

Temporary and Supported Accommodation Strategy

Housing Development Section

April 2016

1. Introduction and Objectives

- 1.1. The purpose of the Temporary and Supported Accommodation Strategy (TASAS) is to ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirement to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households.
- 1.2. North Lanarkshire Council is committed to ensuring homeless households are effectively supported and to provide sufficient levels of appropriate safe and secure temporary accommodation to meet needs.
- 1.3. The TASAS is a component part of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The key objective of the TASAS is to ensure:
 - the provision of temporary accommodation is clearly identified and, as far as possible, meets the needs of homeless households;
 - the management of temporary accommodation is fully considered and supported within the staffing structure;
 - the cost implications of providing temporary accommodation in light of welfare reforms are identified and appropriate action taken to mitigate impacts as far as possible.

2. Strategic and legislative context

- 2.1. The local authority is required by law to provide all homeless households with temporary accommodation whilst their homeless application is being assessed. For those assessed as unintentionally homeless, this duty is extended until they are permanently housed.
- 2.2. Some unintentionally homeless households will require an intensive level of housing support to sustain any accommodation and it may not always be suitable to provide a permanent home in the early stages. The Homeless Persons Interim Accommodation (Scotland) Regulations 2002 established an exemption to the duty to provide permanent accommodation for unintentionally homeless households. The circumstances where interim accommodation can be provided are as follows.
 - a housing support services assessment concluded that the applicant (or any other person residing with that applicant) requires housing support services which cannot reasonably be provided within permanent accommodation; and
 - as a result of a housing support services assessment, the local authority is providing an applicant with interim accommodation together with housing support services;
- 2.3. North Lanarkshire Council completes a housing support assessment with homeless households and establishes the level of housing support required to sustain accommodation. In some instances, the Council will discharge duty on a temporary basis for unintentionally homeless households by providing them with 'interim accommodation'. This enables the household time and support provision to develop the skills required to live independently. Once an assessment identifies an applicant is able to sustain a tenancy, permanent housing is provided.
- 2.4. For those who are assessed as 'not homeless' or 'intentionally homeless' the local authority must provide temporary accommodation for a 'reasonable period' of time and provide advice and assistance to the applicant to help them secure alternative accommodation as per the Code of Guidance on Homelessness¹.

¹ Scottish Government – Code of Guidance on Homelessness; Section 9: May 2005

- 2.5. Furthermore, the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 amends the local authority duty to assess for intentionality and replace with a power to do so. It also changes the duty of local authorities to provide a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) with support, or where no SSST can be offered the provision of hostel type accommodation. This part of the 2003 Act has not yet been implemented; however it may be implemented during the lifetime of this TASAS.
- 2.6. The 2003 Act also introduced powers that enabled Scottish Ministers to prescribe accommodation that would not be acceptable as temporary accommodation in fulfilment of a local authority's duty. Shortly thereafter The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2004 was introduced and specified accommodation that is not suitable as temporary accommodation and was defined as those that did not meet physical, proximity and safety standards. This included bed and breakfast type accommodation which has not been used in North Lanarkshire since this order was introduced.
- 2.7. North Lanarkshire Council published a Temporary Accommodation Strategy in 2008/09 and internal update reports were produced each year setting out the needs of homeless households and profile of stock required by type and area. However, in recent years the number and profile of homeless applicants has changed and data confirms an increased level of single people as well as a higher level of identified support needs.
- 2.8. Additionally, the Children's (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Integration of Health and Social Care place further requirements on the Housing Service and how it delivers temporary accommodation.
- 2.9. UK government welfare reforms will impose caps and thresholds on all temporary accommodation and will result in a serious financial shortfall for the Housing Service.
- 2.10. It was therefore necessary to undertake a complete review of the existing temporary accommodation profile and produce a new strategy in order to meet the increased support needs of homeless households and mitigate the financial impacts of welfare reforms.

3. Financial Impact of Welfare Reform

- 3.1. The UK Government has already implemented a number of changes to the welfare benefits system and a number of further reforms are planned.
- 3.2. In 2014/15, the UK Government announced that the funding arrangements for temporary accommodation would be amended and that rents would be capped at the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rate plus a proposed management fee of £45 per unit per week (unconfirmed at that time).
- 3.3. The only exception to this is accommodation classified as "Specified Accommodation" which was introduced as a means of protecting certain types of accommodation from caps and thresholds and enables full cost recovery when setting rents. In addition, stock classified in this way is eligible for Housing Benefit rather than the housing costs element of Universal Credit and therefore administered by local authorities.
- 3.4. Specified hostels are clearly defined within benefits legislation and are where residents share facilities such as kitchens, lounge areas and in some cases bathrooms but have their own bedroom. Specified refuge is accommodation provided to those affected by domestic abuse. The full costs of running these types of services can be reclaimed through Housing Benefit. In addition, residents of temporary accommodation are not subject to the benefit cap if staying in specified

accommodation and continue to have their housing costs met by housing benefit, even if they move onto Universal Credit.

