

# Public Document Pack

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Chief Officer (Governance)  
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Contact Officer:  
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To: Cllr Helen Brown (Chair)

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gillian Brockley, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett,  
Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Kevin Rush,  
Dale Selvester and Linda Thew

Date Not Specified

Dear Sir/Madam

**NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING**  
**COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2023 at 10.00 AM**

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum  
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Council Chamber, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

## A G E N D A

### 1 **APOLOGIES**

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

### 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

### 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 10)

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January, 2023.

### 4 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 11 - 20)

Report of Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

**Purpose:** To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

### 5 **HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT** (Pages 21 - 80)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

**Purpose:** To provide an update on the Housing Support Grant.

### 6 **COMMON HOUSING REGISTER (SINGLE ACCESS ROUTE TO HOUSING - SARTH)** (Pages 81 - 108)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

**Purpose:** To provide an update on the Common Housing Register and outcome of the customer satisfaction survey.

### 7 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) GARAGE SITES AND PLOT SITES UPDATE** (Pages 109 - 114)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

**Purpose:** To provide an update on work being carried out at Garage sites across the County.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO  
CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The report contains details of proposals and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure until consultation on the proposals have been carried out.

**8 SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW REPORT (Pages 115 - 142)**

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

**Purpose:** To provide an update to the Committee following the Sheltered Housing review.

***Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours***

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## **COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **11 JANUARY 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote attendance meeting on Wednesday, 11 January 2023

### **PRESENT: Councillor Helen Brown (Chair)**

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gillian Brockley, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Dennis Hutchinson, Kevin Rush and Dale Selvester

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** Councillors: Bernie Attridge (for Linda Thew), Ted Palmer (for Ray Hughes)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors: Bill Crease, Dave Hughes and Alan Marshall attended as observers

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Councillor Sean Bibby (Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration); Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement); Councillor Billy Mullin (Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources); Chief Officer (Housing & Assets); Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement; Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities; Service Manager – Housing Assets and Business Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Community & Education Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator & Electoral Services Officer.

### **15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Councillor Ted Palmer declared a personal interest as a Council Tenant.

### **16. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December, 2022 were approved as a correct record, and moved and seconded by Councillor Bernie Attridge and Councillor Rosetta Dolphin.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 14 December be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **17. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME & ACTION TRACKING**

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme for consideration.

The Facilitator commented that there were no proposed changes to the items listed for future meetings. In referring to the actions arising from the last meeting, the Facilitator reported that all actions had been completed and that the recommendation from the Committee on the use of reserves to reduce the number of void properties would be considered by Cabinet at its next meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2022.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Kevin Rush.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

**18. HOUSING RENT INCOME & WELFARE RESPONSE**

The Chief Officer (Housing & Assets) introduced an operational update on the latest welfare reform response impacts and current levels of 2022/23 housing rent arrears. The report provided an update on the impacts that welfare reforms continued to have on residents and the work that was ongoing to mitigate many of the challenges and to support households through the cost-of-living crisis.

The Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities provided a detailed update on the latest position for welfare reform and cost-of-living crisis mitigation, outlining a range of measures that had been developed to help those affected by the cost-of-living and the support provided to residents to help mitigate the negative impacts. A further update was provided on each of the following areas, as outlined in the report:-

- Spare Room Subsidy
- Benefit Cap
- Cost of Living Support Scheme
- Unpaid Carers
- Winter Fuel Support Scheme
- Welfare Support
- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)

The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement provided a detailed update on the latest position of rent arrears, advising that the collect of rent continued to remain challenging with the rise of cost-of-living and the impacts on some tenant's ability to pay. The Rent Income service had experienced increased workloads with a 1.2% increase in cases where tenants needed to be contacted and the service continued to signpost tenants with referrals to specialist teams across the Council, including Supporting People and Welfare Response teams.

The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement highlighted the current level of rent arrears and number of evictions for rent arrears, as detailed within the report. The challenge for collection of rent from those tenants in receipt of universal credit continued to present a risk to the Council with more tenants migrating across to universal credit and the delays experienced with putting management payment arrangement for some tenants where the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) deduct rent payment as source.

As part of the Council's ongoing response to mitigate the impacts on tenants and ensure the long-term financial stability of the Housing Revenue Account, in 2021 Audit Wales undertook a comprehensive review to assess the effectiveness of the Council in supporting tenants. The Audit Wales review acknowledged the proactive measures already taken by the Council in supporting tenants and stabilising rent collections during a period of unprecedented change, especially with the rollout of Universal Credit and the impacts of the pandemic.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin thanked the officers for the report and welcomed that there had been only 1 eviction, which she felt avoided causing further pressure on the homelessness service. She referred to the table showing the banded arrears for 2022/23 commenting on the different levels of rent paid by tenants, and asked if the levels of rent could be identified within the table in future reports. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement agreed to look into whether this could be provided in future reports.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson thanked officers for the report, which he felt provided the most accurate and up to date information available. In relation to the increase on the trend for rent arrears, he asked if the Service Manager expected this to reduce by the end of the financial year. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement advised that expected the rent arrears to reduce by the end of the financial year but commented on the effects of the pandemic and the need to ensure that the arrears remained stable.

