



Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022

September 2022

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1.0 Introduction

This Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (the Plan) sets out how Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) will work towards achieving Welsh Government's vision to making homelessness 'rare, brief and unrepeated'.

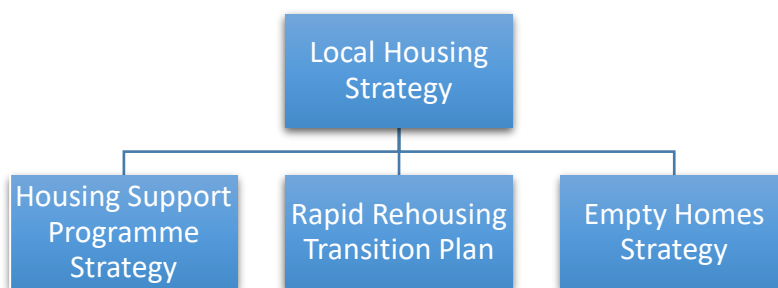
Prevention of homelessness is the primary focus of the Plan. Where prevention has not worked the aim is to provide settled accommodation as quickly as possible and ensure the correct support is in place (where necessary) to ensure homelessness is unrepeated.

To achieve this, there is a need to change the way services are delivered. This plan outlines the changes that are required over the next five years and beyond. As homelessness cannot be resolved by housing alone, there is also a need to strengthen partnership working arrangements with key services, section 1.3 and 1.4 below details the partnership working arrangements in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Plan.

The information within this document is correct at the time of publication.

1.1 Context

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is one of three strategies that has been developed to support the implementation of Conwy's Local Housing Strategy.



Conwy's 2018 Local Housing Strategy vision is for 'People in Conwy have access to affordable, appropriate and good quality accommodation that enhances their quality of life', to achieve this there are 4 key objectives:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Ensure housing support is available to those in need
- Improve the quality of the private sector
- Ensure people understand their housing options to enable them to make an informed decision

The social rented sector in Conwy (11.6%) is relatively small in comparison to the rest of Wales (16.4%), and offers one of the lowest social housing stocks per head of population. This lack of stock has resulted in many low income households relying on the private rented sector for accommodation in Conwy. Figures published in Conwy's 2018 Local Housing Strategy show 18% of households in Conwy rent privately, this figure is high in comparison to 14% across Wales.

During the last three years there has been on average 1102 applicants on the housing register, however, on 01 April 2022 this figure increased to 1719 as a result of a number of external factors such as the Covid-19 Pandemic, changes to household income and the cost of living and changes to Welsh Government policy such as the removal of priority need. On average, during the last four years, 60 new social housing units have been delivered and 307 units available as a result of property turnover. These figures demonstrate how demand far outstrips supply.

An annual social housing grant (SHG) budget is available to support Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to develop and increase the supply of affordable housing. SHG is allocated to developments that meet local

housing need and Conwy's strategic priorities, as outlined in the Local Housing Prospectus. The Prospectus is published annually and provides RSLs associations and other stakeholders with the information they need to make informed decisions about where to search for land and property to deliver new affordable housing.

In June 2021, Julie James MS, Minister for Climate change, announced a new Welsh Government target to deliver 20,000 new low carbon social homes for rent, intermediate homes for rent and shared ownership homes during this Government. To support this, the Welsh Government allocated an additional £50 million to social housing budget in Wales, bringing the total allocation to £250 million. In Conwy this resulted in an allocation of £8.5 million SHG in 2021/22. This level of funding is expected to continue with an annual indicative budget over the next three years of £12 million.

It is recognised however, that new social housing development is not enough to meet current and future demand. The private sector plays an important role in the housing market, enabling people and families to find a home that is right for them. Therefore, funding has been made available to develop and implement initiatives to improve the condition and increase the supply of private sector accommodation at affordable rent levels, this includes unlocking the potential of empty properties.

CCBC provide an empty homes service, this service offers advice and support to empty home owners to bring their property back into use. There are currently 1685 properties in Conwy that have been empty for 6 months or more and on average 25 empty properties are brought back into use each year, this equates to 1.5%.

National Assembly for Wales Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee published a report in October 2019 detailing how WG and local authorities can improve the empty homes service in Wales. One of the recommendation was to have a local empty homes strategy and action plan in place.

CCBC developed an empty homes strategy and action plan in 2018 and set up a working group made up of key stakeholders to support the implementation. A number of changes have been made to service delivery to achieve the strategic aim to significantly reduce the number of empty properties in Conwy and unlock the housing potential. There is a particular focus on bringing empty properties back in to use that will be available at affordable rent levels, and on targeting the types of properties that will match the needs of homeless households.

In addition, the Housing Support Grant (HSG) for Wales was allocated an additional 40million pounds for the financial year 2021-22. The HSG is an early intervention grant programme to support activity, which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation. The North Wales Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group was set up in September 2020, to provide a forum for collaborative working and oversight of HSG activities.

Conwy's Housing Support Grant Programme Strategy was published in February 2022, following a robust needs assessment. The strategy sets out the strategic direction for our housing related support and homeless prevention services for the next four years. The aim of the strategy is to take a proactive approach to the early intervention and prevention of homelessness. Where homelessness cannot be prevented the aim is to ensure that support and/or accommodation is available to help people regain their place in the community of their choice; maintain their accommodation and remain independent.

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014, implemented from April 2015, introduced new duties on local authorities to help prevent homelessness for anyone who asks for help and placed a much greater focus on early intervention, with the definition of threatened with homelessness being extended from 28 days to 56 days.

With the suspension of the priority need assessment in 2020, the number of households owed the full rehousing duty (Section 75) increased to 263 in 2021/22, compared to 128 in 2019/20. There has also been an increase in the number of households requiring temporary accommodation. There were 279 households living in temporary accommodation on 31 March 2022, compared to 144 on 31 March 2020. The average length of stay in temporary accommodation in 2021/22 was 224 days, compared to 158 days in 2019/20. This includes all households who spent time in temporary accommodation during the year, as well as those who left.

In June 2019 Welsh Government (WG) set up the Homelessness Action Group (HAG) to recommend the steps required to end homelessness in Wales. WG published its Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in October 2019. This identifies the need to move away from the current 'staircase', earned rewards, model of service delivery to a Rapid Rehousing approach. This means moving away from the provision of emergency, temporary and hostel services towards long term housing-led solutions. To do this it involves understanding what housing is needed, how housing is going to be funded, developed and allocated.

WG's strategy identifies principles that underpin homelessness prevention that should be reflected across public services, including the following:

- Tackling and preventing homelessness is a public services matter
- The earliest interventions are the most effective and the most cost effective and should always be the interventions of first choice
- All services should place the individual at the centre and work together in a trauma informed way

These principles are carried through in to the rapid rehousing approach.

1.2 Vision

Conwy's Rapid Rehousing vision is as follows:

'Key services deliver a coordinated approach to homeless prevention activities to ensure homelessness in Conwy is rare. Where homeless cannot be prevented, people can move into settled accommodation quickly and can access appropriate support, to ensure that homelessness is unrepeated. If temporary accommodation is required it will be used for a short period only'

To achieve this there are four key objectives:

- Transform the quality and use of temporary accommodation
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Ensure support is available to those who need it
- Strengthen partnership working arrangements to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services

Conwy is committed to working to achieve a RR approach. The recent public health emergency has reinforced the importance of a safe and stable home for everyone, but we have emerged from the pandemic in to an affordable housing crisis. We face significant challenges, particularly in relation to increasing the supply of affordable housing quickly.

1.3 Governance

The Strategic Housing Partnership will monitor and support the implementation of the Plan. The Partnership was established in 2014 to co-ordinate and strengthen housing related activities across the Council and its partner organisations. Membership includes internal and external key service partners at a senior level.

The work of the Partnership is scrutinised by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure accountability of its work on annual basis.

A wider strategic steering group of key services and local partners will be established in order to strengthen partnership working arrangements at the right level to effectively deliver the Plan. This will ensure that each partner is able to identify their own role in the work to prevent homelessness.

1.4 Engagement

The Rapid Rehousing Plan was out to public consultation from 30.9.22 to 11.11.22. The aim of the consultation was to seek the views of key stakeholders in order to gain a greater understanding of the

opportunities and challenges to achieving 'Rapid Rehousing'. Conwy is committed to listening to the views of stakeholders and has used the information to develop this Plan.

An online questionnaire survey was available for the duration of the consultation period. 12 surveys were completed in total, the surveys were completed by:

Elected Member	2
Landlord	1
Local Resident	4
Organisation	5

Of the 4 organisations that completed the survey:

- 1 was completed by North Wales Police, Local Policing.
- 1 was completed by the Kind Bay Initiative
- 1 was completed by Adferiad Recovery.
- 2 were completed by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

6 focus groups took place during the consultation period with people who have experience of homelessness and/or at risk of homelessness. 24 people attended in total, the age of participants ranged from 18 to 58. The events were coordinated and facilitated by Shelter Cymru and the Take Notice Project, and took place on the following dates:

- Wednesday 19th October
- Tuesday 25th October (morning and evening event)
- Thursday 27th October (morning and afternoon event)
- Wednesday 9th November

A workshop was held on Wednesday 26th October with organisations who play a key role in the prevention of homelessness and delivering homelessness and/or support services. 36 people attended who represented 26 organisations/departments.

Council Attendees	External Partners Attendees
Housing Strategy – 5	Grwp Cyefin – 1
Housing Solutions – 2	North Wales Housing – 1
Social Care – 4 (Older People, Disabilities, Community Well Being, Quality Standards and Commissioning)	Adra – 1
Supporting People - 3	Wales and West – 1
Youth Justice - 1	Clwyd Alyn – 1
Economic Development – 1	Clearsprings – 1
Planning – 1	DWP – 1
Communities for Work – 1	Police – 2
Economy and Culture – 1	Health Primary Care – 1
TOTAL – 19 attendees	Health Mental Health – 1
	Area Planning Board – 1
	Shelter – 1
	Kind Bay – 1
	CVSC – 1
	Alabare – 1
	Welcome Centre – 1
	TOTAL – 17 attendees

2.0 Homelessness analysis

This section of the Plan provides information on relevant contextual factors in Conwy and in relation to households that have applied for homelessness assistance, in order to understand the likely demands on the service over the next 5 years and the housing shortfall that needs to be addressed.

2.1 Context

Conwy has a population of 115,228 (2011 Census). The age profile shows there is a higher than average proportion of persons of retirement age and a lower proportion of children and working age households.

Currently there are approximately 53,350 households and approximately 57,850 dwellings. The majority of households are one and two person.

Housing Related Benefits

Opportunities for well-paid employment in the County Borough are limited; the economy relies heavily on tourism and service industries. The proportions of employment in the tourism related sectors of retail, accommodation and food services, and arts, entertainment and recreation are high – a total of about 32% of all jobs compared to 21% nationally. These sectors are the ones most likely to include low wage, part time or seasonal employment and are the areas of employment which took some of the hardest hits from the effects of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

The number of people receiving housing related benefits had been on a gradual downward trend between spring 2013 and autumn 2018, but had then started to rise slowly. The Covid-19 pandemic and the change it caused in people's household income and housing situation resulted in a large upturn in numbers of recipients in April 2020 and the trend continues upward since then. In August 2020 there were 10,069 households who were recipients of housing related benefits. This was an increase of 1,324 or 15.1% on the previous year.

The proportion of those receiving housing benefits who are housed within the private rented sector is much higher in Conwy County Borough than across the country as a whole, which is a reflection of the lack of social housing within the housing stock and of the increasing reliance on the private rented sector to provide for those in social and intermediate need.

Characteristics of recipients of housing related benefits

Source: Stat-Xplore, Department of Works and Pensions

	Conwy County Borough		Wales	Great Britain
	Number	%	%	%
All recipients (Aug 2020)	10,069		277,251	5,636,147
Households with children	3,250	32.3%	35.1%	36.5%
Lone parent family	2,206	21.9%	24.1%	24.4%
Couple with children	1,044	10.4%	10.9%	12.1%
One person household	5,760	57.2%	55.2%	54.9%
Characteristics for housing benefit recipients only				
All Housing Benefit recipients (Aug 2020)	5,972		160,243	3,044,777
In work	547	9.2%	8.1%	14.2%
Lone pensioner (aged 65+)	2,003	33.5%	31.1%	32.1%

As a proportion of all housing benefit recipients, CCBC sees more one person households and fewer households containing children than nationally. Though information about age structure is only available for

the legacy Housing Benefit element, data also suggests that recipients in Conwy are older than the national average.

Housing Income

The table below shows median, lower quartile and lower decile household incomes across the UK and Wales and Conwy in April 2021. Conwy households have slightly higher income profiles than households in Wales.

Area	Total households	Median income	Lower quartile	Lower decile
United Kingdom	28,320,359	£32,550	£18,050	£10,500
Wales	1,379,337	£27,850	£15,900	£ 9,300
North Wales	307,650	£27,850	£16,100	£9,400
Conwy CB	53,233	£28,300	£16,350	£9,750

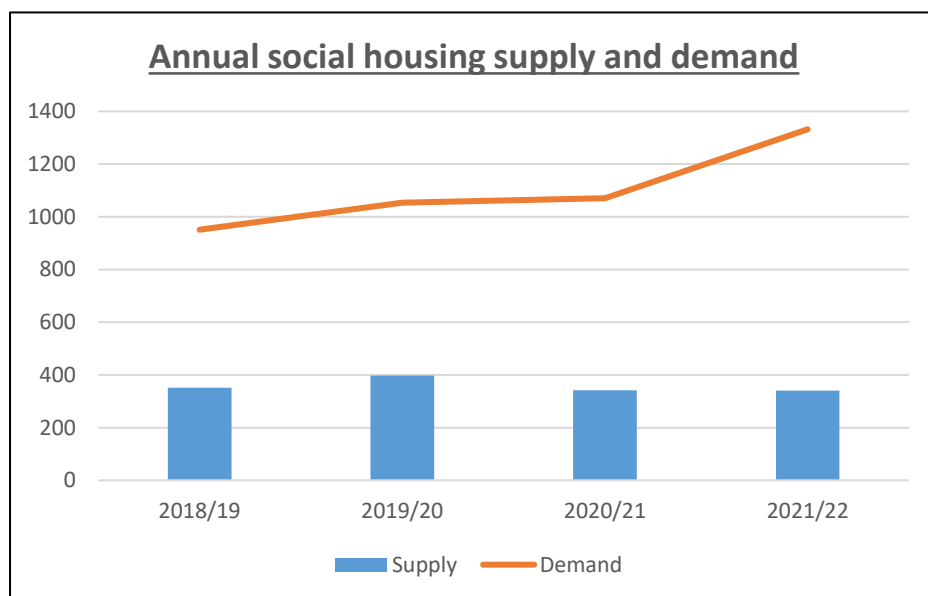
Home Ownership

The average house price is currently 7.3 times the average household income of £28,300 and 12.7 times the lower quartile household income of £16,350. House prices have risen 60% in the past ten years, whereas income levels have risen by only 33% in the same period. Compared to February 2020 Conwy house prices have increased by 24% (the UK average is 14%).