- 3.5. As Universal Credit (UC) is rolled out across the country, claimants who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation will be subject to the spare room subsidy as well as the maximum benefit cap levels. Additionally, if the property is occupied by a person under the age of 35 years, they will be subject to the shared room rate which has been frozen at £59.44 per week for four years.
- 3.6. Rental charges for dispersed temporary accommodation exceed the LHA level and are clearly unaffordable for homeless households claiming UC. In addition, the totality of changes already underway creates a potential loss of rental income through housing benefit of around £2.0m annually with additional losses in the region of £1.24m if the management fee is not paid.
- 3.7. The Housing Service recognised that there were very serious implications of amended funding arrangements and undertook a full review of the needs of homeless applicants, the existing temporary accommodation provision and the changed financial position. An Options Appraisal was completed to consider and explore all alternative options to provide a more sustainable profile of temporary accommodation and it was agreed that increasing the level of “specified” hostel and supported types of accommodation would meet the needs of homeless applicants as well as increase income and reduce potential shortfalls. Action was then taken to re-classify some unit based accommodation as “specified” hostel.
- 3.8. At that time the rent structure for temporary accommodation was pooled and similar amounts of rent were charged for dispersed and hostel type properties. However a review of the running costs of hostel type and supported accommodation highlight that it is more expensive due to the 24 hour on-site supervision required. There was scope to restructure rents to ensure costs were being recovered and it was proposed to agree a full restructure of rent charges with Finance and Customer Services.
- 3.9. However, the UK Government Autumn Spending Review Statement in November 2015 included additional amendments to welfare benefits to save a further £12billion, specifically targeting Housing Benefit. The Chancellor announced that the management fee element was being removed from April 2017 and would instead be paid up front to local authorities in England via the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and to the Scottish Government.
- 3.10. At the same time it was confirmed that new caps would be introduced affecting all accommodation, including temporary and supported accommodation managed and operated by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Cap will come into effect for all tenants taking up a tenancy from 1st April 2016 and be effective from 1st April 2018. The Cap will now limit the amount of HB that can be paid to a person renting from a social landlord to the (LHA) Rate.
- 3.11. This cap applies to **all** temporary and supported accommodation, including homeless accommodation from April 2018. The only exception to this is where the accommodation is managed by a registered charity; although uncertainty remains for those organisations that are both an RSL and a registered charity.
- 3.12. Existing units of temporary accommodation meet the criteria for ‘specified hostel’ and are protected until March 2018, however the revised rules for funding temporary and supported accommodation provided and managed by local authorities and other social landlords will be severely reduced and it is clear that ongoing consideration must be given to mitigating the financial loss to the Council in the provision of temporary and supported accommodation and where possible, to protect vulnerable homeless applicants and their families.

- 3.13. However it is anticipated that responsibility for funding temporary and supported accommodation will be transferred to the Scottish Government as part of the Scotland Bill at some point in the future. The Scottish Government will then identify their priorities and provide appropriate resources.
- 3.14. In the past few years, the Scottish Government has implemented the policy objectives of the Homelessness (Scotland) Etc. Act 2003, which have arguably led to improvements in services for vulnerable homeless households. It is therefore more likely that the provision of supported accommodation will continue to be seen as a priority. However; given the various other priorities it is uncertain if an appropriate level of funding will be provided to cover the higher costs of this type of provision. It is anticipated that supported and managed hostels will be protected in some form and proposals to review the rent structure of the different types of temporary accommodation will proceed.
- 3.15. The following table provides a summary of the various different types of temporary accommodation and how they are affected by welfare reforms:-

Table 1: Temporary Accommodation and the effects of Welfare Reforms

	Accommodation Provider	Care, Support or Supervision	Effects under Universal Credit
Supported Exempt Accommodation	Housing Association, charity or voluntary organisation Housing Associations will no longer be covered by this exemption from 1 st April 2018	Provided by or on behalf of the accommodation provider	Tenants not affected by Direct Payments; Benefit Cap or Bedroom Tax. Not subject to caps + thresholds if a registered charity
Managed Properties	Housing Association, charity or voluntary organisation Housing Associations will no longer be covered by this exemption from 1 st April 2018	Not provided by or on behalf of the accommodation provider	Tenants not affected by Direct Payments or Benefit Cap but are subject to Bedroom Tax. Not subject to caps + thresholds if a registered charity
Refuges (which do not meet SEA criteria)	Housing Association, charity, voluntary organisation or local authority Housing Associations and local authorities will no longer be covered by this exemption from 1 st April 2018	No care, support or supervision required (but likely to be required under other funding arrangements, i.e. Housing Support contracts)	Tenants not affected by Direct Payments; Benefit Cap but are subject to Bedroom Tax. Not subject to caps + thresholds if a registered charity
Hostels (shared accommodation as defined in HB Regs.)	Housing Association, charity, voluntary organisation or local authority Housing Associations and local authorities will no longer be covered by this exemption from 1 st April 2018	Not necessarily provided by or on behalf of the accommodation provider	Tenants not affected by Direct Payments or Benefit Cap. As shared not likely to be subject to bedroom tax. Not subject to caps + thresholds if a registered charity
Hostel (shared accommodation as defined in HB Regs.)	Local authority managed, leased from an RSL or the PRS This arrangement would be subject to caps + thresholds if leased then managed by the LA. Rents are capped for any stock used by a LA that has been leased from either the private or Housing Association sectors.	Not necessarily provided by or on behalf of the accommodation provider	Tenants not affected by Direct Payments or Benefit Cap. As shared not likely to be subject to bedroom tax. Is subject to caps + thresholds, which limit the amount of HB or UC Housing costs that can be claimed.