Councillor Bernie Attridge raised concerns around the current level of rent arrears which he did not feel was under control, highlighting previous occasions where Members had raised significant concern when rent arrears had increased to £1M. He did not feel that there being only 1 eviction should be celebrated as he felt that those properties could be provided to tenants who were willing to pay their rent and this would reduce the rent arrears and benefit the Housing Revenue Account. He asked how many officers formed part of the Income Maximisation Team, which he said had been put in place to free up Housing Officer time. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement and Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities advised that there were 7 officers within the rent collection team and 5 officers within the income maximisation welfare reform team.

In response to a further question from Councillor Attridge around comparisons on rent arrears with other Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), the Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement agreed to look at what benchmarking data could be provided in the future reports. This information may have to be anonymised.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement agreed to provide information on the number of cases waiting to go back to court to the Committee following the meeting.

Councillor Dave Evans commented on the 454 households in Flintshire which were subject to a reduction in their housing benefit payments because of the Bedroom Tax, and asked how many of these household were in rent arrears. He also asked how many of those tenants previously evicted had been re-homed by the Council and had they gone into rent arrears again. The Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities agreed to provide the information on requested around tenants affected by the Bedroom Tax following the meeting. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement said that he was not aware of tenants who had been evicted and had gone into rent arrears again with the Council, but that this data could be reviewed.

Councillor Dale Selvester commented on the changes on how tenants pay their water and sewerage charges and asked whether officers felt this would have a significant impact on rent arrears with tenants paying charges directly to Welsh Water from April 2023. He also asked whether tenants affected by the Bedroom Tax were encouraged to move to smaller properties. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement advised that very few Local Authorities across Wales collected water rates on behalf of Welsh Water. He felt that the changes would have a positive effect on the Council and would provide a better deal for tenants. He also advised that the Council would have a statutory duty to ensure Welsh Water were informed if a property was empty. The Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities advised that tenants were encouraged to move to smaller properties if they were affected by the Bedroom Tax but unfortunately there was a shortage of smaller properties available across Flintshire.

The Chair asked if the percentage of arrears relating to water charges could be shown in future reports. The Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement agreed to look if it was possible to show what arrears were rent and what percentage was residual water charges for future reports.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration thanked officers for the report and the Committee Members for their comments and questions. He referred to the information provided to the Council from the DWP on tenants receiving Universal Credit and suggested that the Committee may wish to consider writing to the DWP to assist the Council in obtaining this information in the future.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, with the following additional recommendation, were moved and seconded by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Dave Evans:-

- That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, write to the Department for Work and Pensions to seek their agreement to share information with the Local Authority on which tenants received Universal Credit, to allow for appropriate assistance/support to be provided for any tenants falling into arrears.

**RESOLVED:**



- (a) That the latest financial position for 2022/23 rent collections be noted;
- (b) That the Committee support the ongoing work to manage the impacts that welfare reform has, and will continue to have, on some of the most vulnerable residents along with implementing support via Welsh Government support measures to mitigate the cost of living crisis; and
- (c) That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, write to the Department for Work and Pensions to seek their agreement to share information with the Local Authority on which tenants received Universal Credit, to allow for appropriate assistance/support to be provided for any tenants falling into arrears.

## **19. COUNCIL PLAN 22-23 MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Chief Officer (Housing & Assets) presented the monitoring report to review mid-year progress against the Council Plan priorities identified for 2022/23. The out-turn report for the 2022/23 Council Plan showed 59% of activities were making good progress. 70% of the performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets, 9% were being closely monitored and 21% were currently not meeting target.

The report was an exception-based report and concentrated on those areas of performance which were currently not achieving their target. The performance indicators which showed a red RAG status for current performance against target, relevant to the Committee, were detailed within the report.

Councillor Bernie Attridge commented on the total number of mandatory large disabled adaptations and the average number of days to complete a mandatory large disabled adaptations and asked for an explanation for the delays with planning applications for large jobs. He also asked if there was a delay with Occupational Therapist visits. The Service Manager - Housing Welfare and Communities explained that the planning delays were due to the backlog and complexities around some of the disabled adaptations which needed to take place. She also explained that a new framework was imminent which would enable the Council to use local suppliers and increase the number of quotes. With regards to Occupational Therapists, she explained that there was currently a number of vacancies to fill within the service, and added that it was an area that was currently hard to recruit in. Work was progressing to link with Universities to see if they could assist with recruitment.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee support the levels of progress and confidence in the achievements of priorities as at mid-year within the 2022/23 Council Plan;
- (b) That the Committee endorse and support overall performance against 2022/23 Council Plan performance indicators as at mid-year; and

- (c) That the Committee is assured by the explanations given for those areas of underperformance.

**20. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.32 am)

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**Chair**



## COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
<b>Report Author</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Community Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Community Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

### RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING</b>
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?</li><li>2. Is it an area of major change or risk?</li><li>3. Are there issues of concern in performance?</li><li>4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?</li><li>5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?</li><li>6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?</li></ol>
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Community & Housing OSC.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2.  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Ceri Shotton Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702305 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk">