strategy.
- **The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2002-2004** – seeks to ensure that any woman experiencing domestic abuse in East Ayrshire will be treated with respect in a confidential and sensitive manner and have easy access to a appropriate quality services which meet her needs and those of her children. As a member of the Domestic Abuse Forum, the Department of Homes and Technical Services (Housing Services) - is developing options for increasing the supply of temporary accommodation for women fleeing domestic abuse. A recent successful funding bid will now enable the development of a purpose built refuge in Kilmarnock. Strategic links between both strategies include the development of joint training forums, additional provision of temporary furnished flats and the expansion of housing support services.
- **The Supporting People Strategy** – The new integrated policy and funding framework for housing support services introduced from April 2003 provides a solid basis on which to build services targeted to prevent or alleviate homelessness. Considerable work has already been done during the implementation phase of Supporting People to start new services and grow others to meet the needs of people at risk of homelessness or actually presenting as homeless. Transitional Housing Benefit and now Supporting People Grant funding has been secured to both fully fund the Tenancy Support Team and enhance support services in temporary accommodation. The effectiveness of the services funded from Supporting People Grant will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they achieve the designed outcomes and deliver Best Value from the funds committed to them.

- **Rough Sleepers Initiative** - Rowan Alba Association manage the START Project, covering East, North and South Ayrshire. The Project offers advice information and support primarily to single 18 – 25 year old homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. Within East Ayrshire, the Project also manage 4 furnished flats which are offered with integral support and has an established office base within the community that also offers a drop in facility for service users. The Project is funded, via Rough Sleepers Initiative until March 2004, and the three Ayrshire Authorities will work on developing an exit strategy for the Project with a view to securing more permanent funding options.
- **The Children Services Plan** – recognises the consistent evidence that homeless people have in general much poorer physical and mental health than the general population. Homelessness is also associated with poorer access to health services and identifies the negative effect this has on children, particularly related to immunisation, child health surveillance and follow up within specialist services. As such the Plan identifies the actions undertaken within the homeless hostels to improve integrated access to services for children and young people, some of which is funded via Changing Children's Services Fund and Rough Sleepers Initiative.
- **Health and Homelessness Action Plan** – identifies the significant health risks associated with the homeless population and current service gaps. The Plan has a range of ambitious objectives to ensure that the homeless population can not only access current services, but those new initiatives are developed to tackle current gaps in service provision.
- **The Local Plan** – aims to address social problems of disadvantage, deprivation and social exclusion.
- **The Tenant Participation Strategy** – is currently being developed in partnership with the Tenant Information Service.
- **The East Ayrshire Council Plan 1999 – 2002** – demonstrates the commitment of the Council to protect the weak and vulnerable and to promote social inclusion as a key element of every aspect of the plan, which includes; tackling unemployment, fighting poverty, promoting health, improving housing for all, and those with particular needs, and inspiring young people. This will be achieved in partnership with the community and will build on the effective Social Inclusion Partnerships.
- **Joint Community Care Plan and Accommodation Strategy (2001-2004)** - recognises that vulnerable people requiring care in the community may be more susceptible to homelessness than most people. It stresses that housing solutions may fail if other needs such as for health and social care are not identified. The Strategy also emphasises links between substance abuse and homelessness. It stresses that for people with addictions or/and mental health problems, living in hostel provision, often without support and access to specialist services, can hinder opportunities for resettlement and integration.

- **Local Planning Agreement for Hospital Discharge (1998)** - this recognises the possible risk of homelessness for people with mental health issues admitted to hospital. It requires that social work teams undertake assessment and care planning and that particular housing officers should be nominated to liaise with hospital staff when accommodation issues are likely to impact on discharge arrangements.
- **Youth Homelessness Policy and Procedures** - this covers all 16 and 17 year olds; those formally 'looked after' up to age 21 and all other young people up to 21 who are assessed as vulnerable under the homelessness legislation. It established a framework for joint assessment, review and monitoring of needs and outcomes, between housing and social work services.

#### 1.2.4 Defining homelessness

East Ayrshire Council's Homelessness Strategy adopts the definition of homelessness employed by the Homelessness Task Force. This goes beyond those who are roofless, to include for example, those in unsuitable temporary accommodation. The definition of homelessness is included at Appendix One.

#### 1.2.5 Defining vulnerability

At present, the homelessness legislation states that applicants should be considered to be in priority need (and thus entitled to permanent accommodation) if they are:

***“vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness or mental handicap or physical disability, or other special reason”.***

The Code of Guidance on Homelessness (December 1998) identifies further circumstances that may make an applicant vulnerable under the category of “other special reason”. East Ayrshire Council will adhere to a definition of vulnerability that follows the Code of Guidance for the initial period covered by this strategy. Groups covered under this definition of “other special reason” as detailed in the Code, are also listed in Appendix One We intend working towards extending vulnerability as per categories of applicants listed in the Homelessness (etc) Scotland Bill, as resources and services allow, whilst working towards providing permanent accommodation for all applicants by 2012.

### 1.3 Aims and objectives of the homelessness strategy

In setting out aims, objectives and proposed actions, the East Ayrshire partners endorse the Homelessness Task Force's position that homelessness will not be solved overnight and that a concerted, co-ordinated and focused partnership will be required, involving statutory and voluntary agencies and the private sector. Taken together our Strategy and Action Plan aim to significantly reduce the incidence and impact of homelessness over the period to 2012.

### **1.3.1 Overall aim**

The overall aim of the strategy is to work towards eliminating homelessness and resultant exclusion and to promote social justice. The Strategy will therefore seek:

- to prevent homelessness and particularly the need to sleep rough.
- to alleviate homelessness that does occur through appropriate, creative, collaborative and user-centred service responses.

### **1.3.2 Guiding principles**

The guiding principles underpin all aspects of the Strategy and these are:

- to equalise opportunities for those affected by homelessness and to maximise their participation in the process of strategy implementation;
- to develop a holistic, user-centred, approach to meeting the particular needs of homeless people and to tackling prevention.
- to meet statutory duties, implement best practice and ensure best value.
- to develop our response reflectively - through monitoring, evaluation and review to build on experience and service users' views.
- to work jointly with partners to deliver a quality, seamless, user-centred service.

### **1.3.3 Priority objectives**

We shall be ambitious in pursuing 5 priority objectives, which are interconnected and form the basis for the Action Plans.