4. Temporary Accommodation Stock profile

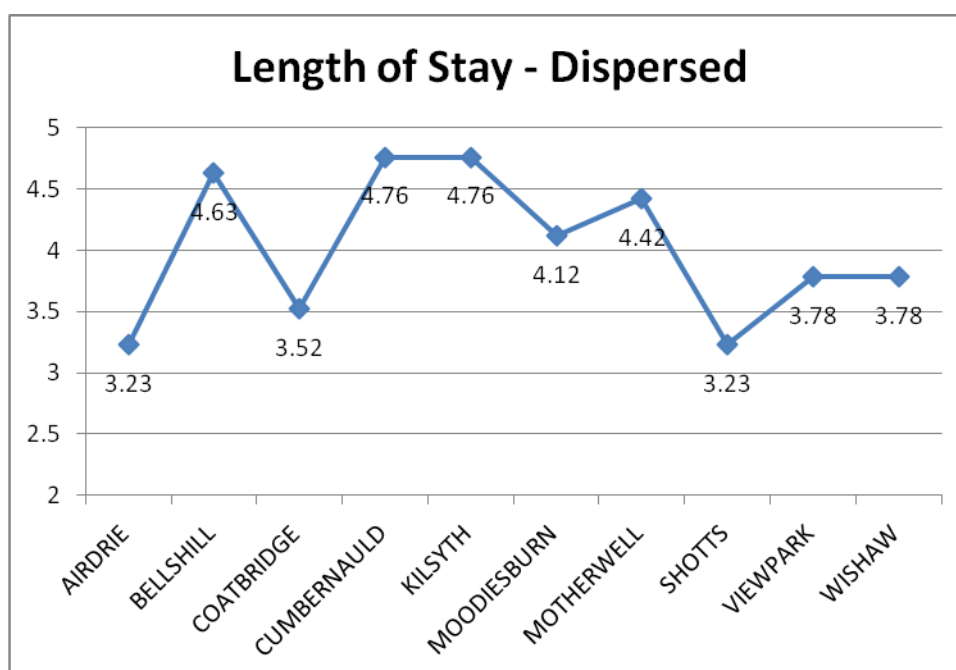
- 4.1. In order to ensure the provision of temporary accommodation is responsive to the needs of homeless households, it was necessary to undertake an analysis of the profile as well as consider the data available on the homeless population. A temporary accommodation modelling tool is in use and assists in this process. Data analysed included:
- Area of application;
 - Household type and size;
 - Age and gender of main applicant;
 - Extent and nature of support needs;
- 4.2. Work to review this information began in late 2014 and was completed by March 2015. At that time there were approximately 650 units of accommodation available for use as temporary and supported accommodation across North Lanarkshire. The profile of this provision is noted below:
- 471 dispersed houses and flats across all local areas;
 - 83 properties defined as Specified Hostel or Refuge spaces with the provision of on-site supervision including:
 - 19 Specified Refuge spaces at Manse Avenue in Coatbridge;
 - 64 Specified Hostel spaces at Airth Court, Motherwell, Tarbolton Road in Cumbernauld and Thrashbush Quadrant, Airdrie; and,
 - 24 Supported Transitional Accommodation spaces managed by a charitable organisation at four sites namely; Bridgework Service, Black Street, Mason Street and Houldsworth Court and 12 units of supported accommodation for young people at Viewpark provided by a second charitable organisation.
- 4.3. There are clearly a range of temporary accommodation options available for homeless households, however it is important to understand the needs of homeless people as well as the local areas they live in so that, as far as possible, needs can be met and homeless people can remain within their own local communities.
- 4.4. The Council owns the majority of properties utilised as temporary accommodation, however there are a 102 properties leased from Registered Social Landlords or from private landlords through the Private Sector Leasing Scheme.
- 4.5. The majority of leased properties are located in the North locality (Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Moodiesburn) and this is a direct result of the pressure on dispersed properties in the area, the limited level of council stock available and where the largest RSL is located within the North Lanarkshire boundary. It should be noted however, that a few properties have been handed back to owners very recently and is linked to scheduled demolition in the case of RSL properties and repair issues for PSL's. This has reduced the overall number of RSL properties to 31 (from 34) and PSL's to 27 (from 29).
- 4.6. A number of PSL properties are in use in the Bellshill area and again is due to the level of pressure on dispersed housing stock in the area. One of the two RSL properties is wheelchair accessible and is consistently utilised for people who require this type of property.
- 4.7. Most PSL and RSL properties are one or two apartments to suit single homeless households. There is only one four apartment and a few three apartments and these properties will have been leased in order to meet the demand for family accommodation in the area concerned.