Social Housing

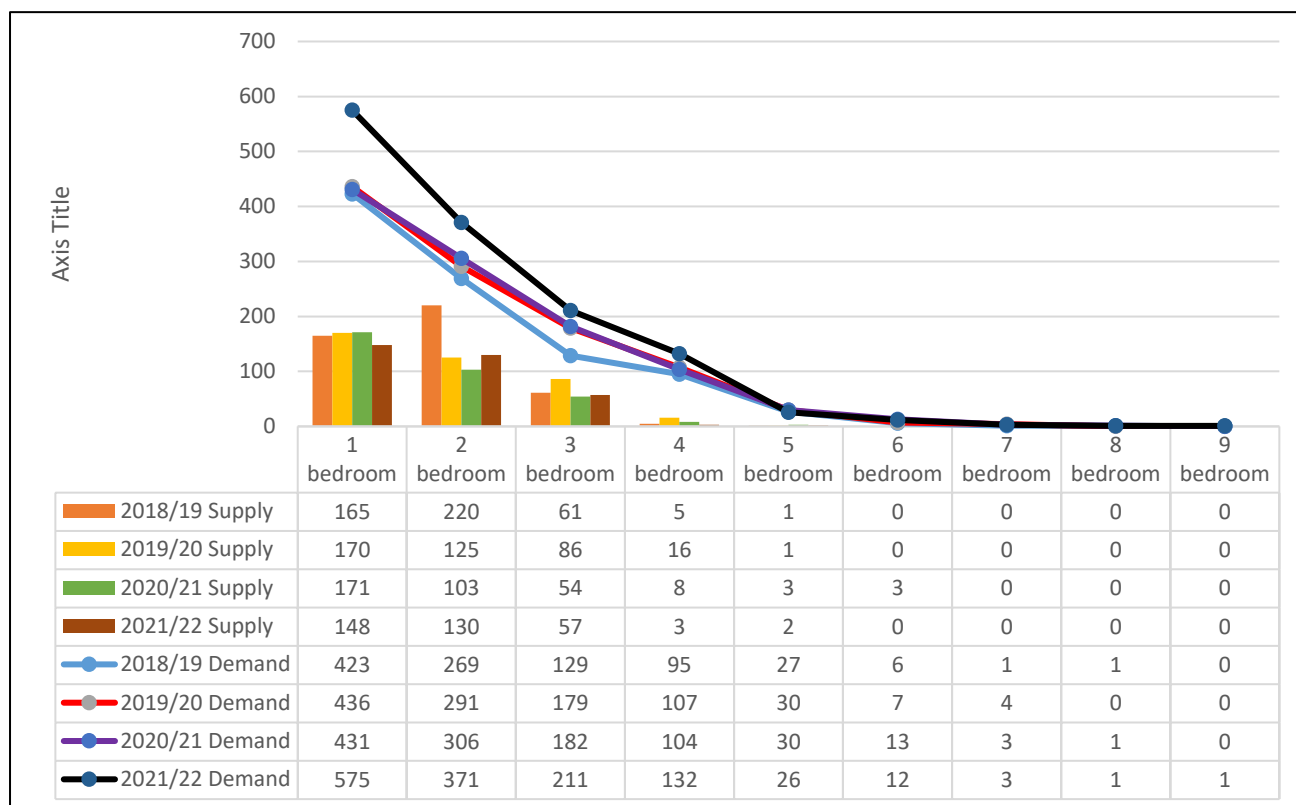
As outlined in section 1.1, the social rented sector in Conwy (11.6%) is relatively small in comparison to the rest of Wales (16.4%). The social housing stock is made up of 4,603 (66.8%) general needs properties and 1,376 (20%) sheltered accommodation units.

The graph below shows the annual social housing supply (*new build delivery and turnover of existing stock*) and demand (*social housing register date at 01 April each year*):



Although the new housing delivery has increased in the last four years, the turnover of existing stock has reduced and demand has increased. As a result the gap between supply and demand is widening.

The graph below shows the annual supply (*new build delivery and turnover of existing stock*) and demand (*social housing register at 01 April each year*) broken down into bedroom sizes:



The graph shows the greatest shortage of accommodation is one bedroom and larger (4+ bedroom) properties. It is a strategic priority to increase the supply of this type of accommodation, and has been included within the local authority housing prospectus.

The table below provides a breakdown of demand; total number of applications each year, broken down into bands on the housing register.

Applicants on housing register at 1 April:

Source: SARTH data

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total applications	1,127	1,083	1,202	1,719
B1	150	140	150	239
B2	783	773	878	1,296
B3	8	7	7	9
B4	186	163	167	175

There has been a significant increase in the number of applications (517) between 1 April 2021 and 1 April 2022, with Bands 1 and 2 both seeing large increases. These two bands are for applicants with the highest levels of housing needs, with most homeless applicants being in Band 2.

Direct lets

In 2020 a temporary allocation procedure was adopted to maximise the number of homeless households who were allocated social housing through 'Direct Lets'. The aim is to ensure that homeless households are able to access 50% of all social housing allocations.

The table below shows that homeless households gained 29% of all available lets in 2020/21 and 30% in 2021/22. The type of property becoming available impacts on the proportion of direct lets that can be made to homeless households, with many vacancies not being suitable to meet their needs, for example sheltered properties.

Breakdown of all allocations made by property size and type:

Source: SARTH data

	2020/21			2021/22		
	Total lets	Direct lets	% direct lets	Total lets	Direct lets	% direct lets
1 bed flat**	127	43	34%	104	31	30%
Studio/bedsit	8	7	88%	7	3	43%
1 bed bungalow*	25	3	12%	24	3	13%
2 bed flat	58	12	21%	49	20	41%
2 bed bungalow*	13	2	15%	19	3	16%
3 bed bungalow	2	0	0%	1	0	1%
2 bed m'ette	1	0	0%	1	1	100%
1 bed house	5	0	0%	1	0	0%
2 bed house	26	9	35%	16	7	44%
3 bed house	53	15	28%	38	10	26%
3 bed flat	1	0	0%	0	0	0%
4 bed house	3	1	33%	3	0	0%
6 bed house	2	0	0%	0	0	0%
3 bed m'ette				1	1	100%
Total	320	92	29%	264	79	30%

*Predominantly sheltered housing

** It is not known how many of the one bedroom flats were for over 55s

The direct lets approach is due to be reviewed as it was put in place on a temporary basis only. An assessment will be made of the impact that it has had on other applicants on the Housing Register, such as applicants in Band 1 and applicants in Supported Housing.

Intermediate Housing

The intermediate housing stock current stands at 356 units. The stock is made up of 340 (96%) general needs properties and 16 (4%) older persons units. Intermediate rent levels are set at the Local Housing Allowance rate or 80% of the market rate in the local area (whichever is higher). Applicants for intermediate housing will be accepted onto the Tai Teg intermediate housing register if their income falls between £16,000 and £45,000.

All social housing and intermediate housing meets the Welsh Government's Welsh Housing Quality Standard as a minimum, new stock is developed to the Welsh Development Quality Requirements.

Private Rented Sector (PRS)

Figures published in Conwy's 2018 Local Housing Strategy show 18% of households in Conwy rent privately, this figure is high in comparison to 14% across Wales.

The PRS can provide flexibility for people with changing accommodation needs or who need to move house frequently for work reasons etc. However, the sector has a lower level of statutory security of tenure in comparison to social housing, and there can be significant up-front costs such as deposits and rent in

advance and landlord imposed eligibility criteria, which can be problematic for low income or vulnerable households.

Private sector rents are determined by the market and prices are the result of demand and supply. As demand exceeds supply, some prospective tenants are willing to pay high levels of rent to secure a roof over their heads as there are so few housing options available, but the sector has become increasingly unaffordable for the majority of people who make homeless applications.

The chart below provides an analysis of private rental advertisements in Conwy County between May and August 2021:

Source: Bevan Foundation

Analysis of private rental advertisements in Conwy County, May- August 2021 Source: Bevan Foundation, using Rightmove and Spareroom.com data						
No. beds	Count	Ave weekly rent £	Min weekly rent	Properties above LHA rate	Properties below LHA rate	Average LHA weekly shortfall
Shared accommodation	42	101.97	73.85	42	0	£43.02
1	10	116.41	101.54	10	0	£21.54
2	13	150.36	126.92	13	0	£18.03
3	7	186.15	144.23	7	0	£19.30
4	1	-	1,100.00	1	0	£87.00

The above shows there are no properties on the market at a rent level at or below the Local Housing Allowance rate.

The Bevan Foundation updated this work in May 2022 and found a worsening position in Wales in relation to property availability at or below LHA rates. However, in Conwy they did identify two shared rooms at LHA rate.

A social lettings agency, HAWS, has been set up in Conwy to help lower income families access the PRS. There are currently 44 properties on the portfolio, let at LHA rate. Vacancies are circulated to Conwy's Housing Solutions Team, who can present clients with homeless applications as nominees. However, any household can apply, with the landlord having the final say as to who becomes their tenant.

Ineffective Properties

Conwy has a higher than average proportion of private property that is not on the residential housing market and is not available for full time occupation. Empty homes, holiday lets and second homes represent a stock of bricks and mortar which could, if economic conditions, planning or local taxation policies change, contribute to the overall supply, which would impact on property prices and the availability of accommodation.

In March 2021 Conwy had 1,485 properties that had been empty for 6 months or more. Bringing empty homes back in to use has been a focus of effort in Conwy for some time, resulting in the return of 125 homes over the past 3 years; 18 of these (14%) are now available at affordable rent for at least 5 years.

Property owners have taken advantage of the strong short term letting market over recent years. Since 2017, 625 properties have shifted to non-domestic rates, but it is likely that more properties will qualify to do so this year. In May 2022, the Council Tax team report that they have received an average of 8 applications a week since April 2022.

In 2018 CBCC research suggested there were 900 'whole property' holiday lets in Conwy. In August 2021, 1,333 'whole property' short term lets were active in the Conwy County area on two major on-line letting platforms.

In March 2021, 1,401 properties in the Conwy County were second homes.

2.2 Presentations

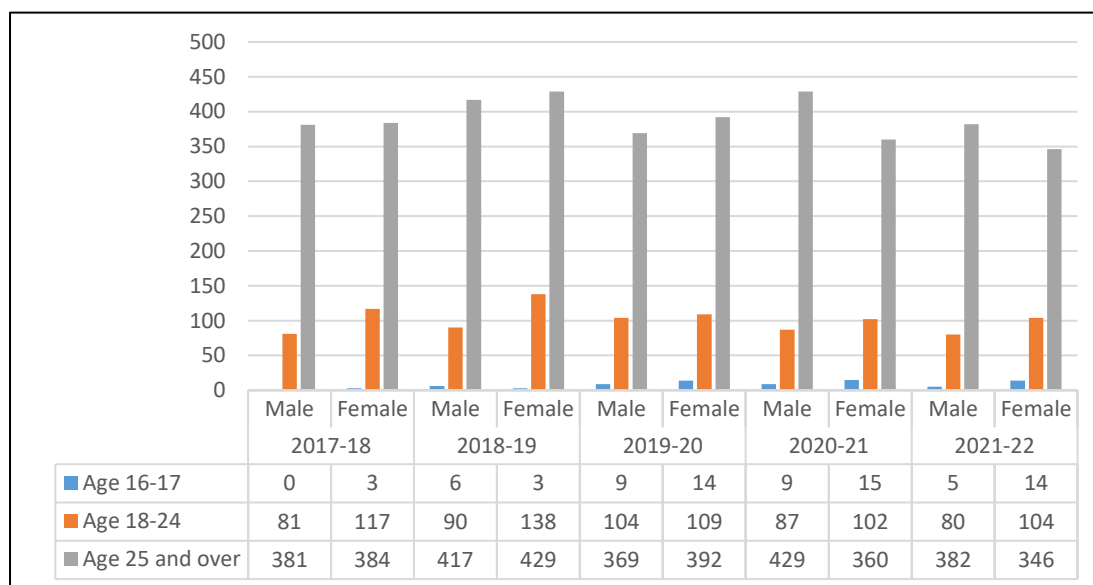
This section provides homeless data for the period 2018/19 – 2021/22. Data for the last two years is likely to be the more accurate indicator of homelessness need than before this date, as the removal of the requirement to apply the priority need assessment in late March 2020 remains in place. Earlier data has been provided in order to consider trend information.

2.2.1 Demographics

Demographic data in relation to homeless presentations is limited due to incomplete recording. Some information is recorded for the lead applicant associated with each application at the Section 62 stage. Whilst other demographic information is captured, including in relation to other household members, it is not recorded in a way that it can be reported on.

Lead applicants assessed under Section 62 by age group/sex:

Source: Stats Wales and CHS



2.2.2 Specific groups

Youth Homelessness

Whilst the number of applications from young people under 25 has reduced, the nature of the duties owed has changed, resulting in more young people being owed a greater level of duty, including the provision of temporary and settled accommodation. This impacts on the amount of temporary accommodation needed and the time spent there, as well as on support requirements.

Number of applications from young people (applicants under age 25):

Source: Stats Wales

	Age 16-17			Age 18-24		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
2018/19	6	3	9	90	138	228
2019/20	9	14	23	104	109	213
2020/21	9	15	24	87	102	189
2021/22	5	14	19	80	104	184

Domestic abuse

Breakdown of relationship has been one of the main three reasons for homelessness for a number of years (see 2.2.4). In 2021/22 there was an increase in people who have experienced domestic abuse being owed duties at Section 73 and 75 where the relationship breakdown was due to violence and at Section 73 where the relationship breakdown was non-violent. There is limited opportunity to prevent homelessness in these circumstances and some households may require enhanced support.

Applications where cause of homelessness is breakdown of relationship – violent:

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Section 66	30	17	9	12
Section 73	93	70	69	89
Section 75	27	47	25	34

Applications where cause of homelessness is breakdown of relationship – non-violent (this includes other types of domestic abuse):

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Section 66	21	13	20	19
Section 73	81	83	76	96
Section 75	18	9	31	30

Prison leavers:

The Homeless Prevention Officer (Prison Liaison) reports that previously, Probation staff approved addresses with family members and friends for accommodation on release. However, with the removal of the requirement to consider priority need, presenting as homeless is now a housing option and fewer people seek to live with family/friends on release. Unfortunately this cohort experience barriers accessing all types of housing, which can make it challenging to be able to secure accommodation in order to discharge the s75 duty. Affordability is a key challenge as prison leavers have very high rates of unemployment and reliance on Universal Credit. For some, nominations for social housing are unsuccessful on the grounds of the 'sensitivity' as their offences and potential risk implications.

From October 2020 to April 2022, 63 prison leavers accessed temporary accommodation, an average of 3.3 persons a month. Due to the nature of the offences that some people have committed, placements can be difficult to obtain as some Bed and Breakfast owners are unwilling to accommodate prison leavers or put current residents at risk. A number of leased temporary accommodation properties are under occupied by this client group in order to be able to provide interim accommodation. Registered sex offenders and arsonists present challenges for safe placements.

Homeless applications from people leaving prison:

Source: a) Stats Wales b) Cartrefi Conwy

	2018/19a	2019/20b	2020/21b	2021/22b
Section 66	*	1	1	0
Section 73	63	56	31	34
Section 75	9	7	6	4

Minority groups

There is very limited data in relation to minority groups. The collection of equalities data is not complete, due to work pressures. Where we do have this data it is for the lead applicant only.

Veterans and EU nationals

We do not have separate data on these groups.

NRPF

There have been 12 applicants identified on the monthly data provided to Welsh Government from August 2020 to April 2022.

Rough Sleeper information

With the 'everyone in' approach since the early days of the pandemic everyone who was sleeping rough or at risk of doing so has been accommodated, with the exception of one person who has slept rough for many years. Offers of accommodation have been made on numerous occasions and they can be accommodated if they wish, but to date this is not what they want.

Numbers of people sleeping rough

Source: a) estimated following Rough Sleeper count exercise b) CCBC monthly reports to Welsh Government

	Number
2018/19a	10
2019/20a	21
2020/21b	1
2021/22b	1

2.2.3 Homeless application outcomes

Outcome of applications assessed:

Sources: Stats Wales; *Service PIs

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of service requests*	1,169	1,350	1,272	1,233
Total Section 62 assessments	868	997	1,018	931
Total number of outcomes	1,089	1,149	1,002	1,061
- of which single person applicants	615	657	642	679
Not homeless or threatened	30	51	87	114
Ineligible*	3	3	0	4**
Section 66 – threatened with homelessness	312	327	240	237
- of which single person applicants	114	126	111	109
Section 73 – homeless	534	549	525	503
- of which single person applicants	354	381	381	366
Section 75 – full housing duty	114	138	132	198
- of which single person applicants	54	48	78	131

Note: Those who are ineligible are usually people who have returned from abroad and who fail the habitual residency test.