These are:

- to improve the response to homelessness in East Ayrshire
- to maximise the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping
- to provide information and advice
- to alleviate homelessness
- to address health and homelessness

## **SECTION TWO**

### **HOMELESSNESS AND SERVICES IN EAST AYRSHIRE**

#### **2.1 HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS**

##### **2.1.1 Rising numbers of homelessness presentations**

Not all homeless people will present to the local authority as homeless, and local authorities find a proportion of applicants not in fact to be homeless in terms of the existing legislation. Nevertheless, presentations as homeless still represent the best source of information to compare trends over time.

- In the 3 years between 1996/97 to 1998/99, homelessness presentations to East Ayrshire Council increased by 25%, from 591 applications to 737. The average rise across Scotland for the same period was 11%.
- Over the following 3 years homelessness applications initially decreased in East Ayrshire to 662 (1999/00) and to 658 (2000/01), after which there was a rise to 704 applications in 2001/02. This rise has continued with 624 presentations between April and 31 December 2002. If the rate of presentation should persist to 31 March 03, total applications for the current year could exceed 800. Since the new duty for temporary accommodation was implemented on 30 September 02, the majority of applicants have been single men.

##### **2.1.2 Reasons for homelessness**

- In East Ayrshire, as elsewhere, the key cause of homelessness is that friends or relatives are no longer willing or able to accommodate. This was the case for 42% of all applicants in 1999/2000, compared to 37% Scottish wide.
- Disputes with partners are also a significant cause of homelessness both in East Ayrshire and across Scotland, and in a significant proportion of cases violence is involved. In 1999/2000 violent relationship breakdown accounted for 13% of all applications to East Ayrshire Council (the comparable figure Scottish wide was 12%), while non violent relationship breakdown accounted for 11% of all applications (the comparable Scottish wide figure was 12%).

##### **2.1.3 Increasing proportions of households presenting as homeless**

###### **Single People**

- A clear trend in the 1990's in East Ayrshire, as in other areas, was a growth in the proportion of single homeless applicants. In 1999/2000, 57% of applicants to East Ayrshire were single people (compared to 62% across Scotland).

- The most statistically significant group of applicants is single males over the age of 25 but under retirement age. In 1999/2000, single males in this age group accounted for one in 5 of all applicants (20% compared to 24% at Scottish level). By contrast single women in this age group accounted for only 5% of all applications to East Ayrshire in the same year.
- In 1999/2000, 11% of all applicants to East Ayrshire were single people under the age of 18 (compared to 9% across Scotland). In this age group the proportions of males and females are comparable.

### **Couples and Lone Parents**

Despite increasing numbers and proportions of single homeless people, homelessness continues to affect significant numbers of children. This is most frequently the case for children in lone parent households. Statistics for 1999/2000 show that:

- Applications from lone parent households under the age of 25 to East Ayrshire Council accounted for 8% of all applications (compared to 6% across Scotland).
- Applications from lone parent households over the age of 25 accounted for 18% of all applications (compared to 19% across Scotland).
- Applications from couples with children accounted for 7% of all applications (compared with 6% across Scotland).

#### **2.1.4 The outcomes for homeless applicants**

East Ayrshire Council's homelessness presentations for 1999/2001 showed notable differences between areas, both in terms of the household types presenting as homeless and in accommodation outcomes.

Three year trend information covering 1996/97 to 1999/00 showed that *East Ayrshire Council overall assessed:*

- A lower proportion of applicants as homeless or potentially homeless than was the case Scottish wide. In 1999/2000, the respective figures were 56% for East Ayrshire, compared to the Scottish average of 74%.
- A lower proportion of homeless applicants as priority homeless or potentially priority homeless - 35% for East Ayrshire in 1999/2000, compared with 44% at Scottish level.

- A significant percentage of applicants not to be homeless, or lost contact with them after presentation - in 1999/2000, the respective percentages were 40% for East Ayrshire and 26% Scottish wide.

In terms of accessing accommodation, East Ayrshire Council:

- Secured some form of accommodation for 43% of applicants assessed as priority homeless - a lower proportion than the 64% of applicants for whom accommodation was secured across Scotland in 1999/2000.
- By contrast, “temporary accommodation only” was the final secured outcome for a higher proportion of priority applicants (41% in 1999/2000 compared to 20% at Scottish level). However, 93% of temporary accommodation provided was in hostels and this was predominantly the two hostels managed by the local authority.

### **2.1.5 Applicants assessed as homeless but not in priority need**

In 1999/00, 146 applicants were assessed to be homeless but not in priority need and in 2000/01 the figure was 165. These numbers are particularly significant, given the new duty imposed by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, to ensure that temporary accommodation is provided for applicants assessed to be homeless, regardless of priority need. Of the 165 applicants assessed as having no priority need in 2000/01, only 3 were recorded as having been secured accommodation.

### **2.1.6 Applicants assessed as intentionally homeless**

In 2000/01, 36 applicant households were assessed to be intentionally homeless, while the corresponding number the previous year was 40. Of these 40 applicant households, just over half (21) contained children. While numerically small, these figures are important due to the homelessness etc (Scotland) Bill's intent to ensure that all homeless households are provided with some form of accommodation (either a Scottish Short Assured Tenancy or accommodation to which section 7 of the Housing Scotland Act 2001 applies.)

### **2.1.7 Characteristics of applicants placed in hostel accommodation**

Until recently, hostel accommodation was used to accommodate both single people and households with children. As would be expected, given the significant proportions of single person households presenting as homeless, predominately single people were accommodated. However, a total of 105 children were admitted to the local authority hostels in 2001/02.

The Assessment found that many people accommodated in hostels had needs that exceed their need for accommodation. Moreover, such additional needs are often not addressed within generalist hostels, while the mix of single people and households with children could be problematic for both service users and management.

Information held on admissions to the local authority hostels in 2001/02, shows that of 199 admissions:

- 64% were assessed as having additional needs, with the most common being drug issues - as recorded in 46 instances;
- Drugs plus mental health issues were recorded in respect of a further 15 admissions. Together these cases represented 31% of all admissions.

Against the background of complex and multiple needs, there were indications of constraints on access to support and health care:

- The applicant was recorded as having no GP in 33% of cases.
- The applicant was recorded as having no social work involvement in 63% of cases.

Moreover, a temporary stay in hostel accommodation may not be effective in *breaking cycles of homelessness or preventing repeat homelessness*. In the year 2001/02, 48 admissions (24%) were recorded as second or subsequent ones. Furthermore, 48% of applicants admitted to hostels in 2001/02, left no forwarding address, while a permanent tenancy was allocated only in a minority of cases.

Since the assessment, East Ayrshire Council has taken action to reconfigure the use of hostels. Households with children are the first priority for moving into additional units of temporary furnished accommodation provided.