- 4.8. It is more expensive to lease properties than use existing council stock; and careful consideration must be given to balance the reason these properties are required and the increased costs involved, especially as these costs cannot be fully recovered from housing benefit
- 4.9. In 2014/15, 88% of homeless applicants provided with temporary accommodation were satisfied with the standards, which is an improvement from the previous year of 1.6% and this was reported within the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

5. Stock Turnover and Length of Stay

- 5.1. In order to ascertain how many properties are required for temporary accommodation, it is necessary to collect various elements of data including demand from homeless households, existing profile of temporary accommodation stock, turnover of each property and length of stay of homeless household.
- 5.2. It is important to understand the number of times existing properties turnover each year and this is calculated by dividing the stock numbers by the number of times a property became vacant in the year. Levels of turnover vary according to the type of accommodation and the length of stay by homeless applicants.
- 5.3. The actual turnover and length of stay in temporary accommodation was reviewed and it became apparent that a number of properties did not become vacant over the year because a homeless household had remained resident for more than that period and is directly linked to various reasons including availability of permanent accommodation and the level of support needs of homeless households. This was more prevalent in dispersed accommodation than in emergency access hostels or supported accommodation and in order to reflect the extended length of stay for some applicants within the model, it was agreed that an additional month would be applied to the annual length of stay for dispersed properties. The graph below highlights that Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Bellshill are the areas where there is a longer length of stay followed by Motherwell and Moodiesburn; and this is reflective of the pressure on available permanent housing in these areas as well as the needs of homeless applicants. Shortest lengths of stay were recorded in Airdrie and Shotts.

Table 2: Dispersed Accommodation – Length of Stay



- 5.4. The length of stay was also considered for emergency access hostels, supported and refuge accommodation. However, it became clear that length of stay and turnover rates were affected by the support needs of homeless households and that some households moved through various types of temporary accommodation during their period of homelessness. A number of these moves were planned when homeless people were relocated to dispersed properties, after an initial period in emergency access provision. Unfortunately, it was also recognised that a number of these moves were as a result of crisis in the person's life and is linked to complex needs including mental ill-health, substance misuse, offending behaviour and neighbour disputes.
- 5.5. Although homeless data is helpful in providing an indication of support need, it does not provide details on the extent and nature and it was recognised that this information was necessary to ensure that the length of stay and turnover rates are accurately defined. It was agreed that a profiling exercise would be required and a template of different types of temporary accommodation was developed in conjunction with operational housing staff. Table 3 below sets out the various different types of accommodation required; the client group or level of support needed and the target household type.

Table 3: Temporary Accommodation - Template of Need

	Accommodation Category	Client Group / Level of support	Household Type
1	Dispersed Self Contained (HRA/PSL & RSL)	No or low level support needs and can sustain tenancy independently Or higher level of needs but are unable to share and require sole occupancy	Families and Single Person Households
2	Dispersed - Adapted/other (HRA/PSL & RSL)	Hospital discharge/Disability	Disabled families or Single Person Households
3	Refuge - Manse Ave/Dispersed (HRA/PSL & RSL)	Domestic Abuse applicants (single or multiple needs)	Families / Households affected by domestic abuse
4	Hostel/ Emergency Access - Direct Access Accommodation	Very chaotic homeless applicants who are unlikely to sustain any form of tenancy, don't want a tenancy or only engage with support in crisis	Single Person Households
5	Hostel/Emergency Access-Supervision	Vulnerable homeless applicants who lack basic living skills and require on site supervision to manage accommodation	Single Person Households
6	Hostel/Emergency Access-Support	Vulnerable or high support needs homeless applicants including those who lack basic living skills. Some may need self-contained space.	Single Person Households
7	Specialist Supported Accommodation	Homeless applicants who need specialist housing based supported accommodation. Multiple support needs and in a position to work through and engage with support.	Single Person Households
8	Specialist Supported or Transitional Accommodation	Young people aged 16-18 who come straight into homelessness after leaving care	Single Person Households

- 5.6. During February 2015, operational housing staff reviewed data from homeless applications received in the previous full year (2013/14). The aim was to categorise the support needs of applicants and match them with the most appropriate temporary accommodation to meet their needs and this information is set out in section 6 where the demand for temporary accommodation is identified.
- 5.7. As a result of this exercise, revised lengths of stay were discussed for the different types of accommodation and agreed with senior managers and input into the model as noted below:

Table 4: Temporary Accommodation – Length of Stay

Temporary Accommodation Category	Length of Stay
Refuge - Manse Ave/ Dispersed	4.7 months – (based on averaged stays of between 2 and 10 months)
Hostel/Emergency or Direct Access	1.9 months - (based on averaged stays of 6 wks to 3 months)
Hostel/Emergency Access - Supervision	
Hostel/Emergency Access - Supported	9 months - (based on analysis of needs)
Specialist Supported Accommodation	
Specialist Supported Accommodation - Young People Leaving Care	12 months - (based on analysis of needs)

- 5.8. Lastly it should be noted that sharing in accommodation is currently in operation within emergency access units where two unrelated people share a flat; and in some supported transitional accommodation where people have their own bedroom but share lounge, kitchen and bathroom areas.
- 5.9. It was the intention within the previous LHS to consider eliminating sharing within temporary accommodation, however; this is no longer possible due to welfare reforms where a reduction in housing benefit is applied to people who are under-occupying accommodation, even when it's temporary; although the impact of this has largely been mitigated in North Lanarkshire at present. Additionally the caps and thresholds will affect residents in temporary accommodation if they are in receipt of Universal Credit. Sharing would be targeted at single homeless households and no more than two people would share a property.
- 5.10. In order to address any future impacts it has been suggested that sharing is introduced within some dispersed properties. Implementing sharing within dispersed could result in an increased level of temporary tenancies being created in each property over the year and lead to a reduction in the overall requirement for dispersed stock.
- 5.11. However, there are various elements that need to be considered including the standard and configuration of existing stock as well as the potential increase in management and supervision requirements to ensure that residents are safe through appropriate risk assessment processes.