There has not been a rise in the number of homeless applications in the last two years, in fact they have reduced when compared to the number received in 2019/20. However, the nature of the duties owed has changed in the last two years, with more households reaching Section 73 and requiring the provision of temporary accommodation rather than only assistance to help secure accommodation. This is because of the removal of the priority need assessment. The number of single people owed a duty under Section 75 has increased in the last two years as a result, significantly so in 2021/22. This has led to an increase in the use of temporary accommodation.

There is a marked difference in the number of service requests and the number of Section 62 outcomes each year. This is likely to be for a variety of reasons, including assistance no longer being required as well as not being able to contact the applicant. However, detailed information about the reasons is not available.

The table above highlights the outcomes in each year; at Section 75 this shows the number of duties discharged, i.e. those households who left the service at this stage each year. However, in order to fully understand the demands on the homelessness service there is also a need to consider the number of Section 75 duties that are accepted each year. These have risen in each of the last two years, leading to an increased need for temporary accommodation and a higher demand for settled accommodation. The supply of settled accommodation has not increased in proportion to the increased demand, and social housing vacancies have fallen during this time.

Number of Section 75 duties accepted:

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number	136	128	180	263

2.2.4 Causes of homelessness

There is a high proportion of cases where the reason for homelessness is due to the loss of rented accommodation. There will be a variety of reasons for this, however, landlords often use Section 21 notices to end a tenancy, as this is the quickest way to gain possession. Where an applicant has a valid Section 21 notice landlords are contacted to see if there is any prevention work that can be undertaken to allow the tenant to remain. Often, during these discussions, additional information is provided about the circumstances that have resulted in the notice being served. However, this is not recorded in a way that can be accessed via reporting mechanism.

Breakdown of relationship is another main cause of homelessness. Similarly, prevention work is undertaken where it is appropriate to do so.

The three main causes of homelessness each year at each duty have remained consistent over the last four years.

Main three causes of homelessness by each duty:

Source: Stats Wales

Date	Cause	Section 66 prevention duty	Section 73 relief duty	Section 75 full duty
2018/19	Loss of rented/tied	144	99	24
	Breakdown of relationship	51	174	42
	Rent arrears	42	-	-
	Other relatives/friends can no longer accommodate	0	75	18
	Total homeless households	312	534	114
2019/20	Loss of rented/tied	142	95	31

	Breakdown of relationship	-	153	56
	Rent arrears	49	-	-
	Other relatives/friends can no longer accommodate	37	125	13
	Total homeless households	327	548	138
2020/21	Loss of rented/tied	79	-	23
	Breakdown of relationship	-	145	39
	Rent arrears	33	-	0
	Other relatives/friends can no longer accommodate	48	166	31
	Other (includes homeless in emergency, returned from abroad, sleeping rough)	-	54	-
	Total homeless households	241	523	132
2021/22	Loss of rented tied	92	48	26
	Breakdown of relationship	31	185	64
	Other relatives/friends can no longer accommodate	40	146	50
	Total homeless households	237	503	198

A detailed breakdown on the demographic information and tenure of accommodation prior to presentation is provided in Appendix 1.

2.2.5 Rate of repeat presentations

Data in relation to repeat homelessness presentations is not easily available, and therefore is only provided for one year. Repeat presentations are most prevalent amongst single people but particularly single males.

Information from homeless prevention officers suggests that temporary accommodation is used as a housing option for some people between relationships and other life events. Further work is required to fully understand the reasons for repeat presentations, in order to be able to address them and work towards ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief and unrepeatable.

Number of applicants who have made more than one homeless application by household type (2020/21)

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

	Number of applications						TOTAL
	2	3	4	5	6	7+	
Couple	15	2	3	0	1	0	21
Couple with children	14	7	0	0	0	0	21
Single parent male	9	4	3	0	0	0	16
Single parent female	45	19	7	1	1	0	73
All with children	68	30	10	1	1	0	110
Single female	51	16	10	5	1	0	83
Single male	110	55	22	14	1	7	209
TOTAL	244	103	45	20	4	7	423

2.2.6 Use of temporary accommodation

The use of temporary accommodation increased significantly in 2020/21 as more households became eligible for temporary accommodation provision as a result of the removal of the priority need test, prompted by the pandemic. This means that many single people are now owed different duties and has brought about a significant increase in the number of single people living in temporary accommodation.

Additional bed and breakfast placements have been used to meet this demand. The majority of people will be owed the full rehousing duty and as appropriate affordable housing is in very short supply, they face potentially very long periods of time in temporary accommodation.

Households in temporary accommodation on 31 March each year:

Source: Conwy Finance

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
All forms of temporary accommodation	144	144	258	279
- of which families with children	78	75	72	89
In bed and breakfast accommodation	39	36	135	128
- of which families with children	9	9	12	19

Number of new households moved into emergency accommodation each year:

Source: Conwy Finance

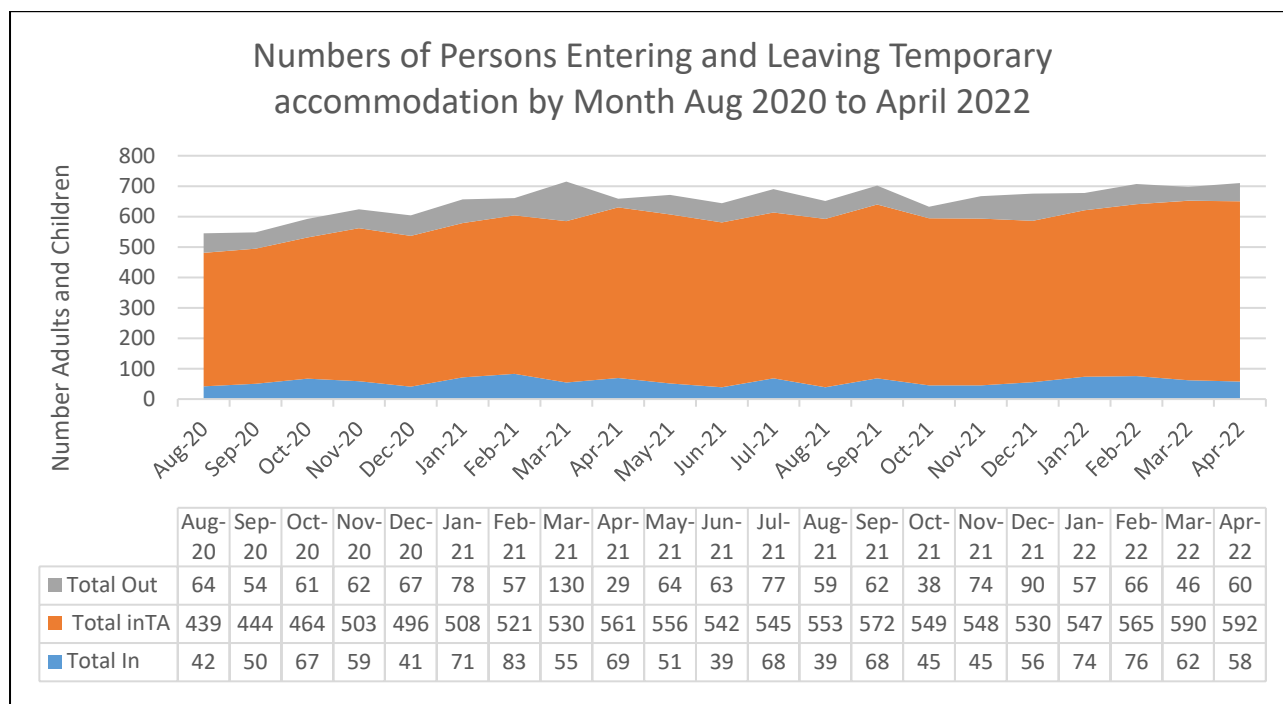
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total number of households	221	237	518	458
- of which households with children	62	69	67	76

To understand the total demand for temporary accommodation it is necessary to look at all households who require temporary accommodation.

Total number of households accommodated in all types of temporary accommodation:

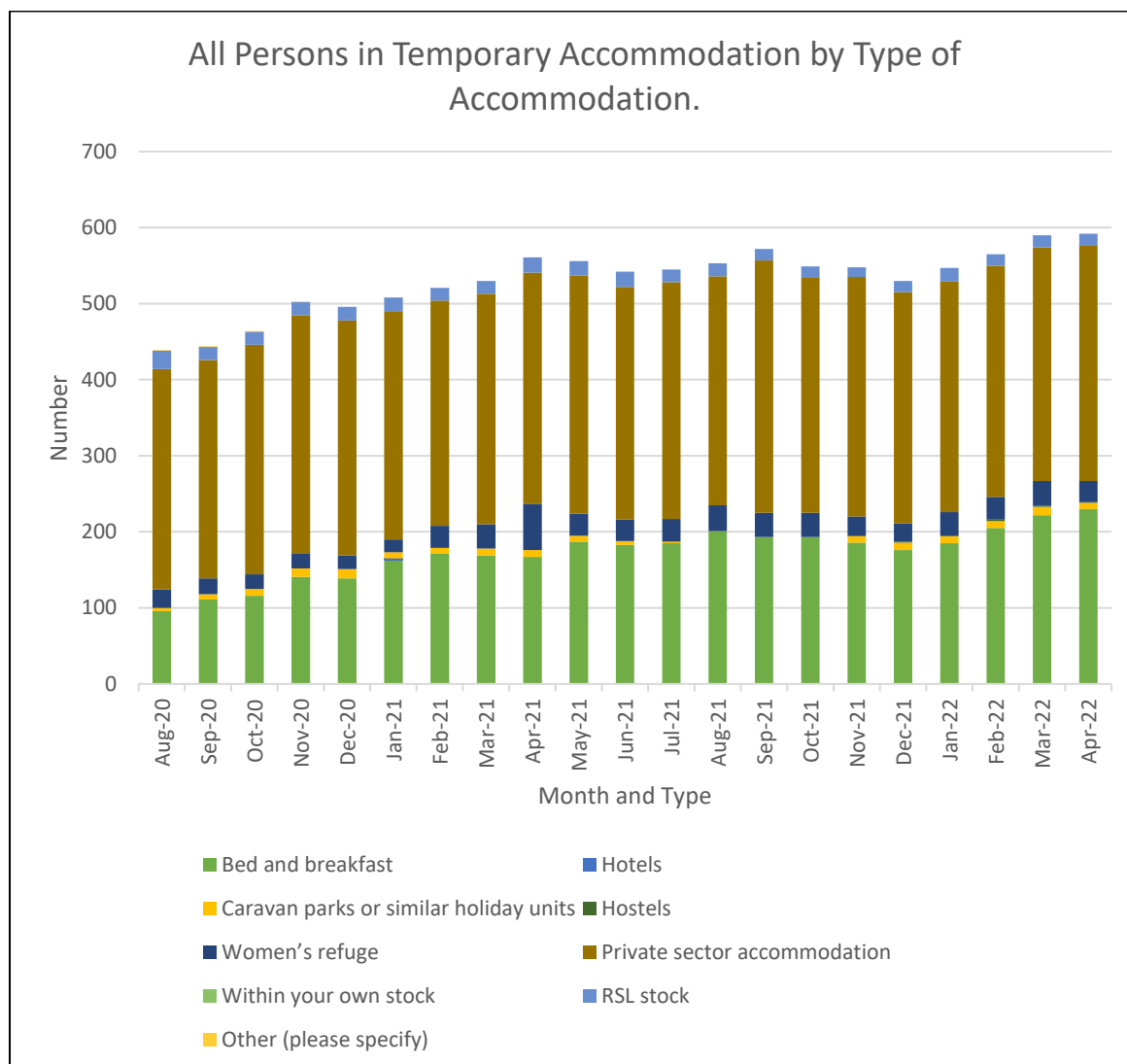
Year	Total number of households	Of which were households with children
2018/19	407	172
2019/20	435	110
2020/21	721	166
2021/22	756	160

The graph below shows the flow of people in to and out of temporary accommodation, and shows that the number of people living in temporary accommodation is trending upwards:



Source: CHS monthly returns to Welsh Government

The diagram below shows the total number of people in temporary accommodation by the accommodation type. Private sector accommodation (self-contained and leased and managed by the authority) accommodates the largest numbers of people, ranging from 290 to 332 occupants. Bed and Breakfast numbers have more than doubled from 96 to 230 individuals. Women living in a refuge has increased as domestic abuse increased during the pandemic.



Source: CHS monthly returns to Welsh Government

2.2.7 Prevention Outcomes

Prevention outcomes at each duty have been reviewed.

At Section 66 - eligible, threatened with homelessness, prevention assistance provided:

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	312	327	240	237
Successful				
Number	219	234	186	143
%	70.2%	71.6%	77.5%	60.3%
Wales average	68%	67%	65%	N/A
Unsuccessful				

Number	57	48	30	54
%	18.3%	14.7%	12.5%	22.8%
Neutral				
Number	39	42	24	40
%	12.5%	12.8%	10.0%	16.9%

At Section 73 – eligible, homeless, duty to help secure accommodation:

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	534	549	522	503
Successful				
Number	219	258	258	169
%	41.0%	47.0%	49.4%	33.6%
Wales average	41%	41%	39%	N/A
Unsuccessful				
Number	225	207	192	242
%	42.1%	37.7%	36.8%	48.1%
Neutral				
Number	90	84	75	92
%	16.9%	15.3%	14.4%	18.3%

At Section 75 – eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need (priority need assessment not undertaken since late March 2020 due to the pandemic):

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	114	138	132	198
Successful				
Number	84	102	108	133
%	73.7%	73.9%	81.8%	67.2%
Unsuccessful				
Number	27	36	24	65
%	23.7%	26.1%	18.2%	32.8%

Performance at Section 66 has been above the Welsh average for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Welsh average performance information for 2021/22 is not yet available.

Performance at Section 73 has been at the Welsh average in 2018/19 and above the Welsh average for 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Welsh average performance information for 2021/22 is not yet available.

Performance in both prevention and relief activity improved in 2020/21 compared to the previous year, but 2021/22 saw rates of successful activity drop to their lowest level in more than four years, falling below the levels in 2018/19. Lack of access to affordable PRS accommodation is likely to be the biggest factor in this downturn in performance.

A detailed breakdown of tenure on discharge is provided in Appendix 1.

2.2.7 Reasons for unsuccessful outcomes

Where prevention was unsuccessful the reasons have been reviewed.

Reasons for unsuccessful prevention assistance (Section 66):

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Assistance refused	*	3	3	2
Non co-operation	3	*	*	1
Application withdrawn	9	9	6	13
Loss of contact	24	30	15	24
Other reasons	3	*	*	0
Total	39	42	24	40

Reasons for unsuccessful relief assistance (Section 73):

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Assistance refused	3	6	3	1
Non co-operation	6	9	*	2
Application withdrawn	18	30	33	51
Loss of contact	63	36	39	37
Other reasons	*	3	*	1
Total	90	84	75	92

Reasons for unsuccessful discharge (Section 75):

Source: Stats Wales

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Assistance refused	9	9	9	10
Non co-operation	*	6	*	3
Application withdrawn	*	3	6	12
Loss of contact	6	3	3	12
Other reasons	12	15	6	28
Total	27	36	24	65

A significant number of applicants do not receive a positive outcome from their application. Loss of contact at Sections 66 and 73 is the category with the highest number of applications, with application withdrawn, particularly at Section 73 being a large number. Further understanding about these outcomes would be helpful in ensuring that the homeless service is working to prevent repeat applications.

2021/22 has a much higher figure of applications that were unsuccessfully discharged at all duties than in previous years. 2018/19 was the last year that more detail about outcomes at Section 75 were collected by Stats Wales but this information is available from our records.

Reasons for discharge of duty under Section 75:

Source: a) Stats Wales b) CHS

	2018/19a	2019/20b	2020/21b	2021/22b
Ceased to be eligible	*	0	1	0
Withdrawal of application*	9	7	10	24
Mistake of fact	*	0	0	0
Became homeless intentionally from accommodation provided under s75	3	9	2	11
Accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (Part VI 1996 HA)	54	65	54	85
Accepted a PRS offer	33	36	54	48
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation made available under s75	6	7	2	17
Refused an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (Part VI 1996 HA)	*	4	6	6
Refused an offer of suitable accommodation in the PRS	*	1	0	1
Refused an offer of suitable interim accommodation under s75	9	4	2	3
Refusal to cooperate	*	5	1	3
Total	114	138	132	198

* The reasons for withdrawal are not known, but applicants who move to Supported Housing cannot have their duty discharged via this form of accommodation and therefore may withdraw their application.