## **2.2 Existing services for homeless people in East Ayrshire**

This section will focus on the network of services that play a role in tackling homelessness in East Ayrshire and the other changes that have been implemented following assessment and recommendations.

The assessment also looked at services for homeless people in East Ayrshire. It identified a diverse range of statutory and voluntary organisations providing services for homeless and potentially homeless people in East Ayrshire and these are summarised below

### **2.2.1 East Ayrshire Council's Housing Service**

- The housing service has recently centralised and consolidated the homeless team. The team now comprises a Strategy and Services Manager, a Temporary Accommodation Manager, a Hostel Manager, 4 Homeless Persons' Officers and clerical assistance, all of whom work closely with the housing service's area teams, other Council departments and external agencies concerned with the prevention and alleviation of homelessness.

- Taking cognisance of the findings of the assessment of homelessness in East Ayrshire, the housing service has recently recruited to a team of support workers. The team, with a base in Kilmarnock and a base in Cumnock comprises 2 Team Co-ordinators, 8 Senior Tenancy Support Workers, 14 Tenancy Support Workers and clerical assistance. Six of the Senior Tenancy Support Workers are directly linked to either mental health services, or addiction services, again in direct response to the recognition that clients in need of either services may be at risk of homelessness and repeat homelessness. This team will assess the support needs of every homeless or potentially homeless household.
- Furthermore, a team of 17 Hostel Support Workers and 1 Senior Hostel Support Worker now staffs both St Andrew's Court and Peden Court Hostels which provides emergency accommodation for homeless people. This crucial development, ensures that our most vulnerable service users can now access support on a 24 hour basis
- Across East Ayrshire, housing management services are delivered locally by 6 Area Teams. Whilst delivering a range of housing management functions, the Area Teams work closely with both the homeless team and the tenancy support team to ensure that all aspects of the Housing Service maximise the prevention and alleviation of homelessness.
- The policy section of the housing service is concerned with addressing homelessness through: planning and co-ordinating service developments; a lead role in delivering Best Value; ensuring service quality and equity through performance monitoring; development and maintaining links to facilitate the Council's enabling role and development activities.

### **2.2.2 Housing information, advice and advocacy services**

This is provided through:

- the 6 area housing teams of East Ayrshire's housing service
- the homeless and tenancy support teams
- Voluntary sector advice agencies including:
  - Two Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs) in Kilmarnock and Cumnock
  - The START project, accessible to all homeless people and to-date working primarily with people between the ages of 18 and 25, sleeping rough or at risk of homelessness.
  - Allies for Change staffed largely by volunteers and providing services mainly for older homeless people.
  - Women's Aid in Kilmarnock and Cumnock.
    - Advice and advocacy for homeless people with particular needs is provided by:
  - The Bridge Project (services for people with addictions in Kilmarnock and Cumnock)

- East Ayrshire Advocacy Service (people with mental health problems and learning disabilities)
- Yip world.com, based in Cumnock (advice, support and developmental services to young people).
  - Voluntary sector hostel and supported accommodation providers, as well as providing accommodation, may also provide information and advice to homeless people, including about resettlement options, access to benefits and assistance with furnishings.

### **Youth Education Project**

A pilot Youth Education Project began in late April 2002 and is being developed by a partnership of homelessness and related services (EAC homelessness staff, tenancy support team and 3 local secondary schools - Doon Academy, James Hamilton Academy and Grange Academy. The project is building on SCSH's pack "I'm Offski". Links with groups of young people has resulted in the production of a booklet on "housing options" for young people. Reports have been produced on the "Prevention of Youth Homelessness in East Ayrshire" and on "Developing Leaving Home and Housing Education". The Educational classes will concentrate on the 4<sup>th</sup> year to target prevention to younger people and will be delivered by teaching staff, the homeless team and the tenancy support team. It is envisaged that following the pilot project, the course will feature in the curriculum of each secondary school in East Ayrshire.

### **Prison Housing Surgery**

In February 2003, the homeless team implemented a pilot housing surgery within HMP Kilmarnock. The surgery is staffed by homeless officers from East Ayrshire Council, and is delivering the service on behalf of all three Ayrshire authorities. By delivering such a service, we aim to prevent the risk of homelessness for prisoners on their release and by offering integral support services, assist in their re-integration into local communities.

HMP Kilmarnock is currently developing a multiagency throughcare service. Following the evaluation of the pilot housing surgery, it is envisaged that the surgery will continue on a permanent basis within the throughcare service, and include colleagues from Department of Work and Pensions, Social Services, and Health.

### **2.2.3 Accommodation services - temporary accommodation**

The homeless service provides temporary accommodation in a number of ways:

- Two hostels
  - St Andrews hostel in Kilmarnock has 19 rooms with 40 bedspaces
  - Peden Court in Cumnock has 7 rooms with 24 bedspaces.
    - Temporary furnished flats

- 6 units of furnished accommodation in Kilmaurs - 4 with 2 bedrooms and 2 with 3 bedrooms
- 3 clustered flats within Kilmarnock, each with 2 bedrooms
- 12 scattered furnished houses/flats of varying size across East Ayrshire
  - Blue Triangle Housing Association has 13 bedspaces in 6 flats for young single homeless people.
  - Rowan Alba's Start Project manages 4 bedspaces in 4 flats leased from the local authority in Kilmarnock for single people under 25 years.
  - East Ayrshire Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Forum submitted a bid in March 2001 to the Scottish Executive for the provision of two new refuges in Kilmarnock and Cumnock in East Ayrshire. Whilst the bid for Cumnock has not been approved, the Kilmarnock bid for funding has been successful. An award has been made from the Domestic Abuse Refuge Accommodation Programme in 2003/2004 for the provision of a purpose built refuge in Kilmarnock.

The new refuge will be located within Kilmarnock town centre, near to the existing Women's Aid office and Women's Centre. It will replace the existing provision with a purpose-built development, comprising eight self-contained flats, along with communal facilities. Officers are currently exploring the feasibility of utilising the Homelessness Strategy Fund in part, to provide additional resources that can be used to improve the refuge facilities and service delivery in Cumnock

#### **2.2.4 The private rented sector**

Private landlords provide a range of sizes and types of rented accommodation and a list of 10 providers is given to homeless applicants, although it is emphasised that the list does not imply the council's satisfaction with the standard and suitability of the accommodation.