6. Improving Standards in Temporary Accommodation

- 6.1. As explained in 5.8, two unrelated people share a flat in emergency access units at present in order to mitigate the impacts of welfare reform. However residents have to share a bathroom as well as lounge and kitchen areas and does not afford the level of privacy expected.

- 6.2. It is incumbent on the local authority to ensure that homeless households are provided with temporary accommodation which is of a reasonable standard and respects their dignity and privacy and this aspect is even more important where people have to share facilities. It is therefore necessary to consider reconfiguring emergency access provision to create an en-suite or second bathroom in each flat to improve the living conditions for homeless people.
- 6.3. Supported accommodation at Black Street is classified as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and there are a series of standards which must be met in order for an HMO licence to be approved. This property has been in use as 'hostel' accommodation for many years, however the space standards for resident rooms have increased over this period and not all rooms are now of a reasonable size to continue to meet this standard. Premises at Black Street also lack sufficient bathroom facilities, and although it is acceptable under HMO rules for residents to share these facilities, again it does not afford the level of privacy required. It will therefore be necessary to consider options to reconfigure the property at Black St to enable all resident bedrooms to meet the space standards as well as provide additional bathroom facilities for the sole use of each resident.
- 6.4. Further, the current configuration of properties at Bridgework provide an opportunity to increase the number of supported places by introducing sharing in the two larger upstairs flats, however improvement works will be required in order to provide an additional bathroom or en-suite to bring it up to the same standard as other accommodation.
- 6.5. Lastly introducing sharing in dispersed properties will assist in mitigating the impacts of welfare reform by increasing the number of tenancies that each property can support. However dispersed accommodation is not fixed for long periods of time and can be short term in order to meet demand at specific times and in specific areas. As a result it is not possible to continually upgrade properties to provide bathroom facilities for sole use. It therefore must be accepted that sharing in dispersed will require residents to share bathrooms as well as lounge and kitchen areas.

7. Demand for Temporary Accommodation

- 7.1. The number of properties available for temporary accommodation has been maintained despite a reduction in homeless applications in recent years. This is partly related to the increasing lengths of stay in temporary accommodation to around 30 weeks; but also to changes in the client profile, which could be attributed to:
 - the abolition of priority need;
 - limited permanent housing options available for people on low incomes;
 - those under 35 years who are disproportionately affected by welfare reforms;
 - reducing number of lets in the social sector;
 - refusal of permanent offers due to barriers around knowledge of area, perceived safety, territorial issues, under-occupancy charge, etc.
 - Intensive support needs
- 7.2. However, it is also because there has been a consistent mismatch in the different types of need which cannot be matched to the current available and suitable temporary accommodation provision. The type of temporary accommodation available to applicants is a key area of consideration
- 7.3. Emergency Access: Emergency access accommodation is required when households initially approach the homelessness service and are mainly located in Motherwell (Airth Court), Airdrie (Thrashbush) and some spaces are available in Cumbernauld (Tarbolton Rd) and Coatbridge (Manse Ave).

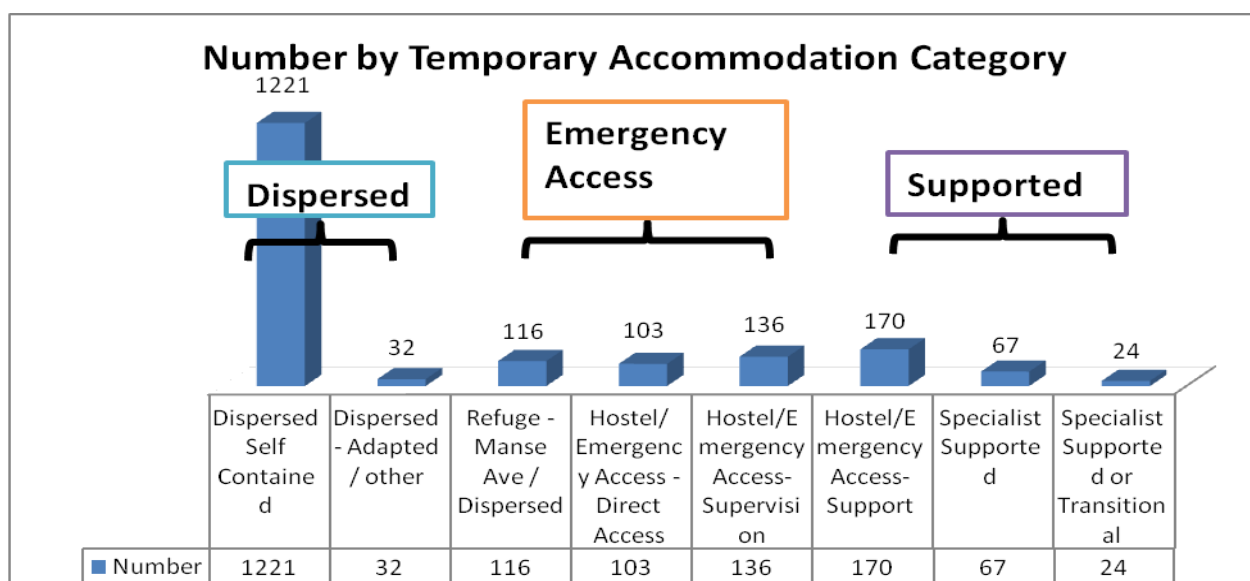
- 7.4. Dispersed: Following assessment and where appropriate, many homeless households are moved on to 'dispersed' properties within local communities, after a short stay. Dispersed properties are generally owned by the Council or Housing Association partners and includes all types of stock e.g. flats, four in a blocks, terraced, etc. This type of accommodation is suited to homeless families or those who have low level support needs. However, a number of homeless households with complex needs are placed in dispersed accommodation because there is a lack of managed/supported stock. These households are provided with floating housing support services and linked into other agencies for additional support where required.
- 7.5. Specified Managed/Supported: Specified managed/supported accommodation is usually hostel type provision with on site supervision and/or support. A number of homeless people are assessed to require this type of accommodation, especially those who are more vulnerable or who have complex needs. Supply increasingly doesn't meet demand. There are currently 37 places of supported accommodation available across NL located in four areas which is managed by third sector agencies through commissioned contracts. Supported managed accommodation is defined as 24-hour on site supervision and the provision of housing support.
- 7.6. Due to availability of stock at the time, homeless applicants can be placed out of their area to another part of North Lanarkshire that they do not know. This may result in a refusal of the offer of temporary accommodation because the homeless person may not feel safe in an area they do not know or be unable to be supported by their family or friends or there may be some perceived territorial issues which are a barrier to people accessing and sustaining temporary accommodation.
- 7.7. All homeless applicants are offered temporary accommodation and data highlights that around 56% accept an offer of temporary accommodation each financial year. The remaining 46% of applicants may not require temporary accommodation because they are able to remain in their existing accommodation until permanent accommodation is available or they have made alternative arrangements with other family or friends. However, these types of emergency or crisis arrangements can break down and applicants at that point can enter temporary accommodation. Some households will initially refuse an offer of temporary accommodation because they believe that the accommodation being offered is not suitable for their needs or it is out of their current area of residency.
- 7.8. Providing the most suitable type of temporary accommodation to a homeless household can make all the difference to them and their ability to sustain it. Ensuring that households are near to their family and support networks, schools, work, etc is a critical factor.
- 7.9. As highlighted earlier in 5.5 homeless data does not provide the detailed information required on support needs, the type of temporary accommodation and likely length of stay required. A profiling exercise was completed in February 2015 to categorise the temporary accommodation requirements of the homeless households in 2013/14 according to complexity of need.
- 7.10. Table 5 illustrates the demand profile by size of household and type of temporary accommodation required and confirms that 62% of all households are single person households.

Table 5: Demand by Temporary Accommodation Category and Household Size

Accommodation Category	Household Size					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Dispersed Self Contained (HRA/PSL & RSL)	654	276	175	80	36	1221
Dispersed - Adapted/other (HRA/PSL & RSL)	24	3	3	2	0	32
Refuge - Manse Ave/Dispersed (HRA/PSL & RSL)	41	31	28	15	1	116
Hostel/ Emergency Access - Direct Access Accommodation	85	16	1	1	1	104
Hostel/Emergency Access- Supervision	135	1	0	0	0	136
Hostel/Emergency Access- Support	135	22	7	3	3	170
Specialist Supported Accommodation	61	4	1	1	0	67
Specialist Supported or Transitional Accommodation for Young People	23	1	0	0	0	24
Total	1158	354	215	102	41	1870

7.11. Table 6 reflects the overall profile of applicants by temporary accommodation category and illustrates that 73% of all homeless applicants require self-contained dispersed properties. In addition, 13% require emergency access or hostel provision and a further 14% require supervised hostel type or specialist supported accommodation. It should be noted that this graph reflects the profile of applicants and not the actual requirement for the various types of temporary stock required.

Table 6: Total Demand by Temporary Accommodation Category



8. Model Outputs and Stock Requirements

- 8.1. The Housing Service utilises a modelling tool to assist in matching homeless households to temporary tenancies by area and by property size required. The current model projects how the profile of homeless households and stock are likely to change as a result of legislative and policy developments and matches homeless households to temporary accommodation based on their eligibility. Data is input to the modeling tool each year and takes into account any updated assumptions or policy drivers e.g. population growth, welfare reforms, impact of allocation policy, uptake of temporary accommodation. An annual report is then produced reflecting the supply of temporary accommodation and current and future demand.
- 8.2. The outputs from the profiling exercise were input to the modelling tool along with the actual stock profile from 2013/14 and the revised agreed length of stay and turnover data. This enabled the gross requirement for temporary accommodation in North Lanarkshire to be calculated at 711 units of temporary accommodation and a current overall shortfall of 61 properties across the three accommodation types.
- 8.3. Overall there is a significant shortfall of 122 hostel/emergency access and supported accommodation units across North Lanarkshire. Broken down by type, the model identifies that the stock profile should be configured as follows:
 - 66% Dispersed (including refuge dispersed) - 471 units
 - 6% Emergency Access/Hostel - 38 units
 - 28% Supported Accommodation - 202 units
- 8.4. The model illustrates that there is a shortfall of units available to meet demand. Additionally, there is a clear imbalance between the existing types of temporary accommodation stock available, compared with the demand from homeless households where more supported stock is needed as well as emergency access provision. Currently, only 5.5% of existing temporary accommodation stock is supported
- 8.5. At a locality level, both Wishaw and Bellshill have the greatest demand for emergency access/hostel and supported temporary accommodation which is unsurprising given that there are currently no units of this type in Bellshill and only 4 spaces of supported accommodation in Wishaw. It is clear therefore that there is a pressing need for this type of temporary accommodation provision in these areas and actions to address this will form part of the Local Housing Strategy Action Plan.
- 8.6. Breaking down stock required by area highlights that the North locality has the greatest overall requirement for temporary accommodation with 25% of demand.
- 8.7. Although the North locality already has a hostel/emergency access facility, it is insufficient to meet demand and additional provision is required. There is no supported accommodation provision in the North at present and homeless applicants with a need for support are either placed in dispersed and provided with floating support or are placed in supported accommodation outwith their area of presentation.
- 8.8. The Airdrie area already has a supply of hostel/emergency access and a small number of supported spaces; however this also appears to be insufficient to meet demand. Currently, homeless applicants from other areas are accommodated within these units and making suitable temporary accommodation available in other areas may assist in alleviating pressure on the existing provision in Airdrie.

- 8.9. Coatbridge currently has refuge accommodation available which is sometimes utilised as emergency access/hostel provision for young vulnerable women or women with children. However there is currently no intensively supervised or supported accommodation located within this area and it would appear that there is a demand for this type of provision.
- 8.10. Motherwell is the only area of North Lanarkshire which appears to have a sufficient supply of all types of temporary accommodation provision. Similar to Airdrie, this area accommodates a number of homeless applicants from outwith the immediate area within hostel/emergency access properties and occupancy is generally quite high for this reason. Resolving accommodation deficits in other areas may have an impact on demand in Motherwell.
- 8.11. Based on model assumptions applied, there is a net surplus of 61 dispersed units of accommodation across North Lanarkshire. As noted earlier there are 102 properties leased from housing associations and private landlords which are more expensive than utilising existing council stock and consideration is therefore required to balance the needs of homeless households and costs involved.
- 8.12. A model scenario was run to extract the 102 units of RSL and PSL stock in order to establish the actual number of units required and illustrates a net shortfall of -41 dispersed properties across the local authority.
- 8.13. A total annual requirement of 38 units of emergency access accommodation and 202 units of supported accommodation has been calculated, with a supply of 82 units of emergency access and 36 units of supported accommodation available; resulting in a net surplus of 44 units of emergency access accommodation and a shortfall of 166 units of supported accommodation across North Lanarkshire.
- 8.14. Given the surplus of emergency access provision, it was agreed that some emergency access (hostel) stock at Airth Court, Thrashbush and possibly Tarbolton Road could be re-configured and re-designated as supported/supervised accommodation. Based on the current net surplus of emergency access accommodation, the net shortfall in supported accommodation would reduce from 166 to 106 units.
- 8.15. The model projections also confirmed that demand is likely to increase slightly over the next 10 years and highlights a 4.6% increase in homeless applications over time to 2021/22, largely due to the future impact of the welfare reform agenda. This part of the model will require to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure future accuracy of the levels of temporary accommodation required.
- 8.16. In summary, it has been identified that 711 properties are required as temporary accommodation across North Lanarkshire; 202 supported, 38 emergency access and 471 dispersed properties to meet the needs of homeless households.

9. Support Needs in Temporary Accommodation

- 9.1. As highlighted at 6.8, an assessment of support needs of homeless applicants confirmed that 73% required no or minimal support. The remaining 27% or 617 applicants had varying levels of support needs with 42% requiring intensive support provided within a hostel or specialist/supported type of accommodation environment.
- 9.2. This exercise also identified that 16.6% or 310 homeless applicants had multiple support needs with 4% (76) highlighted as having more than four different support requirements. This exercise therefore supports anecdotal evidence from housing staff and support agencies that the people they help have an increasing level of complexity of support requirements and require assistance not only with independent

living skills such as cooking, shopping and cleaning but with serious mental ill-health, addictions, violence and abuse.

- 9.3. Housing crisis result in evictions and abandoned tenancies creating substantial void costs for the housing service and leads to repeat homelessness. It also takes up disproportionate amounts of staff time and resources. It is therefore necessary to re-configure some aspects of the homelessness service.
- 9.4. The outputs from the model clearly show a continued imbalance and substantial shortfall in transitional/supported stock. 27% of homeless applicants had support needs identified and around 16% of those were assessed to have multiple needs. These individuals struggle to sustain any accommodation, which impacts negatively on those people, on their communities and on housing staff and partner agencies across localities trying to manage periods of crisis.
- 9.5. Data confirms that around 50% of all permanent offers are refused by homeless households, including a large proportion staying in temporary accommodation and increases their length of stay. Support agencies have advised that they are not always alerted to offers made to the homeless person they are supporting and are therefore unable to assist them to make an informed decision. Improved communication between locality housing teams and support agencies is required and will be addressed through existing stakeholder and improvement groups.
- 9.6. In the past, it was reported that the shortfall in supported accommodation could be offset by the numbers of dispersed accommodation available in which floating housing support services can be delivered to help people learn the independent living skills they need. However, floating support services continue to be at capacity and cannot completely fill the gaps arising from a shortage of properly supervised / supported accommodation services. It also does not address the welfare reform impacts on temporary accommodation and given the loss of income projected, there is a need to further explore alternative options to provide a more sustainable profile of temporary accommodation.
- 9.7. As well as reviewing the provision of temporary accommodation, the Council recognises that improvements could be made to the types of support services provided and is currently considering wider information on asset based approaches and psychologically informed services. Asset based approaches, when considered within a housing support context, take cognisance of the strengths and abilities of the homeless person and the wider community assets available. Consideration is given to how best to optimise the natural and community assets that can assist, e.g. social networks, positive family supports; and focus on these to bring about positive outcomes.
- 9.8. Psychologically informed services for Homeless People² identifies that these types of services are designed to assist those who have experienced trauma and have emotional and psychological issues. Homeless households are more likely to have experienced trauma in their lives and their behaviours may be affected in various ways as indicated. Individuals may:
 - Appear withdrawn and socially isolated;
 - Reluctant to engage with support / lack of trust;
 - Difficulty managing their emotions;
 - Exhibit anti-social and aggressive behaviour;
 - Self harm or have uncontrolled addiction issues;
 - Participate in offending behaviour;
 - Lack daily routine and structure.

² Psychologically Informed Services for Homeless People; Good Practice Guide 2012

Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) is a therapeutic based approach to develop clear and suitable responses to individuals who may behave in a chaotic way; but who are distressed and have learned not to trust services. The aim of adopting a psychologically informed approach is to help them gain an understanding of their behaviour and make changes in their lives to move on positively. It should be noted that psychologically aware housing support services are not a substitute for clinical services for those in need and this type of approach requires input from health colleagues, as well as other agencies, to be successful.

- 9.9. In summary, analysis of evidence suggests that the needs of homeless households have become more complex with 27% of homeless households having support needs and 42% of these requiring intensive support and some form of supported accommodation provision. In reviewing the types of supported accommodation available, the Council will consider the development of different types of housing support interventions to assist homeless households to achieve positive outcomes.

10. Considerations

- 10.1. The purpose of this strategy is to identify the key issues and priorities that need to be addressed and set out a series of actions to address the impacts of welfare reform and meet the needs of homeless applicants.
- 10.2. The Housing Service consulted with a range of stakeholders and developed a number of key recommendations and actions and will be progressed over the next few years.
- 10.3. All of the actions will require careful consideration and balance in order to achieve the desired outcomes. It is also necessary to work with colleagues and other stakeholders in order to ensure the appropriateness of solutions and ongoing activity.

11. Key Issues and Priorities

- 11.1. Current rental charges for the various types of temporary accommodation are not fully reflective of the actual costs and are affected by the caps and thresholds from welfare reforms.
- 11.2. There are insufficient levels of emergency access/hostel provision in some localities and an over-supply in others and homeless households are sometimes placed in temporary accommodation outwith their local area as a consequence.
- 11.3. There is a lack of supported/supervised accommodation across all areas of North Lanarkshire and the needs of homeless households are therefore not being fully met.
- 11.4. Existing standards of hostel and supported temporary accommodation are not conducive to a sharing environment and improvement works are required to ensure that the dignity of homeless households is maintained.
- 11.5. Developing additional supervised/supported accommodation requires an increased level of staffing and resources in order to manage it appropriately. It is recognised that the current staffing arrangements are insufficient to enable the type of supervision and support required.
- 11.6. Sourcing appropriate temporary accommodation for young people is challenging, particularly for those leaving care and it is not possible for young people to remain in a Children's House beyond a certain age. However; corporate responsibilities to young care leavers have been extended until they are 26 years old and accommodation resources must be given careful consideration.

12. Recommendations

- 12.1. Firstly, it is recommended that there is a restructure of the rental charges for temporary accommodation to ensure that income is maximised and offsets the impact of welfare reforms as far as possible. It is intended to have two tiers of charges;
- The LHA rate for dispersed;
 - A higher rent level for supported and hostel type accommodation, which takes account of the additional management costs associated with providing this type of accommodation.
- 12.2. Emergency access provision across localities will be re-considered to ensure that, where possible, homeless people are not moved out of their local communities and balanced with the impacts of welfare reforms.
- 12.3. It is proposed to reconfigure existing hostel units to ensure a more supported and supervised model at Airth Court, Thrashbush Quadrant and Tarbolton Road. This will ensure that costs are covered although there is a requirement to ensure that all costs are eligible under Housing Benefit regulations. Over time this could lead to a reduction of dispersed properties in some areas to more effectively meet profile of homeless applicants.
- 12.4. Further it is proposed to consider options and costs to reconfigure and improve the standard of existing hostel and supported accommodation provision, especially where properties are shared.
- 12.5. It is also proposed to develop additional supported accommodation provision to meet needs of local homeless households. This should also include some form of longer term temporary accommodation for homeless households who will take time to become tenancy ready; but require a stable supported type environment in which to develop the skills required to live independently. This will require consideration of potential suitable properties and the financial commitment required to ascertain if it is feasible and viable.
- 12.6. It is anticipated that a review of resources and staffing from both HRA and Non-HRA will be required to ensure that sufficient resources are supplied within any additional hostel/emergency access and supported/supervised units, to provide the level of safety, security and support required to meet the needs of homeless households.
- 12.7. It is recommended that Housing staff work with Social Work colleagues to consider the feasibility of developing transitional accommodation for young people still in care but who are no longer suited to living in a Children's House. This would work best if located near to Children's Houses in order for ongoing support to be provided.