2021/22 has seen an increase in the number of people becoming intentionally homeless from interim accommodation, and in the number who voluntarily cease to occupy it. This is a concern, as applicants may make another homeless application in the future, although we do not know how many of these households leave to move to settled housing.

2.2.8 Local Connection

Data on local connection referrals is not easily available. We cannot report on the outcome of the referrals that we have made to another authority, or the number of referrals that Conwy has received from other local authorities.

Local connection Section 80 referrals to another authority

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

	No.
2018/19	1
2019/20	2
2020/21	10
2021/22	10

2.2.9 Minimum, maximum and average case length information

Gathering this data has raised issues in relation to data accuracy, which needs to be explored further. Therefore this information is not being provided at this time.

2.2.10 Average length of stay in temporary accommodation

As demand for temporary accommodation has increased there has not been a corresponding increase in the amount of affordable housing available. Whilst access to social housing vacancies has increased, access to affordable PRS accommodation has decreased and there has been an increase in the length of time that households spend in temporary accommodation waiting for suitable settled and affordable accommodation to become available.

The average number of days that all homeless households spent in all forms of temporary accommodation:

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

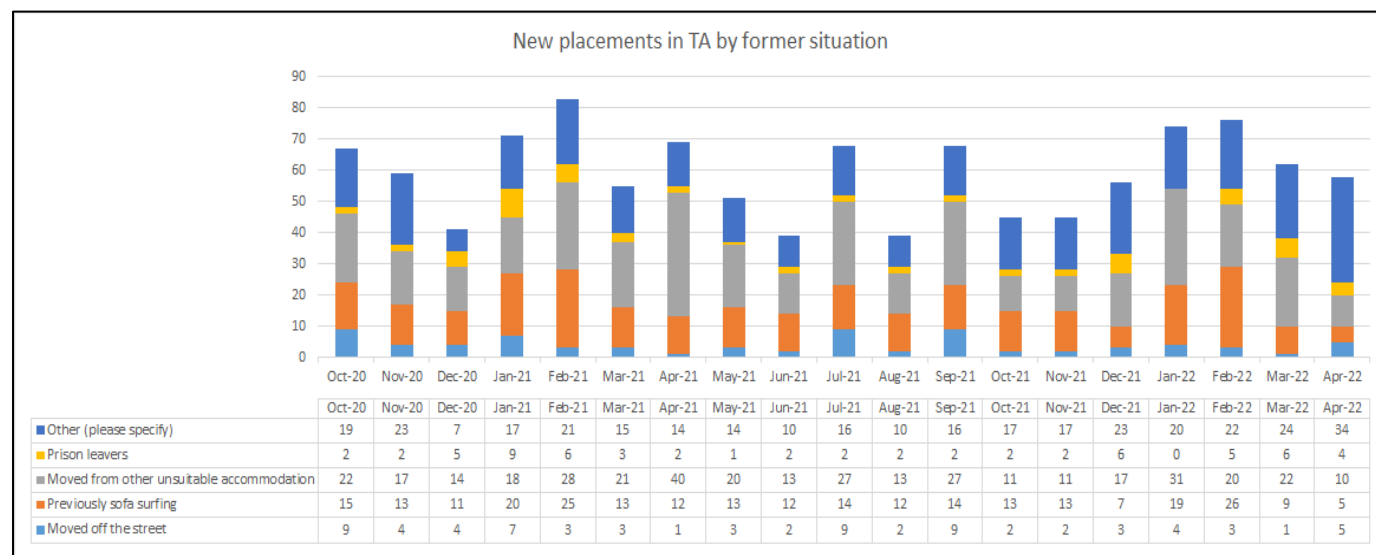
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
All households in all forms of temporary accommodation	213	231	158	224
Emergency accommodation*				
a) Single person households	62	50	76	117
b) Households with children	66	72	76	89
Temporary leased properties				
a) Single person households	458	566	462	513
b) Households with children	452	568	709	737

* This is mainly Bed and Breakfast but does include a small number of other types of emergency accommodation

A detailed breakdown for specific groups is provided in Appendix 1.

2.2.11 Accommodation (before and after) presentation

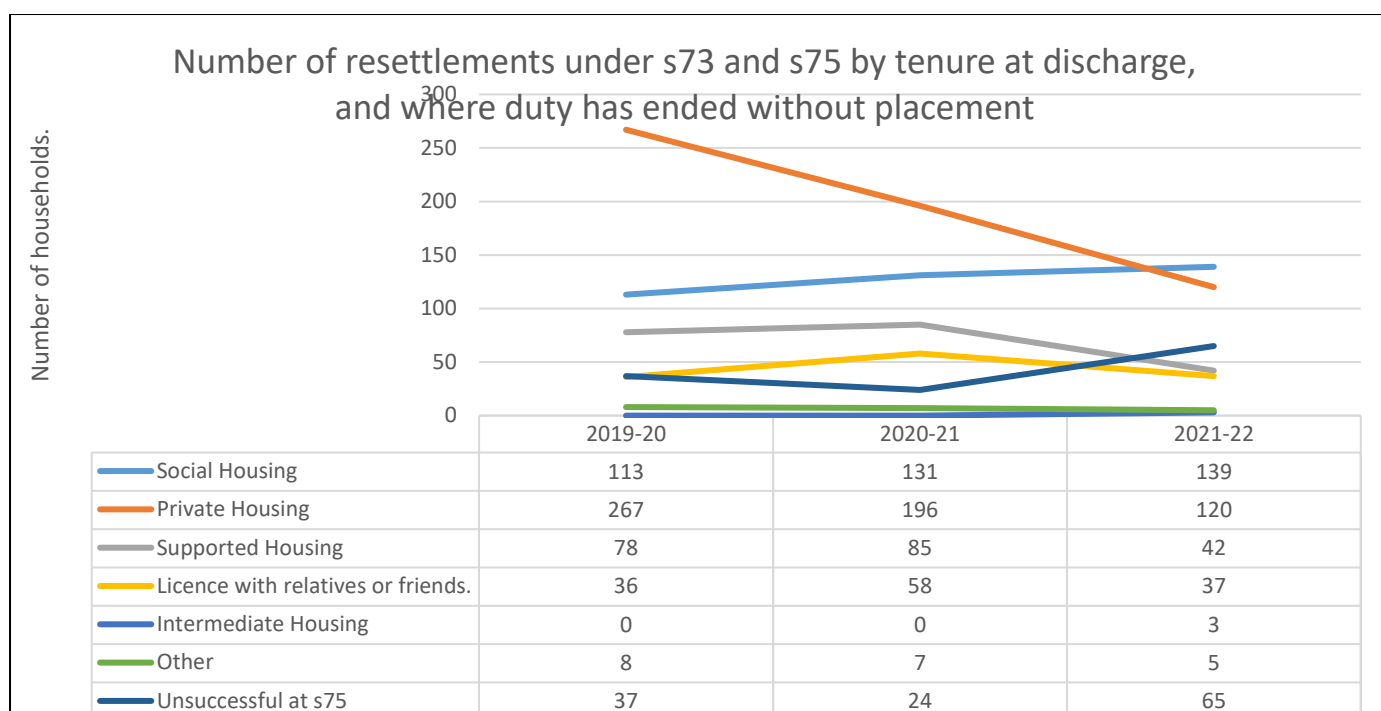
Tenure of accommodation prior to presentation



Source: Monthly returns to Welsh Government

Tenure on discharge of duty

There has been a significant reduction in access to the PRS over the three years shown below, and a smaller increase in access to social housing. Supported Housing availability reduced significantly in 2021/22, which is likely to have been largely due to a lack of affordable move on accommodation, possibly due to the direct lets approach, coupled with a smaller number of allocations. Intermediate housing options do not feature strongly as suitable accommodation to enable discharge of duty.



Source: Stats Wales

A significant number of households are leaving the homelessness service without a positive outcome. This has risen sharply in 2021/22. More work is required to understand why this is happening and whether people still have a housing need.

2.3 Local Housing Market Assessment

To understand what type of affordable housing is needed and where, it is important to have an up-to-date Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) in place. In February 2022, Conwy's interim LHMA was approved. The interim assessment was prepared in line with guidance by the Welsh Government 'Local Housing Market Assessment Guide (2006)' and supplementary guidance 'Getting started with your Local Housing Market Assessment (2014)'. Welsh Government issued new guidance in April 2022 and a timetable for all local authorities in Wales to complete their LHMA, in line with the recommendation set out in the independent review of affordable housing supply in Wales 2019. Conwy's interim LHMA will be updated accordingly.

The interim LHMA has identified a need to increase the supply of affordable housing by 229 units per year over the next 5 years.

In addition to the LHMA, Conwy published the first Local Authority Prospectus, in line with Welsh Government guidance, in August 2021. The following gaps have been identified in the LHMA and Prospectus, and are considered strategic housing development priorities over the next 12 months:

- General needs 1 bed accommodation and larger accommodation in coastal towns (4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 bed) including innovative solutions such as pods, acquisition and refurbishment of existing dwelling(s), conversions and/or shared housing
- 2 bed bungalow/ ground floor adapted properties in coastal towns, where appropriate (i.e. land is suitable and ensures the property is accessible)
- Development that supports rightsizing initiatives and creates mobility within the existing housing stock
- Sustainable developments (i.e. mixed size and tenure), there will be an expectation that consideration is given to ensure a higher percentage of social housing is available
- Development of supported housing schemes for specific groups. The following has been identified as priority areas within the next 12 months:

Local

- Self-contained units for ex-offenders, victims of domestic abuse and people suffering with mental health.

Regional:

- LGBTQ+ dispersed unit
- Dispersed unit or refuge for male survivors of domestic abuse

Development priorities are reviewed annually.

2.4 Conclusion

Conwy has been an area with significant housing pressure for some time, exacerbated by the pandemic. The total number of homeless applications has decreased in the two years since 2019/20, but there has been a change in the duties owed to applicants, with more households requiring temporary accommodation and being owed a Section 75 rehousing duty. During this time access to the private sector has reduced, due to lack of affordability and some properties leaving the market, increasing the reliance on social housing, for which there is a very high level of demand. This means that households are spending long periods of time in temporary accommodation.

It is anticipated that the peak of homeless applications may not have been reached yet, with the number of temporary accommodation placements increasing over the last few months. With the continued suspension of the priority need test it is likely that significant numbers of applications will continue to be made by single people. Those who are under 35 face particular challenges in relation to the lack of affordable housing and are remaining in temporary accommodation for lengthy periods due to a severe shortage of any suitable settled accommodation.

Many single people become homeless from accommodation where they have no legal rights, and therefore there is limited scope for prevention work. Relationship breakdown and loss of rented accommodation have been two of the most common reasons for homelessness for some time, and they are expected to continue to remain so.

There are a number of external factors likely to add further pressure to the homeless service, these are detailed in section 5.

It is difficult to forecast the longer-term implications of Covid 19. There remains an unpredictability about what the future holds, and the impact that this could have on people requiring homelessness assistance.

3.0 Assessing support needs

This section of the Plan provides information to gain an understanding of the needs of people who require support.

3.1 Context

An assessment of the support needs of current homeless households was undertaken in April/May 2022 using the four support group categories and five support requirement categories provided in the RRTP Guidance (October 2021). It was undertaken by the Housing Support Grant Team using documentation from the Housing Solutions team.

In June 2020 a very similar exercise was undertaken, using the parameters in the Phase 2 guidance, and some of the outcomes from this are provided below for the purposes of comparison.

The assessment carried out in April/May 2022 includes all households in all forms of temporary accommodation. The assessment carried out in June 2020 only considered the support needs of those households living in emergency accommodation.

Temporary accommodation type:

Type of accommodation	Totals 2022	Totals 2020
Bed and Breakfast/Hotel	119	55
Cabins	0	6
Caravan	2	12
Emergency bed in HSG Project	2	0
Out of county	20	18
Self-Contained	7	22
Shared House	8	0
Leased properties	107	N/A
Total	265	113

3.2 Volumes

The chart below shows the outcome of the support needs assessment of 265 households undertaken in April/May 2022:

Support Group	Recommended Housing	Recommended Support	Current case volumes (incl %)	Anticipated trend (incl %)
Low/none	Mainstream housing	Individualised support	Singles – 89 Families – 51 Total - 140 (52.8%)	53%
Medium	Mainstream housing	Individualised, likely to include multi-agency support	Singles - 51 Families – 24 Total - 75 (28.3%)	28%
High	Mainstream housing	Housing First/intensive floating support, including multi-agency support	Singles – 39 Total - 39 (14.7%)	15%

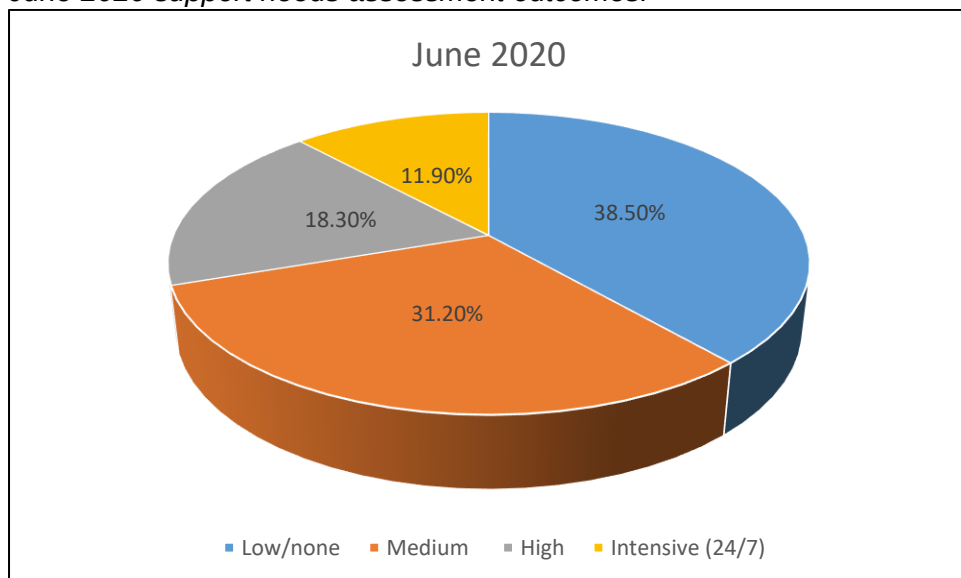
Intensive (24/7)	Supported housing	Residential support	Singles - 11 Total - 11 (4.2%)		4%	
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The chart below shows the outcome of the support needs assessment of 109 households undertaken in June 2020:

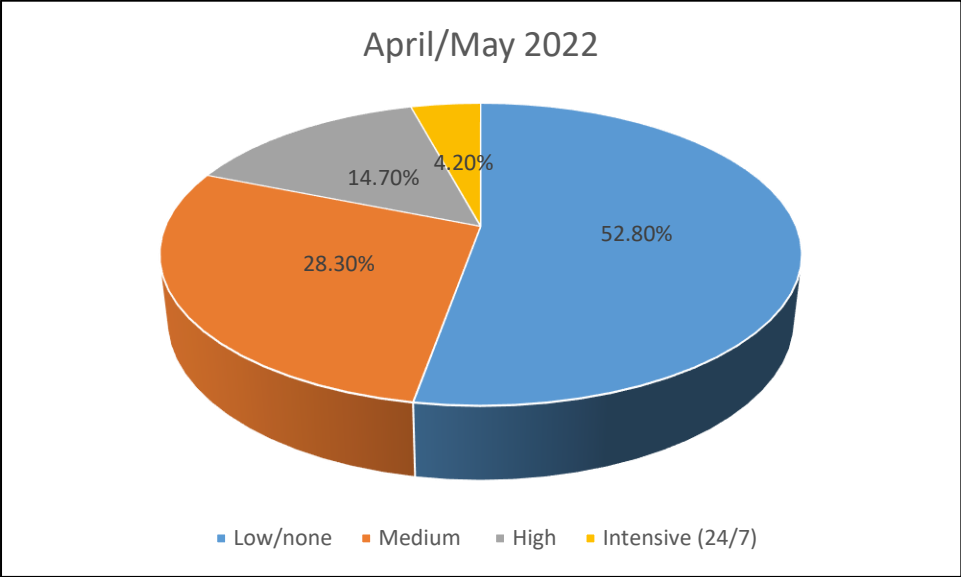
Intensity of support required	Long term 12months+	Medium term 3-12months	Short term <3 months	Grand Total
Low <1 hour per week	1	3	38	42 (38.5%)
Medium 1-2 hours per week	6	22	6	34 (31.2%)
High 3 hours+ per week	16	4	0	20 (18.3%)
V high 24/7	13	0	0	13 (11.9%)
Grand Total	36	29	44	109

Whilst the two assessments used slightly different parameters, a comparison can be made:

June 2020 support needs assessment outcomes:



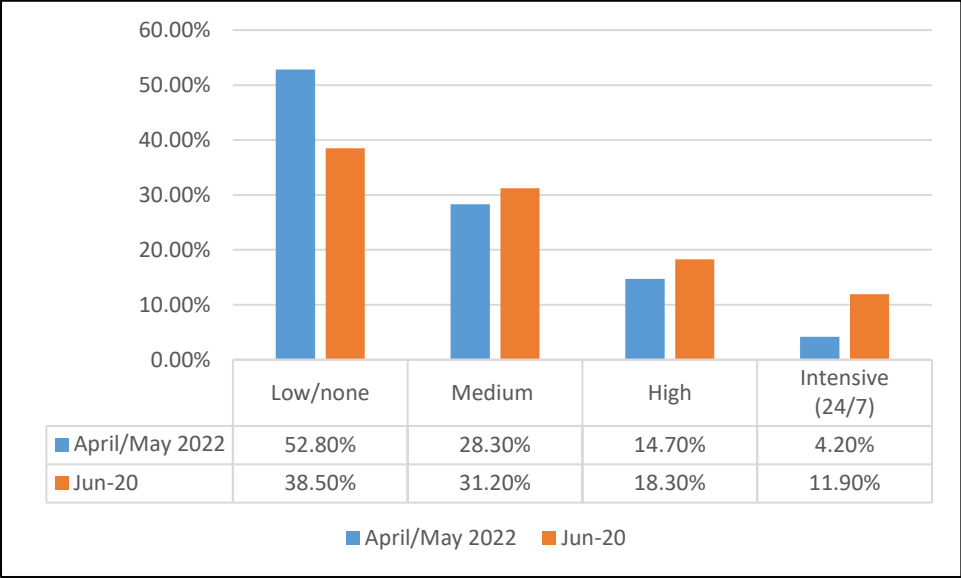
April/May 2022 support needs assessment outcomes:



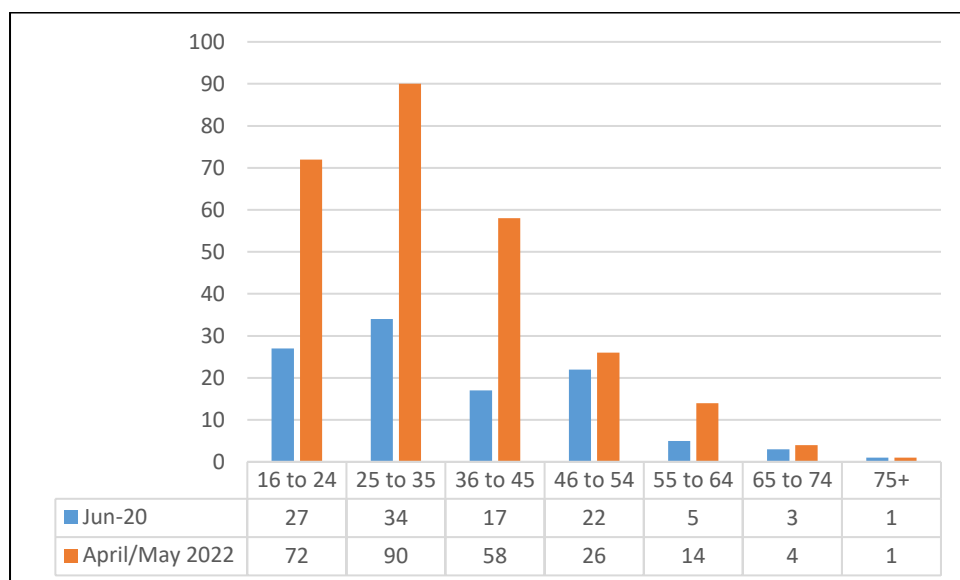
The majority of the 265 households considered in April/May 2022 have no/low support needs (52.8%), and only a very small percentage have an intensive 24/7 need for support (4.2%). Single person households are the only household type requiring support in the high and intensive support groups. All but the 11 single people with the highest support needs require mainstream housing. There is a need to assess how many of the households in the high support group would benefit from a Housing First service. It is likely that a service with some of the elements of a Housing First approach will be appropriate for a higher number of people.

The trend in the number of homeless applications and types of household is covered in Section 2, it is anticipated that the future percentages of households in each support group will remain similar to the percentages identified in the support needs assessment undertaken in April/May 2022.

Support needs assessment outcomes compared:



Age breakdown of lead applicant for both support needs assessments:



Household type and age of lead applicant for both support needs assessments:

	April/May 2022		June 2020	
Age	Family	Single Person	Family	Single Person
16 to 24	17	55	4	24
25 to 35	17	73	8	27
36 to 45	19	39	4	14
46 to 54	5	21	3	20
55 to 64	1	13	1	3
65 to 74	0	4	0	3
75+	0	1	0	2
Total	59	206	20	93

3.3 Support requirements

Support needs of households who are living in leased temporary accommodation can be easily identified, compared to households living in other types of temporary accommodation. The reason for this is, the majority of households have lived in this accommodation for some time and they receive a housing management service from an RSL provider. A monthly review meeting takes place between the RSL and the Homeless Prevention Team. As a result, support needs are clearly identified and recorded.

Types of support required by households living in leased temporary accommodation:

	Family	Single	Couple	TOTAL
Practical	36	14	0	50
Specific/specialist	10	14	2	26
Engagement	3	7	0	10
Stabilising	9	9	0	18
Progression	0	3	0	3
TOTAL	58	47	2	107

A wide range of support needs have been identified. Key points are highlighted below:

- The majority of households require some practical support, but this can be at different levels, and for differing periods of time.
- A number of households have significant rent arrears which is preventing them from being considered for other accommodation.
- There are a number of households who need support to be able to manage their current accommodation and this support is likely to be required when they have moved on from temporary accommodation.
- There is a range of specialist support required which includes supporting households with serious illness/disability as well as mental health and drug/alcohol needs.
- There are some people who are survivors of domestic abuse that require on-going support.

For households living in other forms of accommodation their support needs are not gathered in one place. A large amount of data is recorded as part of each homeless application but not always in a way in which it can easily be extrapolated. Consideration is being given as to how this can be improved, in order to be able to undertake the next support needs assessment consistently across all forms of temporary accommodation and as required by the rapid rehousing guidance.

Households living in other forms of accommodation have a wide range of support needs which includes drug/alcohol use, mental and physical health needs, domestic abuse, care leaver, financial advice, offending behaviour, tenancy support, self-harm. Many households faced more than one issue. This highlights the importance of being able to deliver flexible, tailored and multi-agency support.

In moving to a rapid rehousing approach a key part of the shift is to remove a tenancy readiness culture and expectation. The vast majority of households experiencing homelessness have levels of support needs which mean that mainstream housing is suitable for them. Both support needs assessment exercises show that single people made up the higher proportion of households considered. In the most recent assessment in April/May 2022 there were no families requiring a high or intensive level of support.

For the single person households with intensive 24 support needs, there will be a requirement to identify suitable accommodation with support provision which is not mainstream housing. Whilst this group is made up of a small number of people, clients have a range of needs and have often experienced trauma. Our existing supported housing will be reviewed as part of our transition to rapid rehousing to ensure that we commission the type of provision needed. New services may be required to meet these needs, possibly with the provision of a level of care as well as support which would need to be commissioned via partnership working with Social Care and Health.

3.4 Accommodation requirements

The data from both assessments highlights the level of need for small units of affordable accommodation to meet the housing needs of the single person households. In the April/May 2022 assessment, 128 of the 206 single person households were aged 35 or under and 188 were under 55 years of age. Affordable settled housing for this client group is in very short supply.

3.4.1 Accessibility

Property accessibility needs from the June 2020 are as follows:

Issue	Total June 2020
Child has disabilities	1
Ground floor	3
Ground floor - in wheelchair	1
Ground floor - has disabled child	1
Ground floor or one flight of stairs	1

Has a dog which needs accommodating with them	2
Possible ground floor due to medical issues	1
Total	10

There are 13 households from the April/May 2022 assessment who have a need for accessible accommodation as below:

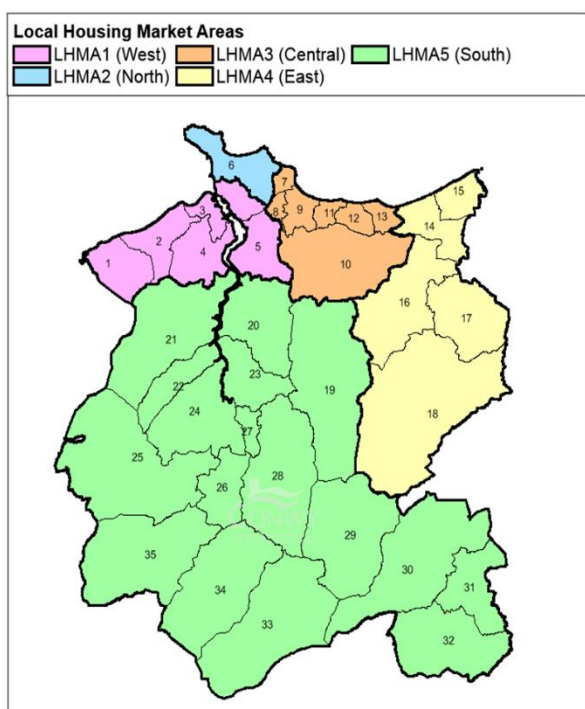
Issue	Total April/May 2022
Requires ground floor due to medical condition	7
Requires ground floor due to disability (adult)	3
Requires ground floor due to disability (child)	1
Level access/may be able to manage first floor	2
TOTAL	13

The majority of these are single person households, although one household is a family requiring three bedrooms in ground floor accommodation. Four of these households require adaptations to their accommodation.

3.4.2 Location

Information has been collated on areas of choice where people would like to live. This is used when developing supported accommodation and also informs any affordable housing developments.

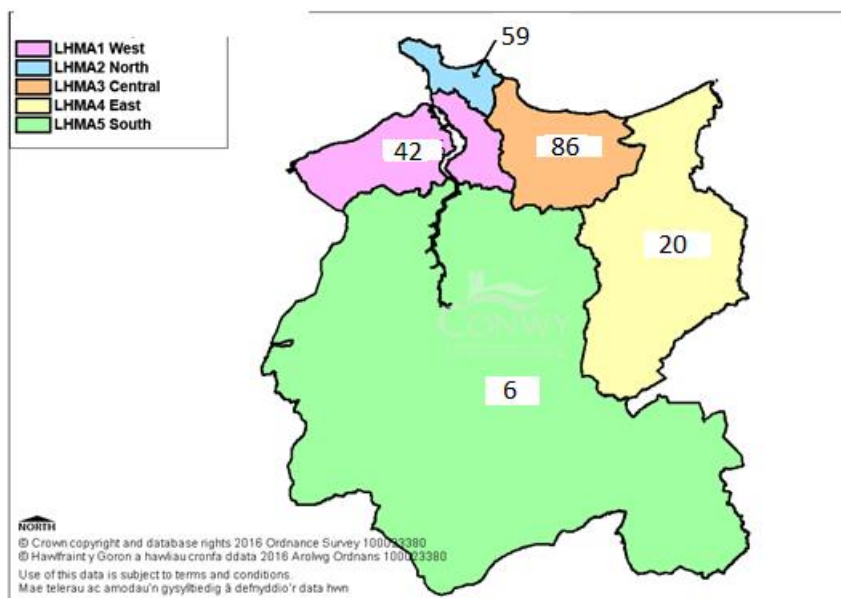
Households' areas of first choice for accommodation:



	Demand from homeless households in Temporary Accommodation	Current stock 1 bed*	Turnover of stock in 2021/22 1 bed*	Current stock 2 bed	Turnover of stock in 2021/22 2 bed	Current stock 3 bed	Turnover of stock in 2021/22 3 bed	Current stock 4+ bed	Turnover of stock in 2021/22 4+
East	20	265	12	270	12	326	8	21	2
Central	86	759	52	537	30	690	15	49	1
North	59	481	31	382	21	454	7	52	1
South	6	127	9	233	9	270	1	4	0
West	42	274	18	352	21	514	12	52	0
Anywhere	9	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	N/A
Out of area	8	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	N/A
None stated	15	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	N/A
Not on housing register	8	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	N/A

*this includes accommodation only available to people aged over 55
Stock turnover numbers are slightly underrepresented due to data gap

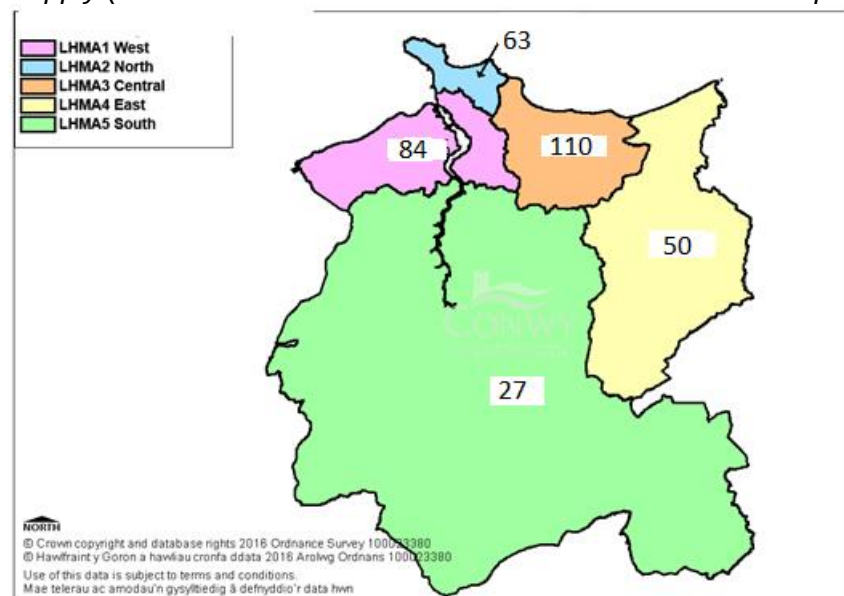
Demand from homeless households in temporary accommodation:



Top 5 areas of choice:

	Single People	Couples	Households with children
1.	Colwyn Bay	Llandudno / Conwy	Colwyn Bay
2.	Llandudno		Llandudno
3.	Old Colwyn / Conwy		Old Colwyn / Llandudno Junction
4.	Llandudno Junction / Rhos on Sea / Deganwy		Rhos on Sea
5.	Abergele / Penmaenmawr / Llanfairfechan / Llanddulas / Llanrwst / Mochdre / Llansannan		Abergele

Supply (turnover of stock 2021/22 and new social units developed in 2021/22:



Top 5 area areas with highest stock levels:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
1.	Llandudno	Llandudno	Llandudno	Llandudno
2.	Colwyn Bay	Colwyn Bay	Peulwys Estate	Conwy
3.	Old Colwyn	Abergele	Abergele / Llandudno Junction	Llandudno Junction
4.	Rhos on Sea	Penmaenmawr	Conwy	Colwyn Bay
5.	Abergele	Llanrwst	Llanrwst	Kinmel Bay

Whilst stock is available in the areas of applicants who want accommodation in the county, the more significant issue is the slow rate of turnover, coupled with high demand from other households on the housing register who are in Band 1 and have a high level of housing need. Homeless households are usually in Band 2. In some circumstances homeless applicants may qualify for Band 1, e.g. where there is domestic abuse. In other circumstances, such as rent arrears, homeless households may be in Band 4 until they have satisfactorily addressed these.

Areas of choice can be broken down by each support group. For example the 11 households (who are all single people) in the April/May 2022 assessment that need intensive 24/7 support have the following areas of first choice:

First Area of Choice	Number of households
Colwyn Bay	2
Tal y Bont	1
Not stated	1
Llandudno	3
Rhos on Sea	1
Conwy	2
All areas considered	1
TOTAL	11

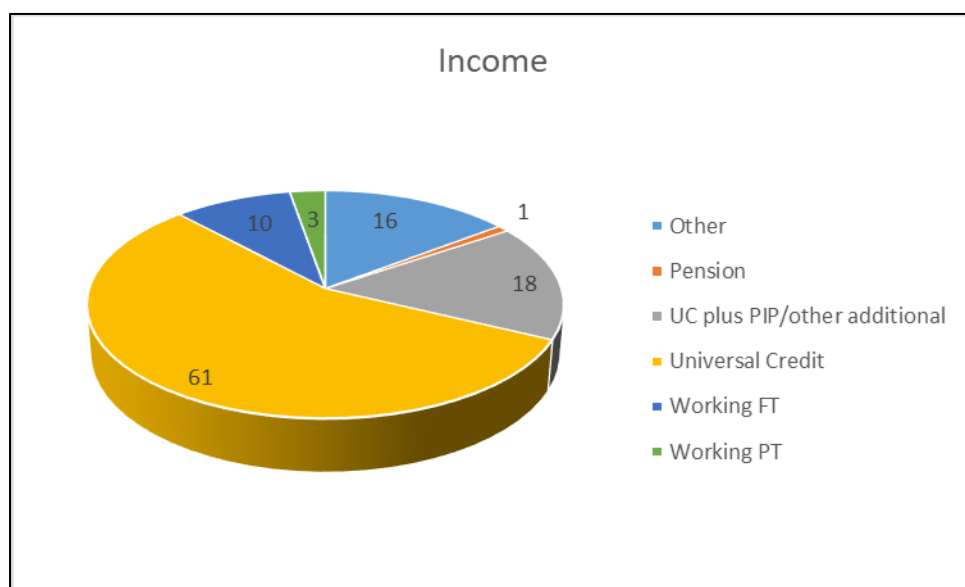
3.4.2 Affordability

Household income details have been collated in order to determine the housing options that are affordable. Households who are in receipt of benefits or on other low incomes are no longer able to afford accommodation in the private rented sector, due to rents being significantly above Local Housing Allowance rates. In addition, many of the households in receipt of Universal Credit have fines and/or deductions, which reduces their income, in some cases significantly, meaning that their income for living costs are substantially reduced.

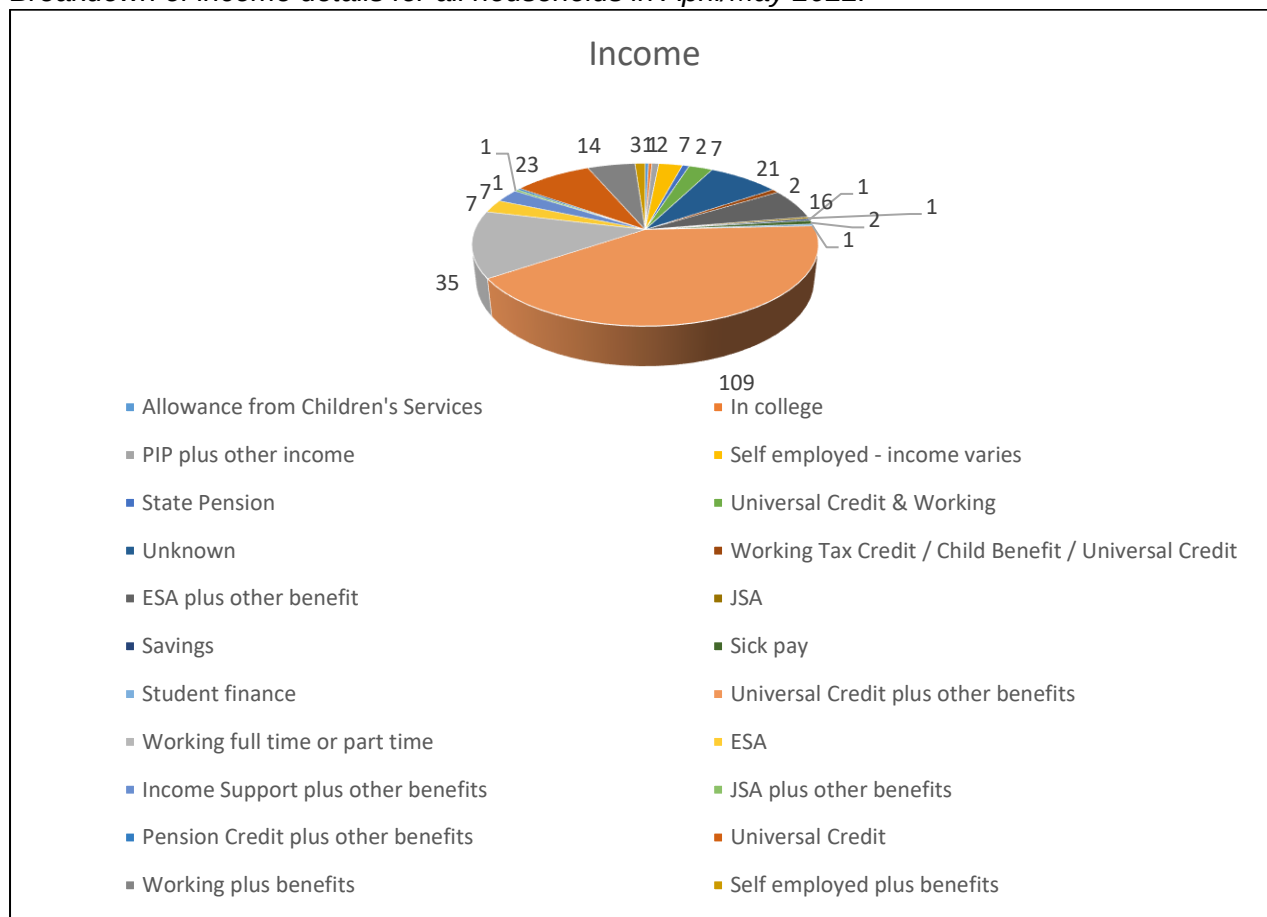
Social housing is the only affordable settled housing option for the majority of people and it is also their preference, due to both the affordability and security that it offers.

The following gives an overview of income source for those whose support needs were assessed in each exercise:

Breakdown of income details for household in June 2020:



Breakdown of income details for all households in April/May 2022:



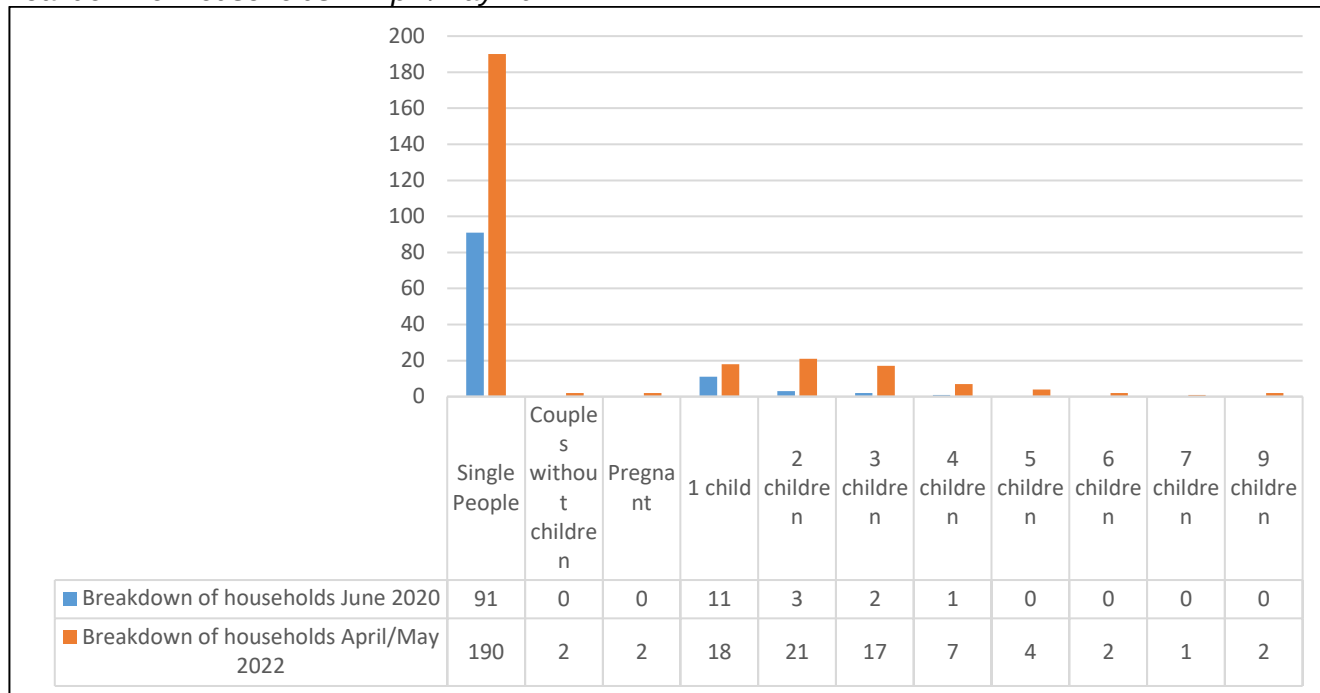
Note: The income of all households could not be easily accessed

The majority of households are in receipt of benefits. Where households are working many are also in receipt of benefits.

3.4.4 Household size/type

The majority of households are single people; 190 single person households out of a total of 265 households. Of the 73 households with children there are 16 families who have 4 or more children, and who require a large or very large property. There are few of these, if any, within the social housing stock (see section 2.2). There is very small amount of social housing available for single people under 55 years of age.

Breakdown of households in April/May 2022:



The majority of households with children are living in self-contained or leased temporary accommodation. Their property requirements are as follows:

Property size required for households in leased temporary accommodation:

Property size	Number of households
1b GF	5
2b GF	2
3b GF	1
1b	42
2b	25
3b	13
4b	14
5b	3
8b	1
9b	1
Total	107

3.5 Continual assessment/mainstreaming

There is a need to undertake more comprehensive support needs assessments during the early stages of homeless applications. It is not uncommon for additional support needs to become evident over time, rather than having an accurate picture at an early point. Arrangements to address this are being considered, in order to support the transition to a rapid rehousing approach.

Working with key partners will be crucial in the move to a rapid rehousing approach. They have a significant part to play in contributing to homelessness prevention by providing tailored support to households with medium and high support needs.

Household numbers in each support group will be reviewed annually, which will be supported by the improvements associated with the homelessness applications process identified within this section.

4.0 Local temporary accommodation supply

This section of the Plan provides information to gain an understanding of the current supply of temporary accommodation.

4.1 Baseline overview

The majority of Conwy's temporary accommodation portfolio is made up of properties leased from private owners and RSLs, along with a heavy reliance on bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation sourced from private providers on a flexible basis. Increasing procurement as demand increases, as it has significantly over the last two years, can be problematic, as most of the establishments also cater for the tourist market. The property market (both sales and rentals) is bouyant, creating other opportunities for owners. There have been a small number of occassions in the last two years when temporary accommodation has been required for a household and there has not been any available. To resolve this, holiday accommodation has been sourced via the internet.

As the 'everyone in' approach has required us to accommodate more people, many of whom are single person households, we have significantly increased our use of bed and breakfast accommodation in the last two years.

The Council does not usually use hostel type accommodation as temporary accommodation, although does lease and manage a small hotel for this purpose. The two small hostels in Conwy are owned and run by RSLs, and are used to provide supported housing.

Summary of current temporary accommodation provision:

Source: Conwy Housing Solutions

Temporary accommodation type	Baseline capacity (units as at 31/3/22)*	Groups accepted – any exclusions?	On-site services available	Service charges (Y/N)	Notes
Triage centres	-	-	-	-	Do not currently have one
Dispersed leased properties	132 properties	None	None	N	Properties are leased from private owners and RSLs, and are all self contained homes
Leased properties	8 properties	None	None	N	Leased from RSL, managed separately to above, all self contained
B and B** with shared kitchen facilities	128 households	Restrictions vary according to owners' willingness to accept some households, especially those with more complex needs. Restrictions can change according to the other households living there. Two B and Bs are for young people only, another will only take people aged 25+	Move On Officers visit regularly, floating support as required	N	The majority of B and B accommodation is en suite
B and B** self contained	2 households				
Hotel with some shared kitchen facilities	9 rooms	None	24/7 security, Move On Officers visit regularly, floating support as required	N	Leased by the Council from July 2021 to meet the demand for temporary accommodation. 7 of the 9 rooms are en suite
Property with shared facilities	5 rooms	For people with more complex needs/chaotic lifestyles	24/7 security, Move On Officers visit regularly, floating support as required, support CAIS worker visits regularly	N	Leased and used exclusively for homeless households
Emergency bed with all shared facilities	2 rooms	For single people with drug/alcohol issues	24/7 support staff	Y	Emergency access to 2 rooms in a hostel
Caravans	3 households	None	None	N	One is in the grounds of a B and B, 2 are on a site

* not including those units anticipated to be lost post-pandemic

** B and B accommodation is procured as needed

Summary of current temporary accommodation provision:

Source: Conwy Housing Solutions

Temporary accommodation type	Baseline capacity (units as at 31/3/22)*	Groups accepted – any exclusions?	On-site services available	Service charges (Y/N)	Notes
Mental Health	16	None	Support staff on site some part of the day	Y	Shared supported living
	4	Male only	24/7	Y	Shared supported living
Substance misuse and/or alcohol issues	6	None	None		Self-contained
	22	Dry accommodation	24/7	Y	2 units have some self-contained facilities and are for methadone users
	6	Dry accommodation	None	Y	Self-contained
Ex-offenders	4	None	None	Y	Self-contained
Young People	25	None	12 units are 24/7	Y	12 are en suite rooms 13 are self-contained
	9	None		N	Young person lives with householder
	3	Female only	Support staff on site some part of the day	Y	
	5	None	24/7	N	LHA rate
VAWDASV	3	None	None	Y	Self-contained
Generic	7	Male only	24/7	Y	
	19	None	13 units are 24/7	Y	6 are self contained
	40	None	None	Y	Self contained
	21	None	Support staff on site during the day	Y	6 are self-contained, 2 properties are shared
	16	None	24/7	Y	
Other (Single parent families)	5	Female only	None	Y	Self-contained
Refuges	11	Female (and children if applicable)	Support staff on site during the day	Y	

4.2 Usage

Many households have more than one temporary accommodation placement whilst they require interim accommodation. This may be due to availability, to enable people to be closer to their local community, access more suitable accommodation or related to management of temporary accommodation.

The average number of days that all homeless households spent in all forms of temporary accommodation:

Source: Conwy Finance

Date	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Average number of days	213	231	158	224

On 31 March 2022 there were 279 households living in temporary accommodation. These households were comprised of 89 families and 190 single people.

Time spent in all forms of temporary accommodation per household as at 31 March 2022:

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

	Under 6 months	6-12 months	Over 1 year	Total
Total households	154	47	78	279
- of which families with children	41	9	39	89
- of which single people	113	38	39	190

Whilst this average number of days is increasing each year, there are some homeless households' situations that are skewing the figures. Looking at the households who have lived in leased temporary accommodation the longest shows that there are 22 households who moved in to temporary accommodation before 2020; one household has been resident since 2014, one since 2015, once since 2016, four since 2017, five since 2018 and ten since 2019. This is for a variety of reasons; they require large accommodation (ranging from 4 to 9 bedrooms), need adapted/specialist accommodation due to a disability, have complex needs and/or they have significant rent arrears in their current property. The average length of stay for these households up to the end of May 2022 was 1,468 days.