#### **2.2.5 Support and health services**

- The housing service has expanded the housing support service, which was piloted in 2002. The two tenancy support teams as mentioned in Section 2.2.1, aims to prevent and alleviate homelessness and assist in tenancy sustainment. The teams have staff based within the Community Mental Health teams in Cumnock and Kilmarnock, and within the Dual Diagnosis/Addiction Services Centre. This innovative approach to service development and delivery will be at the forefront of Joint Futures.
- Partnership developments within this service already include a joint initiative to address the deficit in cooking skills amongst service users, Funded by the LHCC, support workers will receive training on Community Food Working in Conjunction with the Community Health Improvement Partnership.

- Social Work services include social work area teams, a Combined Projects office and specialist support teams working with care leavers, offenders, people with mental health problems, or those soon to be discharged from Kirklandside or Crosshouse hospitals, and people with drugs problems in the community.
- A day service provided by the Salvation Army, primarily for older and longer-term homeless men:
- Support services to meet particular needs include the Bridge Project, Family Support groups, the Drugs and Alcohol Forum and the Richmond Fellowship's ordinary living support packages.
- Health services include the two local health care co-operatives (LHCC's), (East Ayrshire which covers the majority of the geographic area, and Kyle Carrick and Doon LHCC which covers Patna, Drongan and Dalmellington within East Ayrshire), drugs counsellors and community psychiatric nurses employed by Community Mental Health Teams at Kirklandside Hospital and Cumnock Community Clinic.
- East Ayrshire LHCC, in partnership with the Council, has introduced an initiative to meet the health and social needs of children in hostels and temporary accommodation. Funded by Changing Children's Services Fund, the service provides sessional play workers, via YipWorld.com, to not only provide for the immediate needs of homeless children but to work with the families to improve uptake of local resources.
- The nutritional requirements of the homeless population are being addressed, in part, via Rough Sleepers Initiative Funding. An initiative to provide health promotion, nutritional advice and cooking skills has been instigated within the hostel accommodation of the Council and Blue Triangle Housing Association.
- The Rough Sleepers Initiative has also funded the expansion of Primary Care outreach services within the hostels to ensure that the homeless population is registered with a GP, and able to access services as appropriate.

## **2.2.6 Training and employment services**

Training and employment related services include:

- a training café managed by Blue Triangle Housing Association providing 6 training places.
- START providing advice on training and employment for homeless people.
- Apex Trust Scotland manages two employment/training projects. The organisation has an office in Kilmarnock and provides a service throughout the local authority area.

- an Action Team for Jobs, managed by the Department for Work and Pensions aiming to provide extra assistance to jobless people of working age in deprived neighbourhoods. The target areas are the Riccarton and Shortlees and the North West areas of Kilmarnock and the Cumnock area covering the communities of Muirkirk, Logan, and Lugar as well as Cumnock.
- Department of Work and Pensions have recently implemented Progress2work initiative. This initiative seeks to identify opportunities for those who have overcome an addiction and are moving toward further education, training or employment, with support and assistance provided to increase chance of success.

### **2.2.7 Conclusions**

Our assessment of the causes, types of homeless households and outcomes of homelessness presentations in East Ayrshire, all indicate the need to:

- Prioritise the prevention of homelessness, with targeted action aiming to prevent homelessness for vulnerable groups, such as younger single people, homeless people who have experienced repeat homelessness and homeless people with particular needs and health issues.
- Respond to homelessness more effectively, taking account of the varied and often multiple needs of homeless households. These include meeting the needs of children affected by homelessness and those households with issues to be addressed beyond their need for accommodation.
- Ensure the continuing development of a corporate, holistic and reflective approach to assessing and meeting needs in conjunction with our partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors. This will require us to review and audit the implications of our homelessness strategy and action plan.

This assessment of homelessness trends and issues in East Ayrshire has informed the priority aims set out within the Homelessness Strategy. Given that our proposed actions will require different resources and timeframes, a detailed Action Plan is appended to provide a systematic basis for monitoring and review by the Council and its partners. This specifies the priority attached to actions, partners and associated time-scales.

## **SECTION THREE**

### **ACTION TO MEET PRIORITY OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 IMPROVING THE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS**

This Section identifies the specific actions that will be undertaken by the housing service and colleagues within partner agencies, in liaison with our service users, in order to address service gaps and meet our objectives. The action plan, accompanying this strategy, sets out our targets for achieving such, and therefore each action within this section is cross referenced to the appropriate entry within the action plan. (A.P.)

##### **3.1.1 Operational framework and development plan (A.P. Ref: 1.1)**

An improved response to homelessness necessitates a coherent operational structure and to this end East Ayrshire Council has implemented a number of changes since the completion of the homelessness assessment. These include the appointment of a Homeless Strategy and Services manager, the recruitment of a tenancy support team (26 posts) and the development of an induction training programme for new staff. Ensuring that appropriate housing and support is available to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, will be key to the operational structure of the future and to the development plan. Particular attention will be paid to the widening of legislative rights as proposed in the Housing etc (Scotland) Act 2003

##### **Key Tasks on the operational framework and development plan**

- Protocols with partners for people with support needs will be agreed.
- Homelessness policy and procedural manual will be reviewed and consolidated.
- All Council reception services will be delivered in a person-centred manner.
- Staff training needs will be identified and a structured training strategy implemented.

##### **3.1.2 Information technology and performance monitoring (A.P. Ref. 1.2)**

To allow the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and services to homeless and potentially homeless people to be monitored, IT systems will need to be “fit for purpose” and allow for easy retrieval of information. To allow for this, East Ayrshire Council has implemented the HL1 data capture system, and is striving to integrate the monitoring of all aspects of the service within the Housing Management Information System of the Department.

##### **Key Tasks on IT and performance monitoring**

- The homeless management system will be developed as part of an integrated housing management system.
- The Single Regulatory Framework will be integrated into daily procedures.

## **3.2 PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS**

### **3.2.1 Ensuring housing management policies do not contribute to homelessness (A.P. Ref: 2.1)**

Housing management and related policies can contribute to homelessness in a number of ways, including through lack of choice in allocations to homeless people, rent arrears management and policies for dealing with anti-social behaviour.

East Ayrshire and other registered social landlords will continue to review relevant housing management policies and procedures to ensure that policies and procedures do not contribute unnecessarily to homelessness.

#### **Key Tasks to ensure preventative housing management policies**

- Policies related to rent arrears control will be reviewed.
- Policies on anti-social behaviour will be reviewed and strategic interventions and partnerships/joint work required will be identified.
- Homeless applicants entitled to permanent accommodation will be afforded the same number of offers of accommodation as mainstream waiting list applicants and will not be discriminated against in terms of areas offered.
- Targets for payment of housing benefit will be established and monitored.
- A regular update of written information for tenants, such as the Tenants Handbook and Housing Options Guide will be provided.

### **3.2.2 Identifying those at risk or getting into housing difficulties(A.P. Ref: 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)**

Difficulties in securing suitable accommodation and in managing accommodation are known to arise for people at particular points, such as when making the initial transition to independent living, when relationships break down and when illness occurs.

- All services will strive to identify people at potential risk and to ensure the provision of the support assessed as required.

## **Key Tasks to identify those at risk and provide appropriate support**

- We will ensure that advice and representation is available for people facing eviction because of rent arrears or other debt problems.
- The pre allocation process for people leaving for example, hospitals and prison will be improved to minimise the need for stays in temporary accommodation by establishing outreach surgeries.
- We will review the extent to which joint protocols are in place and their effectiveness in meeting the needs of those particularly at risk of homelessness including:
  - those leaving prison
  - those leaving hospitals, including psychiatric wards
  - people with active addictions
  - people with multiple or complex needs
  - those leaving the armed forces
  - asylum seekers and refugees
  - people with learning difficulties
  - families with difficulties or in crisis.
- A Youth Homelessness protocol and procedure will be developed.
- Housing Education in all schools will be piloted and implemented.
- Written information for young people will be improved.
- We will develop and implement throughcare and aftercare policy for young people who have been looked after.
- We will identify and address issues by developing sub strategies, that can cause homelessness and tenancy sustainment difficulties among vulnerable groups including:
  - people with mental health issues
  - people with addiction issues
  - older people
  - people with learning disabilities
  - people from minority ethnic groups.
- All information and assistance will be available in various formats, including for the sensory impaired, for those with learning disability or low literacy levels and in languages other than English.

### **3.3 PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS**

#### **3.3.1 Information and advice(A.P. Ref: 3.1)**

The provision of free, good quality, information and advice is a key resource in both preventing and alleviating homelessness. In recognition of the

importance we place on information and advice we have included this as a separate objective within our overall strategy and as a specific action plan.

East Ayrshire Council and a range of other organisations and agencies currently provide information and advice. Research was commissioned following the homelessness assessment to focus specifically on current advice services and their views on the scope to improve the overall service response. Recommendations for improving information and advice services and their co-ordination have been incorporated within the action plan.

The Scottish Executive has issued Guidance on the information and advice that local authorities are required to ensure is available in their area.

Scottish Ministers have also issued regulations on the type of advice and assistance to be given to applicants assessed as homeless or potentially homeless under the homelessness legislation.

Below we detail our proposed actions for improving our information and advice services while actions to improve advice and assistance are detailed under the section “Alleviating homelessness.”

### **Key Tasks to improve information and advice**

- East Ayrshire Council will seek to achieve National Standards at all contact points within the Council and will develop a strategy to have all levels of national standards met within the local authority area, including the establishment of a partnership with a specialist information provider.
- A multi agency Homeless Forum to ensure effective co-ordination and clarity about agency roles, will be established.
- An Information Dissemination Strategy will be developed.
- A multi agency training forum and joint training strategy will be developed.
- A one stop shop facility providing a range of housing and related services will be established.
- All information and advice will be targeted to particular groups via appropriate agencies.
- Protocols for outreach work to deliver information and advice in, for example, hospitals and prisons will be developed.
- Information and advice giving will be monitored and any gaps addressed.

## **3.4 ALLEVIATING HOMELESSNESS**

### **3.4.1 Temporary accommodation and related support services (A.P. Ref: 4.1, 4.2)**

The main temporary accommodation resource in East Ayrshire is local authority hostel accommodation catering for a range of needs, situated in the larger towns of Kilmarnock and Cumnock. Bed and breakfast is also sometimes used. Following the homelessness assessment, we try not to place homeless households with children in hostel accommodation and have made available additional units of mainstream stock for use as temporary accommodation.

The mix of needs in the hostels, including people with support needs, is considered inappropriate. It is also recognised that more temporary accommodation is needed to meet the requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 that all homeless people require to be provided with temporary accommodation, regardless of assessed priority.

#### **Key Tasks on temporary accommodation and related support services**

- Additional units of furnished self-contained accommodation, dispersed throughout the local authority area will be identified for use as temporary furnished accommodation. As far as possible applicants will be offered a choice of temporary accommodation options. These options include 24 hour supported accommodation, dispersed units with integral floating support, Women's Aid refuge, or supported accommodation for young people. The demand for additional units of accommodation is constantly assessed and developed as required.
- Systematic needs assessment will be carried out, including the needs of any children the applicant may have.
- Appropriate support will be provided to applicants while in temporary accommodation and during the transitional period of resettlement into permanent accommodation, including an Information Pack.
- A service user feedback system will be further developed.
- Public Access Terminals have been installed in hostels. Information will be updated regularly , and their use monitored.
- Funding recently allocated by the health board to facilitate health visitors and GP's time to improve health care for hostel residents and those sleeping rough, has been extended across Ayrshire, following the success of the pilot project within St Andrew's Court Hostel.
- We will review and revise admission and exclusion criteria for temporary accommodation.

- Reconfiguring the use of the existing hostels to meet the needs of particular client groups will be considered.
- We will move towards all multiple occupancy accommodation meeting regulations for Houses in Multiple Ownership.

### **3.4.2 Interim accommodation for homeless applicants in priority need with high support needs**(A.P. Ref: 4.1, 4.2)

While the homelessness legislation requires that permanent accommodation be secured for applicants assessed to be priority homeless, regulations prescribe that non-permanent (or interim) accommodation can be provided where it is assessed that an applicant's support needs cannot, at this point, be met in an ordinary tenancy.

This may be appropriate where, for example, the applicant is particularly vulnerable and unable to have their support needs met in an ordinary tenancy, due to youth or other circumstances. One example of current "interim accommodation" includes hostel provision by Blue Triangle Housing Association for young people. Additional required supported provision includes resources targeted to meet the needs of people with addictions and people with mental health needs.

#### **Key Tasks to ensure appropriate use of interim accommodation**

- We will review future requirements for additional interim accommodation including access requirements and particular needs. It is envisaged that an ongoing evaluation of needs will provide a constant supply of accommodation for this purpose.
- Applicants placed in interim accommodation will have access to independent advocacy and advice.
- We will set a review date not later than six months after the provision of interim accommodation.

### **3.4.3 Advice and assistance**(AP. Ref: 4.1, 4.2)

For applicants assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness, for whom there is currently no legislative requirement to provide **permanent** accommodation (those not assessed to be in priority need) we will ensure that temporary accommodation is provided along with appropriate advice and assistance. This will maximise the household's opportunity to secure appropriate accommodation and to resettle effectively.

#### **Key Tasks on advice and assistance**

By adopting a multi agency approach we will ensure advice and assistance is available and provided on:

- The availability and access criteria of housing across all housing tenures.
- How to access relevant support and community-based services/resources.
- Financial advice, appropriate to the household's circumstances.
- Legal advice, as appropriate to the household's circumstances.

#### **3.4.4 Promoting sustainable housing solutions(A.P. Ref: 4.1, 4.2)**

Temporary accommodation will continue to be used where applicants have an urgent need for accommodation and for such a period as to allow for an assessment of their needs, including any support needs, to be carried out.

A key aim in resolving homelessness will be to move homeless applicants into permanent accommodation at the earliest opportunity. For the period covered by this initial strategy, this will apply to priority homeless applicants with other applicants provided with appropriate advice and assistance as detailed above, to enable them to secure their own accommodation.

East Ayrshire and its partners are however, committed to ensuring that from 2012, or earlier if possible, all applicants, regardless of assessed priority need will be secured permanent accommodation, unless there is good reason for considering other interim accommodation options.

Ongoing monitoring and assessment of applicants' needs and of the housing supply, will be essential to ensure the capacity to provide an adequate supply of affordable housing.

#### **Key Tasks to promote sustainable housing options**

- We will conduct focused assessments to clarify time-frames required for residence in different types of temporary accommodation.
- Following the Allocation and Void Control Best Value Service Review, a number of initiatives are being piloted prior to implementation. These include the valetting of all void properties prior to relet, and the implementation of a set of lettable standards to be applied to each void property.
- A rent deposit scheme will be established by 2004 and a private sector forum will be established to review constraints on access, sustainability issues and the future capacity of this sector.
- A furniture recycling and delivery scheme will be developed.
- We will extend the existing team of tenancy support workers working in pathfinder areas to ensure ongoing support for all tenants requiring this.

- Specialist outreach support services for particular groups who may require this such as young people and women leaving refuge will be developed.
- Protocols and procedures will be agreed between East Ayrshire Council and registered social landlords (RSLs) to increase the supply of housing for homeless applicants - both on a temporary and permanent basis.
- A common housing register will be developed. The Council has successfully bid for funding to develop the prototype of the register and pilot it's implementation.
- We will establish policies and procedures for converting tenancies to Scottish Short Assured Tenancies (SSST).
- We will work with relevant partners to promote employment opportunities`
- Mechanisms for assisting people to build or rebuild social networks and to engage in community life will be developed.

#### **3.4.5 Policy consistency and integration (A.P. Ref: 4.1, 4.2)**

A diverse range of policies and plans exist, with a bearing on tackling homelessness, in addition to legislative requirements and best practice evidence. It will be necessary to ensure co-ordination and implementation of these.

##### **Key Tasks to ensure policy consistency and integration**

- A nominated lead Policy and Strategy Officer(s) will play a co-ordinating role with a remit to ensure:
  - all relevant Council and inter-agency policies properly consider the implications for homelessness for related issues, including in respect of equal opportunities
  - training will seek to promote service cultures which are supportive of proactive, preventative and collaborative approaches based on person- and user- centred service principles.
  - effective liaison with senior homelessness staff to monitor and review the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy.
  - The developing Local Housing Strategy will compliment and overarch the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy
  - A Homelessness Strategy Review Group will re convened to oversee the implementation of the Strategy.

### **3.5 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING THE HEALTH NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION**

NHS Boards are required to address the needs of homeless people as part of an overall drive to reduce inequalities in health care and provision. As such NHS Ayrshire and Arran have published their Health and Homelessness Action Plan which forms an integral part of the Local Health Plan.

The plan itself has been developed through joint working between NHS Ayrshire and Arran, and each of the three local authorities. It adopts a health improvement approach and will be delivered in partnership with local stakeholders. As one of those partners, this Council has adopted many of the actions within the Health and Homelessness Action Plan as part of the Homelessness Strategy

#### **Key Tasks to ensure Health Needs are met (A.P. Ref: 5.)**

- A comprehensive needs assessment of health and homelessness within East Ayrshire will be undertaken which will inform service developments
- In order to produce a co-ordinated response to addressing identified service gaps , a multi agency forum will be established to develop multi agency systems of referral, planning and information sharing
- As part on the introduction of single shared assessments and shared care approach, particular reference will be made to young people and those with mental health or addiction problems
- A multi agency approach has been taken and will continue to be developed to meet the support needs of those with addiction and mental health issues, whilst proposals for outreach worker will be introduced.

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **JOINT WORKING**

Joint working with all relevant stake-holders in East Ayrshire - through existing and new strategic forum, in our development work and throughout our practice - will be critical both to the success of meeting most of the objectives in the Action Plan and to the success of strategy implementation overall.

Beyond local partners, East Ayrshire Council will continue to work jointly with neighbouring local authorities, namely North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council. This partnership working will address 'cross-border' issues and maximise the resources devoted to tackling homelessness. Specific joint working initiatives include:

- The Rough Sleepers Initiative
- The proposed development of the rent deposit scheme.
- The development and implementation of the Health and Homelessness Action Plan
- Housing Surgery within HMP Kilmarnock
- Pan Ayrshire Mediation Service
- Reciprocation and Management of High Risk Offenders

## **SECTION FIVE**

### **MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REVIEWING THE STRATEGY**

#### **5.1. Monitoring and evaluation**

East Ayrshire partners recognise the value of monitoring the outcomes of homelessness and service responses including both hard and soft outcomes. To this end we will:

- Develop a framework that is:
  - corporate and inter-agency
  - implements the HL1 data capture system
  - focuses on the outcomes of homelessness service interventions and tenancy outcomes.
  
- Initial proposals include:
  - exit questionnaires for people leaving hostels
  - monitoring tenancy outcomes through post allocation visits for new tenants
  - the designation or appointment of a 'follow on' or 'link worker' with a monitoring role to enable improved monitoring and follow on support outcomes through home visits and 'drop-in' facilities
  - ensuring that all agencies' reporting systems trigger appropriate action and improve monitoring of resettlement outcomes for at least the first 6 months after a house is allocated
  - monitoring lengths of stay in temporary accommodation for different household types
  
- Evaluation will seek to make full use of monitoring information and will also seek to involve service users in service evaluations through for example:
  - written consumer satisfaction surveys for hostel residents and homeless applicants
  - establishing and supporting hostel residents meetings or a residents' forum
  - management meetings with user groups
  - developing a consultative group, or groups of homeless and/or formerly homeless people to enable user participation in strategy development
  - assisting user groups to participate in wider networks, such as that co-ordinated by Scottish Council for Single Homeless; and
  - forming and supporting a user group to enable user participation in the audit or monitoring of services.
  