Bed and breakfast

The Council has approved a range of Bed and Breakfast/hotels for spot purchase of rooms by the night and/or week. The accommodation is used by a variety of household types. Single persons stay the longest in this accommodation because of a lack of affordable housing for them to move on to.

The average number of days all homeless households who left during the year spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation:

Source: Conwy Finance

Date	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Average number of days	52.7	n/a	58.4	89.5

The average number of days all homeless households with children who left during the year spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation:

Source: Conwy Finance

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	35.8	n/a	63.7	83.3

Time spent in Bed and breakfast per household as at 31 March 2022:

Source: Cartrefi Conwy

	Total households	Of which families with children	Of which single people
Under 2 weeks	15	3	12
2 to 6 weeks	24	8	16
6 weeks to 6 months	62	8	54
6 to 12 months	23	0	23
Over 1 year	4	0	4
Total	128	19	109

Households are charged the Housing Benefit rate and claim housing related support. They do not pay for bed and breakfast accommodation if they are not eligible for Housing Benefit.

Leased properties

CBCC have a varied portfolio of property leased from private owners and RSLs. The accommodation is located throughout the county, enabling as many households as possible to stay living within their communities and near to services and amenities. Housing management services are provided by a local RSL via contract.

Leased accommodation is usually accessed after a stay in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, as it is usually necessary to wait for a property to become vacant. The number of properties on the scheme fluctuates to some extent, but recruiting additional properties from private owners is currently challenging as owners have alternative, more profitable, uses for their properties to choose from.

Households are charged the Housing Benefit rent rate and may claim housing related support.

Other forms of temporary accommodation

The average number of days that all homeless households who left during the year spent in other forms of temporary accommodation (excluding bed and breakfast):

Date	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Average number of days	344.1	n/a	391.7	513.2

- Properties with shared facilities

These properties are both leased by the Council and used in a similar way to Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

Households are charged the Housing Benefit rate and claim housing related support. They do not pay for this accommodation if they are not eligible for Housing Benefit.

- **Emergency Bed**

Two rooms in a hostel run by an RSL are designated for use as emergency accommodation for 28 days, whilst people's needs are assessed. Currently people are spending longer periods of time here due to a lack of move on options.

- **Caravans**

One caravan is located in the grounds of a Bed and Breakfast establishment which is used regularly. Occupants are charged the Housing Benefit rate and claim housing related support. They do not pay for this accommodation if they are not eligible for Housing Benefit.

Two are on a site, leased by the Council from the owner. Households are charged the Housing Benefit rent rate and may claim housing related support.

The cost of temporary accommodation to the authority is included at Section 7.

Demand for temporary accommodation is increasing currently, resulting in increased Bed and Breakfast usage. Fewer households are leaving temporary accommodation than are moving in to it at the moment due to a lack of affordable housing.

4.3 Inclusivity

The provision of temporary accommodation is challenging due to the continuing number of new presentations, coupled with the low level of affordable accommodation available for households to move on to. There are particular difficulties in providing the following:

- self contained temporary accommodation for most households at the point that they first need temporary accommodation
- self contained accommodation to enable single people to move out of Bed and Breakfast accommodation
- temporary accommodation that meets the needs of people with physical disabilities, particularly those that impact on mobility
- temporary accommodation for prison leavers with specific convictions such as for sexual offences or arson, and for people facing these type of allegations
- temporary accommodation for households requiring 4 or more bedrooms
- temporary accommodation for people with more complex mental health issues

There are no service charges for any of the authority's temporary accommodation. A number of supported housing providers set their own service charges to cover a range of services such as cleaning, gardening, window cleaning, staffing.

5.0 Temporary Accommodation Transformation

This section of the Plan sets out CCBC's temporary accommodation transformation plan.

5.1 Vision

Conwy's vision for temporary accommodation is as follows:

'Temporary accommodation is used to meet short term housing needs and ensures dignity and respect for residents.'

To achieve the vision there are four key objectives:

- Alternatives to Bed and Breakfast accommodation will be developed
- Temporary accommodation standards will be compliant with requirements set out in the suitability order
- Innovative solutions to increasing the supply of affordable housing will be developed to enable less use of and shorter stays in temporary accommodation
- Existing partnership working arrangements will be strengthened to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services to reduce the need for temporary accommodation

How the above will be achieved is detailed in the Rapid Rehousing Action Plan, see section 7.

5.2 Key Challenges

The scale of the affordable housing crisis in Conwy necessitates the current level of temporary accommodation use. Conwy is committed to reducing the use of temporary accommodation; reducing the number of households needing temporary accommodation and average lengths of stay in order to reduce the amount of overall provision. The key challenges to achieving this are as follows:

Challenge	Description
The current level of demand on the service	Officers are currently operating beyond their capacity, this is having an impact on the ability to meet service demand. Working at this capacity can also have an impact on the communication between service providers/the local authority and customers, as a result people accessing the service may not be fully aware of the support available to them and/or may not be kept informed about their housing situation.
Changes in the assessment of priority need	Demand on the service is likely to continue to increase and as a result the gap between supply and demand will continue to grow. This will have an impact of the ability to move away from temporary accommodation in the short to medium term.
Move on options available to applicants in temporary accommodation	There are 1,719 applicants currently on the housing register and the allocation policy does not prioritise applicants in temporary accommodation. In addition, the availability of affordable housing within the private sector is limited. As a result it is difficult to find move-on options for applicants in temporary accommodation. Due to limited move on options, people can stay in temporary accommodation for a long time, which makes it difficult when they move on to a different area, as all the support that is in place needs to change, this can affect

	the continuity of support. It can also be unsettling and disruptive for children and families if there is a need to change school to secure permanent accommodation.
Temporary accommodation standards	Standards and facilities do not meet the needs of tenants and/or standards set out in the suitability order
Implementation of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016	The Act provides increased security to applications living in temporary accommodation. This will have an impact on the availability of temporary accommodation.
Welsh Government funding	Existing Welsh Government capital funding streams do not fund temporary accommodation, this will have an impact on the innovative solutions that can be found to develop alternative solutions.
Applicants with complex needs	There is an increase in applicants with complex needs and limited suitable housing options available to meet their needs.

5.3 Transformation Plan

The key action to reduce temporary accommodation usage is to **reduce the demand**. This can be achieved by strengthening partnership working arrangements with key services to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services and increasing supply of affordable accommodation. How this will be achieved is covered in section 6.3.2 and 6.3.4.

In addition, the following needs to be done:

- Increase the homeless prevention team capacity (this is covered in section 7.2)
- Review the allocation policy in partnership with the SARTH partners, including a plan for vacancy control, for example offering vacant properties to those ready to move on from supported housing, creating a vacancy for someone in need of supported housing
- Undertake a review of the temporary direct lets approach
- Review longstanding temporary accommodation households in order to develop a plan for each that will facilitate move on to settled accommodation
- Prioritise move-on for households with children living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation in order to minimise the harmful effects
- Consider funding options to develop new approaches to the provision of short term temporary accommodation, including working with Welsh Government
- Support landlords to move tenants on who have had failed tenancies
- Increase access to affordable PRS properties via the social lettings agency and other initiatives such as Leasing Scheme Wales
- Consider the facilities available to people living in temporary accommodation now and use the feedback gathered during the RRP consultation to identify what needs to be done to ensure the accommodation meets the needs of tenants now and in the future.
- Consider safeguarding arrangements and monitor the effectiveness
- Ensure continuity of care when people move on from temporary accommodation
- Housing Prevention Officers to review the frequency, content and methods used to communicate with people living in temporary accommodation

6.0 Development of the Plan

This section sets out how CCBC will transition to a rapid rehousing approach.

6.1 Vision

Conwy's Rapid Rehousing vision is as follows:

'Key services deliver a coordinated approach to homeless prevention activities to ensure homelessness in Conwy is rare. Where homeless cannot be prevented, people can move into settled accommodation quickly and can access appropriate support, to ensure that homelessness is unrepeatable. If temporary accommodation is required it will be used for a short period only

o achieve this there are four key objectives:

- Transform the quality and use of temporary accommodation
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Ensure support is available to those who need it
- Strengthen partnership working arrangements to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services

How the above will be achieved is detailed in the Rapid Rehousing Action Plan, see section 7.

6.2 Homeless prevention

The key challenges in achieving homeless prevention outcomes are listed below:

- Lack of affordable housing to enable people to be able to resolve their own housing need
- People contacting the Homeless Prevention Team too late
- Customer expectations
- The number of people who have complex needs and existing pathways not working effectively
- Private sector landlords leaving the sector (this is covered in 6.3.2)
- Existing methods of capturing homelessness data
- Existing methods of assessing support needs
- The rise in the cost of living and tenants' ability to afford accommodation including social housing
- The perception that homelessness is a housing matter only
- High service demand and limited capacity within the Homeless Prevention team can affect service delivery, including engagement with customers. There is no opportunity to build trust, which is important to customers
- Recruitment and retention
- Accommodation is offered where it is available, offers are not based on the suitability of the accommodation
- In some cases 'affordable housing' is not affordable
- Understanding and responding to the root cause of homelessness

To overcome these challenges the following needs to be achieved:

- Develop a communication plan to improve the availability and accessibility of information to support people at risk of homelessness, to help them to make an informed decision about their housing options and manage their expectations
- Review existing referral pathways
- Review IT computer systems used to capture data
- Develop a corporate approach to homelessness prevention
- Use case studies and marketing to reduce the stigma of homelessness

- Hold job fairs
- Ensure offers of accommodation are suitable
- Focus on early intervention
 - Consider how Youth Services can provide early advice and possible mediation to families with a view to reducing youth homelessness
 - Consider how Youth, Education & Housing services can provide information and advice to young people to help them understand their rights and options
 - Consider what relationship services in the area are able to offer in terms of support to couples in need
 - Consider what support the Police can offer in terms of domestic abuse support to both housing staff and the clients themselves

6.3 Rapid Rehousing Transformation

To work towards achieving Welsh Government's vision to making homelessness 'rare, brief and unrepeatable' four key objectives have been identified, this section considers each objective; the key challenges and what needs to be done to overcome these challenges.

6.3.1 Transform the quality and use of temporary accommodation.

Section 5.2 outlines the key challenges to transforming the quality and use of temporary accommodation, and section 5.3 outlines what needs to be done in order to overcome these challenges.

6.3.2 Increase the supply of affordable housing

Increasing the supply of affordable housing to meet the level of housing need is affected by a number of complex and interrelated factors, as outlined in section 2.1. The factors affecting affordable housing supply:

	Factor	Description
Policy	Local Housing Allowance rate.	Set below private sector market rents.
	Changing property standards e.g. increased minimum EPC standard for rental properties (Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard Regulations).	Some properties do not meet the current standard for letting, with an increased standard to be introduced. This could result in properties being withdrawn from the market.
	Local planning policy HOU/10.	Prevents the creation of shared accommodation.
Economic	Private sector rent is above LHA rates.	Private rented sector is not affordable for low income households and does not provide security of tenure. As a result people are reluctant to consider this sector as an option
	Landlords request rent upfront at the start of a tenancy	
	In some cases, Housing Benefit is paid direct to tenants who cannot budget	
	Increase in second homes and holiday rentals.	Decrease in properties available to rent in the private sector.
	Increase in inflation and the cost of living.	Has created an increase in need for affordable housing, but concerns that even social housing may be unaffordable for some households.

Social	High demand for smaller 1 bedroom accommodation.	Low stock across all tenures.
	High demand for larger accommodation.	Low stock of 4+ bedroom social housing units and private sector not affordable.
	High demand for adapted wheelchair accessible accommodation.	Low stock across all tenures.
	People have the ability to work from home and are choosing to relocate.	Increase demand for housing across all tenures.
Technology	Has helped to improve communication and engagement with applicants.	Increase in customer expectations.
Legal	Implementation of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.	Requires new form of contracts to be issued to all tenants, changes to property fitness requirements and repossession arrangements.
Environment	Land for new development.	Lack of affordable and appropriate land can affect the number of affordable housing units developed. It can also affect what is developed e.g. land may not be suitable to develop adapted properties.
	NIMBYISM in relation to new developments.	Can affect a new housing development tenure and mix.
	Existing supply and demand.	Current demand far outstrips supply.

To overcome these challenges the following needs to be achieved:

- Publish robust up-to-date local housing need information to support RSL and private sector development plans
- Make best use of existing social housing stock
- Utilise funding opportunities to develop new affordable housing
- Utilise funding opportunities to develop initiatives to bring empty properties back in to use as affordable housing
- Utilise funding opportunities to develop initiatives to increase the supply of private rented sector accommodation
- Establish more shared accommodation for people under 35
- Consider flipping leased temporary accommodation a) leased from RSLs, b) leased from private landlords to HAWS portfolio
- Consider the review of existing planning policies or the implementation of new policies that will increase the availability of PRS accommodation
- Consider initiatives that support people to access the private sector, such as guarantor schemes
- Raise aware of the housing shortage
-

How the above will be achieved is detailed in the Rapid Rehousing Action Plan, see section 7.

6.3.3 Ensure support is available to those in need

The key challenges to ensuring support is available to those who need it are as follows:

- People who do not want to engage with support that is offered. This can be for variety of reasons such as, loss of confidence after a previous negative experience
- People who are not able to engage at the right time (this can be seen as non-engagement). There can be a variety of reasons why people do not engage at the right time, for example, some people do not have the facilities to charge their phone and find it difficult to contact services, some lack confidence and find it difficult to access services in formal settings and some do not have money to pay for travel to access services
- Establishing access to appropriate multi-agency support
- Continuity of support.
 - Moving from temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation can be isolating and additional support is needed.
 - There are gaps in services for people leaving prison, young people and people leaving hospital

To overcome these challenges the following needs to be achieved:

- Support needs to be tailored to individual needs, to achieve this a review of support is needed:
 - Review supported housing provision to ensure it meets the identified need
 - Review floating support services to ensure it meets the identified need and address any gaps
 - Consider a support package that includes building personal confidence and encourages community involvement to help reduce isolation
- Review cases that have been closed due to non-engagement
- Adapt services to meet the needs of customers (deliver services in informal settings and offer more outreach services)
- Build on the success of good practice
- Consider the need for a triage centre that provides a holistic approach to support services

The outcome of the last 3 actions above will result in an understanding of what needs to be done next and how.

6.3.4 Strengthen partnership working arrangements with key services to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services

Strengthening partnership working arrangements with key services is important in order to successfully achieve primary and secondary prevention outcomes.

The key challenges to strengthening partnership working arrangements are as following:

-
- Poor communication for example, if information between key stakeholders is not shared at the right time, this can result in a delay in the service customers receive
- Lack of understanding of what other services do
- Funding and capacity can restrict how and when organisations work together
- When there is a gap in the services provided i.e. if the service does not exist or if the service is not accessible
- When the organisation is not fully commitment and the partnership is with one individual, this can result in a lack of consistency due to high labour turnover or sickness absence
- When organisations do not see how they fit in to the wider agenda

To overcome these challenges the following needs to be achieved:

- Hold regular forums and networking events for key stakeholders to share information
- Hold workshops with the relevant partners to focus on key issues and align strategic goals
Encourage key stakeholders to consider what role they play in homeless prevention
- Continue service user engagement in the implementation of the Plan
- Homelessness to be mandatory training for public sector officers
- Consider private sector landlords as a key partner
- Welsh Government to consider a review the performance indicator data collected from public services each year, to help mainstream homeless prevention across all service areas
- Welsh Government to consider their role in supporting the implementation of the Plan, such as ensuring adequate funding is in place, and encouraging regional working to make best use of the available resources and skills
- Develop a corporate approach to the implementation and monitoring of the Rapid Rehousing Plan
- Build on the success of existing partnership working arrangements
- Review existing referral processes and monitor outcomes

6.3.5 Action Plan

An annual action plan will be prepared which details the actions that need to be undertaken by the authority in partnership with key stakeholders, in order to implement the strategy and achieve the four key objectives set out above (see section 7.4). Delivery against the plan will be reported quarterly to the Strategic Housing Partnership and an annual update will be presented to CCBC's Scrutiny Committee.