- Evaluation of the strategy will also take full account of standards set out in Performance Standards for social landlords and homelessness functions, published jointly by CoSLA, Communities Scotland and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

## 5.2. Reviewing the strategy

- A review framework is being established and this will be serviced by East Ayrshire Council's Housing Service
- Its remit will be to:
  - monitor the implementation of the Strategy and Implementation Plan
  - take account of legislative changes that require further development of the strategy and of service responses to homeless people
  - to assess constraints and opportunities impinging on goal achievement and the required resources and new approaches required for success
  - to monitor demands and trends and to report on these to relevant stakeholders
- The Strategy Review Group will represent the variety of relevant stake-holders, with representatives from internal and external partners, including other housing providers, for example:
  - East Ayrshire Council Housing Services
  - East Ayrshire Council Social Work Services
  - NHS Ayrshire and Arran
  - Communities Scotland
  - Housing associations
  - Voluntary agencies
  - Department of Work and Pensions
  - Service user groups
- Quarterly meetings will be held to review progress
- An annual review will be conducted and a report produced

## APPENDIX ONE

### 1.1 FUNDING TO ASSIST IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

In order to assist in the delivery of the recommendations of the Homelessness Task Force's final report: Helping Homeless People, the Scottish Executive has allocated the undernoted funding to East Ayrshire. This funding was specifically for the assessment of homelessness within East Ayrshire, to increase the provision of temporary accommodation and to improve the advice, assistance and information to all those assessed as homeless. Detail of actual and committed expenditure is included.

#### Scottish Executive Funding to Assist in the Implementation of Homelessness Strategies

Financial Year 2001/2002	£
• Homeless Research Project	7,500
• Expansion of Research Project	5,000
• Development of Homelessness Module within Housing Management System	5,000
• Youth Homelessness Advice Booklet	5,000
• Education Project	2,000
• Housing Options Guide	5,000
• Assessment of Advice and Information Network	2,000
• Development of Private Landlords Forum	2,000
• Staffing Costs	29,000
• Development of Service User Involvement	2,000
• Administration Costs	<u>12,100</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>72,600</b>

Financial Year 2002/2003	£
• Increased Provision of Temporary Accommodation	224,365
• Hostel Information Packs	1,226
• Stakeholder Training	1,500
• Homelessness Strategy Group	523
• Staffing Costs	111,000
• Strategy Development and Delivery	11,386
• Provision of Furniture Handling, Storage and Supports	<u>10,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>360,000</b>

**Financial Year 2003/2004****£**

• Private Rented Sector Guide/Forum	4,000
• Private Sector Liaison Officer	25,000
• Increased provision of temporary Accommodation	166,000
• Furniture Handling, Storage and Supports	10,000
• Staffing Costs	150,000
• Multi Agency Training and Development	5,000
• Homelessness Forum	2,000
• Publication of information and advice	8,000
• Improved public access to services e.g. "gateway" points	<u>100,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>470,000</u></b>

## APPENDIX TWO

### DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS AND VULNERABILITY AS PER HOMELESSNESS CODE OF GUIDANCE

#### DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

1. Persons defined in current legislation as homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness – i.e. those:-
  - without any accommodation in which they can live with their families
  - who can't gain access to their accommodation or would risk domestic violence by living there
  - whose accommodation is “unreasonable”; or is overcrowded and a danger to health
  - whose accommodation is a caravan or boat and they have nowhere to park it.
2. Those persons experiencing one or more of the following situations, even if these situations are not covered by the legislation:-

#### **Roofless:**

- Those persons without shelter of any kind. This includes people who are sleeping rough, victims of fire and flood, and newly arrived immigrants.

#### **Houseless:**

- Those persons living in emergency and temporary accommodation provided for homeless people. Examples of such accommodation are night shelters, hostels and refuges
- Households residing in accommodation which is unsuitable as long-stay accommodation (such as in Bed & Breakfast), because they have no where else to stay
- Those persons staying in institutions only because they have nowhere else to stay

#### **Insecure accommodation:**

- Those persons in accommodation that is insecure in reality rather than simply, or necessarily, held on an impermanent tenure. This group includes:-
  - tenants or owner-occupiers likely to be evicted (whether lawfully or unlawfully).
  - persons with no legal rights or permission to remain in accommodation, such as squatters or young people asked to leave the family home.

- persons with only a short-term permission to stay, such as those moving around friends' and relatives' houses with no stable base.

#### **Involuntary Sharing of Housing in Unreasonable Circumstances:**

- Those persons who are involuntarily sharing accommodation with another household on a long-term basis in housing circumstances deemed to be unreasonable.

#### **CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE APPLICANTS WILL BE DEEMED TO BE VULNERABLE UNDER “OTHER SPECIAL REASON”**

- Young people of 16 or 17 years or younger
- Young people at risk of sexual or financial exploitation or involvement in serious drug, alcohol, or solvent abuse because of the circumstances in which they are living
- Young people previously looked after by a local authority
- Chronically sick people, including people with AIDS or HIV related illness
- People recently discharged from institutions in need of support and assistance, who have no one to provide this
- Women suffering, or in fear of, abuse even if they have no children
- People at risk of harassment or violence on account of race, colour, illness, sexuality, or ethnic or national origins
- Women suffering a miscarriage, or an abortion
- Refugees and other eligible persons subject to immigration control, who are vulnerable because of continuing physical or psychological effects of persecution to other harm suffered before entering the United Kingdom.

## APPENDIX THREE

### HOMELESSNESS PRESENTATIONS

**Table 2.1 Trends in Homelessness Presentations - 1996/97 to 1999/2000 for East Ayrshire and Scotland**

Area	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	% increase 1996/97-1998/99	% increase 1996/97-1999/2000
East Ayrshire	591	789	737	662	25%	11%
Scotland	41,000	43,100	45,700	45,957	11%	12%

(Sources of statistics on homelessness presentations as shown in tables 1.1 to 1.6 are HSG/2001/5; SHSG/2001/5; HSG/2000/5; HSG/1999/3; HSG/1998/4.