6.4 Initial socio-economic/equalities impact assessment

The outcome of the equalities impact assessment is that the Plan will have a positive socio-economic impact. The Plan aims to improve access to appropriate, affordable housing and as a result can improve chances of employment.

7.0 Resource Planning

This section provides information to gain an understanding of the resources needed to implement the Plan.

7.1 Existing resource

The chart below outlines the resources used in the last three years to provide temporary accommodation, which has seen a huge increase in costs in the last two years due to the increased need for temporary accommodation for single people:

		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Emergency Accommodation	Cost of Accommodation	£671,020	£1,945,127	£3,193,636
	Housing Benefit Income	-£91,001	-£377,235	-£370,297
	WG Covid Hardship Grant		-£982,318	-£1,470,006
	Repairs	£730	£7,248	£7,157
	Net Cost	£580,749	£592,823	£1,360,491
Leased Accommodation	Cost of Accommodation	£556,878	£570,863	£656,516
	Housing Benefit Income	-£447,830	-£480,950	-£510,084
	Repairs	£90,346	£103,873	£100,023
	Management Fee (Cartrefi Conwy)	£105,450	£100,504	£117,100
	Net Cost	£304,844	£294,291	£363,555
Total	Net Cost of Accommodation	£885,593	£887,114	£1,724,045

The chart below outlines the resources used in the last three years to deliver housing support:

Project Type	Project Type Breakdown	Totals 2019- 2020	Totals 2020- 2021	Totals 2021- 2022
PRS Access Schemes		0	0	196,000
Rapid rehousing / housing led services	Housing Led	0	0	0
	Housing First (verified)	0	0	0
	Housing First (unverified)	0	0	38,000
Accommodation only services	General	0	0	0
	Cold Weather Provision	0	0	0
	Specific 'dry' accommodation	0	0	0
	Specific 'wet' accommodation	0	0	0
Rough Sleeper Outreach Services		0	25,000	0
Mediation Services		0	0	0
Daytime drop in services		0	0	0
Enforcement, investigation or compliance with housing legislation		0	33,000	0
Activities designed to promote and publicise compliance with housing		0	0	0
Floating Support	VAWDASV		70,094	183,703
	Learning Disability		725,799	734,451
	Mental Health		38,000	76,000
	Substance misuse and/or alcohol issues	46,000	28,343	86,203
	Ex-offenders		55,728	56,084
	Young People		258,862	306,129
	Refugees		0	0
	Older People	1,369,290	990,000	1,009,800
	Gypsy and travellers		0	0
	Generic	1,449,105	772,648	1,197,532
	Other	0	560,226	591,430
Temporary Supported Accommodation	Learning Disability		0	0

	Physical Disability	0	0	0
	Mental Health	216,028	216,028	243,381
	Substance misuse and/or alcohol issues (wet accommodation)		0	0
	Substance misuse and/or alcohol issues (dry accommodation)	306,809	325,061	395,014
	Ex-offenders	35,457	17,729	268,084
	Young People	558,662	505,912	659,544
	Older People	0	0	0
	Refugees	0	0	0
	Generic	0	592,806	770,330
	Other	52,308	52,308	53,354
Permanent Supported Accommodation	Older People	0	372,024	377,844
	Learning Disability	2,200,402	1,492,943	1,554,168
	Other	390,000	275,774	281,289
Extra Care Services		0	0	0
Alarm services	VAWDASV	0	0	0
	Other	99,200	92,500	92,940
Refuges	Male	0	0	0
	Female	232,374	174,280	207,197
	Other	0	0	0
Target Hardening Equipment		0	0	10,000
Non Statutory HSG Related Posts		0	0	215,625
Other Homeless Prevention Projects		0	0	0
Other	Other	692,939	159,000	209,979
	Uncommitted spend	0	0	0
Totals		7,648,574	7,834,065	9,814,081

The chart below outlines the resources used in the last three years to develop affordable housing:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Social Housing Grant	£4,618,847	£2,897,964	£8,595,462
Housing Finance Grant II	£1,199,008	n/a	n/a
Recycled Capital Grant	£306,627	£0	£0
Innovative Housing Programme	£621,244	£1,895,591	n/a
Commuted sum	£0	£80,000	£0

The chart below outlines the resources used in the last three years to develop private sector initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
National Park commuted sum	n/a	£42,204	£57,795
Welsh Government Homeless Phase 2	n/a	n/a	£392,740
Empty Homes budget (defaulted Houses into Home loan interest)	n/a	£24,581	£66,172
Place Making	n/a	n/a	£248,500
Welsh Government Private Leasing Scheme (Pilot)	£2,036	£27,811	£60,808

7.2 Staffing

Conwy Housing Solutions delivers the authority's housing options and homelessness services, in partnership with Cartrefi Conwy. It was established in July 2014 and delivers key services associated with housing options advice and assistance, management of the Housing Register, a wide range of homelessness prevention work, PRS lettings and property management and the discharge of all statutory homelessness duties.

The Homeless Prevention Team within Conwy Housing Solutions is responsible for delivery of the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness. The team consists of one Team Leader, 2 Senior Caseworkers, 12 FTE Homeless Prevention Officers, 3 Homeless Prevention Assistants, 4 Move On Officers and 2 Private Sector Access Officers. Within the HPT team there are 3 specialist officers with roles that focus on the needs of prison leavers, young people and people being discharged from hospital.

The Homeless Prevention Team (HPT) staffing budget is has been as follows:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total Budget of HPT Staffing	£772,168	£766,297	£834,792

As part of the wider partnership with Cartrefi Conwy, the Council funds a number of posts that are based in Cartrefi Conwy:

- A Landlord Liaison Officer and CAB money advice caseworker. These are funded by HSG, and the costs are included in the HSG table above.)
- Three accommodation officers who manage the leased properties used for temporary accommodation
- Five Homefinder Customer Advisors who undertake triage work, provide information on housing options and process social housing applications

7.3 Priorities

The resource plan in section 7.4 provides the detail about what work that will be undertaken to implement the Plan. Priority will be given to the following actions:

- Establish a framework to deliver the Plan, including strengthening partnership working arrangements.
- Increase the capacity within the homeless prevention team.
- Develop and implement IT solutions to streamline services and to monitor service delivery.
- Continue to increase the supply of affordable housing, including innovative solutions to increasing private rented accommodation.

7.4 Resource plan

There are many outcomes that must be delivered to enable a move away from the current approach to delivery of homelessness services and the current level of demand to delivering rapid rehousing, where homelessness cannot be prevented. This transformation cannot be achieved by the authority in isolation; the involvement of a wide range of partners is key.

High level actions have been identified for the two years of this plan. A number of key actions associated with the transition to a rapid rehousing approach require existing arrangements to be reviewed, and the development of new approaches to be considered. Until the outcome of these exercises is known it is not possible to add these to the resource plan. The journey of change and improvement that is required is expected to provide some cost savings and avoid some types of expenditure in the future but it is not known at this stage when these will be realised, e.g. as a result of enhanced prevention outcomes, reduced use of bed and breakfast.

Work undertaken in the first year, including consultation and engagement, will determine the priorities for future years, with resource availability being a key consideration in what can be achieved.

This plan will be monitored and will be updated annually as described in section 6.3.5.

Year 1 and 2 2022/23 – 2023/24

1) Increase the supply of affordable housing

No.	Action	Task	Delivery Group	Resources	Timescale	Measure
1.1	Publish robust up-to-date local housing need information to support development plans.	Develop a Local Housing Market Assessment in line with the new Welsh Government guidelines.	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2024	Published report. Stakeholder engagement.
		Review Conwy's Local Housing Prospectus.	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Bi-annually April October	Published report.
		Carry out Housing Research studies in rural communities.	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly	Published report. Stakeholder engagement.
		Prepare quarterly specialist housing demand report.	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly.	Published report.
		Prepare quarterly social and intermediate housing demand report.	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly.	Published report.
1.2	Increase the supply of new affordable housing to meet local housing need.	Manage the Programme Development Plan in partnership with the zoned Housing Associations to make best use of Welsh Government Funding and develop <i>'the right accommodation in the right areas'</i> .	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly.	Annual measure: Number of units funded by size and tenure. Comparison of the supply and demand data. Total amount of Social Housing Grant spent including any additional funding.

						Number of new affordable homes delivered by size and tenure.
		Work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop community led housing in rural areas.	Affordable Housing Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly.	Number of units planned and/or delivered by size and tenure. Number of local people who are able to remain within their communities.
		Work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a housing led approach to regenerating town centres.	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly.	Number of units planned and/or delivered by size and tenure. No. of empty units brought back into use.
		Work with the Affordable Housing Programme Board to deliver affordable housing on public sector land.	Affordable Housing Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure. Social Housing Grant.	Quarterly.	Land used to deliver affordable housing. Number of units planned and/or delivered by size and tenure. Grant allocated to support the development.
		Comment on all Housing Planning applications to ensure the correct mix of affordable housing is delivered.	Affordable Housing Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	Quarterly	Number of units planned and/or delivered by size and tenure.
		Explore innovative solutions to reduce the waiting time for smaller and larger social housing properties. (e.g shared housing pilot/ pods)	RSL Development Group	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital funding required (unknown)	March 2023	Number of units planned and/or delivered by size and tenure.

				costs at present).		
		Acquire 3 properties numbers to the Leasing Scheme Wales scheme.	Private Sector Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital funding in place - £XX	March 2023	Number of units delivered by size and tenure.
		Develop a communication plan to demonstrate how the (new) Conwy corporate housing branding and marketing materials will be used to raise awareness of the housing shortage and reduce the stigma of homelessness.	Affordable Housing Programme	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2023	Communication plan in place to support the implementation of this action plan.
1.3	Continue to make best use of existing housing stock.	Develop and implement a consistent approach to rightsizing activities and communication across north Wales.	Regional rightsizing strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2023	New scheme is developed and implemented. Number of tenants downsizing. Reduced waiting time for larger properties.
		Review existing Local Letting Policies	Social Housing Management Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	December 2022	All LLPs are up to date and are regularly monitored to ensure fit for purpose.
		Review the allocation policy in partnership with the SARTH partners, including a plan for vacancy control.	SARTH Steering Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	December 2023	Revised policy in place.
		Explore options to bring empty properties back into use as affordable housing.	Empty Homes	Staff time - within existing structure.	June 2022 December 2022	New scheme is developed and implemented.

			Working Group	Capital funding required – approximately 30 units £750,000 (£25,000 per unit)		Number of empty properties brought back into use and rented/sold at an affordable rate.
		Utilise other funding opportunities to develop initiatives to increase the supply of private rented sector accommodation	Private Sector Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital funding required (unknown costs at present).	Ongoing	New scheme is developed and implemented. Number of units delivered by size and tenure.
		Consider the review of existing planning policies or the implementation of new policies that will increase the availability of PRS accommodation	Affordable Housing Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2024	
		Consider flipping leased temporary accommodation a) leased from RSLs, b) leased from private landlords to HAWS portfolio	Rapid Rehousing Strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital funding required (unknown costs at present).	March 2024	Number of permanent units delivered by size and tenure.

2) Transform the quality and use of temporary accommodation

No.	Action	Task	Delivery Group	Resources	Timescale	Measure
2.1	Undertake a review of the temporary accommodation being used now, to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of tenants	Consider the facilities available to people living in temporary accommodation now and use the feedback gathered during the RRP consultation to identify what needs to be done to ensure the accommodation meets the needs of tenants now and in the future.	Rapid rehousing strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	Report detailing recommendations. Implement recommendations
2.2	Undertake a review of the policies and procedures currently in place, to ensure a person centred service is being delivered	Consider the feedback gathered during the RRP consultation to identify what needs to be done to improve the communication between service providers/ the local authority and people living in temporary accommodation Consider safeguarding arrangements in temporary accommodation and monitor the effectiveness Consider the feedback gathered during the RRP consultation to identify what needs to be done to improve the customer journey when they access temporary accommodation	Rapid rehousing strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	Improved communication People living in temporary accommodation feel safe Unrepeated homelessness
2.3	Ensure people living in temporary accommodation are offered suitable settled accommodation as quickly	Review the allocation policy in partnership with the SARTH partners Undertake a review of the temporary direct lets approach to	Rapid rehousing strategic group	Staff time - within new Homeless Prevention Team	March 2024	Applicants are moved on and waiting time is reduced

	as possible with the appropriate support	ensure priority is given to households with children living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, in order to minimise the harmful effects		structure (costs provided above).		
		Utilise funding opportunities to develop new approaches to the provision of short term temporary accommodation	Affordable Housing Delivery Group	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital funding required – costs unknown.	Ongoing	New provision funded and/or in place

3) Ensure support is available to those in need

No.	Action	Task	Delivery Group	Resources	Timescale	Measure
3.1	Support needs to be tailored to individual needs	Review floating support services and address any gaps	New group to be set up.	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2024	Report detailing recommendations.
		Review temporary accommodation support services and address any gaps	New group to be set up.	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2024	Report detailing recommendations.
		Review IT computer systems used to capture data	New group to be set up.	Staff time - within existing structure.	March 2024	New system in place. Support needs are captured and can be used to inform service planning.

				Capital funding required to purchase new software – costs unknown.		
		Consider the need for a triage centre that provides a holistic approach to support services	New group to be set up.	Staff time - within existing structure. Capital and revenue funding required to set up triage centre.	March 2024	Report detailing recommendations.
3.2	Adapt services to meet the needs of customers	Develop a plan to deliver services in informal settings	New group to be set up	Staff time - within existing structure.	December 2023	Service operates in different locations
		Review cases that have been closed due to non-engagement Review existing referral processes and monitor outcomes	New group to be set up		June 2023	Report detailing recommendations.
3.3	Focus on early intervention	Consider how Youth Services can provide early advice and possible mediation to families with a view to reducing youth homelessness Consider how Youth, Education & Housing services can provide information and advice to young people to help them understand their rights and options	New group to be set up		March 2024	

		Consider what relationship services in the area are able to offer in terms of support to couples in need Consider what support the Police can offer in terms of domestic abuse support to both housing staff and the clients themselves				
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4) Strengthen partnership working arrangements with key services to ensure homelessness prevention is prioritised across all services

No.	Action	Task	Delivery Group	Resources	Timescale	Measure
4.1	Transition to a rapid rehousing approach using the Council's project management framework	Identify and engage with key partners to establish the necessary monitoring and delivery groups.	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure.	January 2023.	Partners provide Contribution Statements that identify their role in homelessness prevention work. Project management framework is in place to deliver the Plan.
4.2	Develop a corporate approach to homelessness prevention	Hold a workshop with the relevant partners to focus on key issues and align strategic goals	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2023	New ways of working identified
		Homelessness to be mandatory training for public sector officers	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	New training module developed and implemented
4.3	Improve communication with key stakeholders and encourage them to consider	Facilitate a networking event with key stakeholders to share information	Rapid rehousing strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2023 June 2023	key stakeholders share relevant information to gain a

	what role they play in homeless prevention				September 2023 December 2023	better understanding of what other services are doing
						Strategic goals are aligned.
		Establish a service user forum Hold a workshop with the relevant partners to focus on key issues and align strategic goals	Rapid rehousing strategic group	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2023	Ensure the service meets the needs of customers now and in the future New ways of working identified
4.4	Lobby Welsh Government to play a role in the implementation of the Plan	WG to review the performance indicator data collected from public services each year, to help mainstream homeless prevention across all service areas	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	Response from WG
		WG to encourage regional working	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	Response from WG
		WG to ensure adequate funding is available to implement the RRP	Strategic Housing Partnership	Staff time - within existing structure	March 2024	Response from WG