**Table 2.2 Percentage of all Applicants Assessed as Homeless or Potentially Homeless 1996/97 to 1999/2000**

Area	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
East Ayrshire	61%	61%	57%	56%
Scotland	75%	75%	75%	74%

**Table 2.3 Percentage of all Applicants Assessed as Priority Homeless/Potentially homeless 1996/97 to 1999/2000**

Area	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
East Ayrshire	38%	30%	35%	35%
Scotland	41%	41%	41%	44%

**Table 2.4 Percentage of Applicants with whom the Local Authority lost contact or Assessed not to be Homeless 1997/98 to 1999/2000**

Area	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
East Ayrshire	41%	43%	40%
Scotland	25%	25%	26%

Note: Comparable figures for 1996/97 were not published

**Table 2.5 Reasons Given for Homelessness (expressed as percentages)  
East Ayrshire and Scotland 1996/97 to 1999/2000**

<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999/2000</b>
Family/friends no longer able to accommodate	43%	42%	47%	42%
Relationship breakdown-violent	14%	14%	12%	13%
Relationship breakdown-non violent	10%	10%	11%	11%
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999/2000</b>
Family/friends no longer able to accommodate	37%	37%	37%	37%
Relationship breakdown-violent	12%	12%	12%	12%
Relationship breakdown-non violent	13%	12%	12%	12%

**Table 2.6 Applicant Households by Selected Type of Household (expressed as percentages) East Ayrshire and Scotland 1996/97 to 1999/2000**

<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999 /2000</b>
One person under 18	12%	11%	13%	11%
One person 18 -24	16%	17%	21%	19%
One person 25 and over under retirement age	23%	24%	23%	25%
One parent household under 25	9%	8%	7%	8%
One parent 25 and over	25%	22%	21%	18%
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999 /2000</b>
One person under 18	9%	9%	10%	9%
One person 18 -24	17%	17%	18%	19%
One person 25 and over under retirement age	29%	30%	31%	31%
One parent household under 25	7%	7%	7%	6%
One parent 25 and over	17%	21%	20%	15%

**Table 2.7 Accommodation Secured for Applicants Assessed to be Priority Homeless (expressed as percentages) East Ayrshire and Scotland 1997/98 to 1999/2000**

<b>Short stay accommodation</b>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999/2000</b>
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	25%	28%	41%
<b>Scotland</b>	15%	17%	20%
<b>Permanent accommodation</b>			
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	54%	52%	43%
<b>Scotland</b>	67%	63%	64%

**Table 2.8 Numbers of Applications by Geographic Area and Quarters East Ayrshire 1999/2000**

<b>Local area</b>	<b>Qrt 1</b>	<b>Qrt 2</b>	<b>Qrt 3</b>	<b>Qrt 4</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Totals</b>
Cumnock and Doon Valley	40	59	55	45	199	<b>34</b>
Central	30	30	37	53	150	<b>26</b>
Kilmarnock	14	18	11	18	61	<b>10</b>
Irvine Valley	17	16	16	25	74	<b>13</b>
South	42	20	17	24	103	<b>18</b>
North West						
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>101</b>

**Table 2.9 Applications by household type and area office: East Ayrshire 1999/2000**

<b>Household type</b>	<b>C&amp;DV</b>	<b>% CD&amp;V</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>% Central</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>% IV</b>	<b>KS</b>	<b>% KS</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>% NW</b>
One person 25 to retirement age – male	33	17%	49	33%	11	18%	19	26%	13	13%
One parent household aged over 25- female	40	20%	10	7%	8	13%	9	12%	23	22%
Single 18-24-male	28	14%	26	17%	7	10%	17	23%	9	9%
Couple with children	21	11%	4	3%	6	10%	4	5%	10	10%
One parent household aged under 25- female	17	9%	9	6%	6	10%	2	3%	11	11%
Single 18-24-female	8	4%	9	6%	4	7%	8	11%	8	8%
Single female under 18	5	3%	10	7%	5	8%	5	7%	10	10%
One person 25 to retirement age - female	12	6%	9	6%	7	11%	4	5%	3	3%
Single male under 18	12	6%	11	7%	1	3%	2	3%	8	8%
Couple without children	11	6%	5	3%	2	3%	1	1%	4	4%
One parent household aged over 25- male	4	2%	7	5%	2	3%	2	3%	2	2%
Other	4	2%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
One person retirement age or over- male	2	1%	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%	1	1%
One parent household aged under 25- male	1	1%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
One person retirement age or over- female	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2.10 Final outcome of homelessness application by area, 2000/2001**

Area	Perm. accomm. secured and accepted	% all area applicants secured perm. accomm.	Short stay accomm. secured and accepted	Perm. accomm. secured but not accepted	Short stay secured but not accepted	Perm. accomm. secured but lost contact after making offer	Short stay accomm. secured but lost contact after making offer	Contact lost after assess. but before securing accomm.	Transfer to another authority	No accomm. secured	Totals
<b>C&amp;DV</b>	40	21%	18	3	12	0	17	0	2	91	189 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Central</b>	20	19%	2	2	1	2	1	0	2	105	141 <sup>4</sup>
<b>IV</b>	4	8%	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	18	53
<b>KS</b>	10	12%	7	8	0	8	0	0	0	50	83
<b>NW</b>	3	2%	4	2	1	2	0	0	1	99	138
<b>Total nos</b>	77		34	16	15	13	18	0	5	362	604
<b>%</b>	14%	14%	6%	3%	3%	2%	3%	0%	1%	64%	100%

<sup>3</sup> nos listed do not total 189 because of 6 records miscoded as zero

<sup>4</sup> nos listed do not total 189 because of 1 record miscoded as zero

**Table2.11 Percentage of applications given no accommodation as a final action by household type 1999/00 and 2000/01**

<b>Household type</b>	<b>Nos. given no accomm. 1999/00</b>	<b>Nos. given no accomm. 2000/01</b>	<b>Total Nos. of applications from household type 1999/00</b>	<b>Total Nos. of applications from household type 2000/01</b>	<b>Percentage given no accomm. by household type 2000/01</b>
One person retirement age or over- female	0	1	1	3	33%
One parent household aged under 25- male	1	2	3	2	100%
One person retirement age or over- male	2	5	5	12	42%
Other	3	1	5	6	17%
One parent household aged over 25- male	7	5	17	8	63%
Single male under 18	14	22	34	41	54%
Couple without children	14	6	23	11	55%
Couple with children	15	17	45	43	40%
One parent household aged under 25- female	19	22	45	43	51%
Single female under 18	20	14	35	33	42%
Single 18-24-female	24	29	37	41	71%
One person 25 to retirement age - female	26	27	35	50	54%
One parent household aged over 25- female	33	41	90	93	44%
Single 18-24-male	69	72	87	88	82%
One person 25 to retirement age – male	100	99	125	130	76%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>60%</b>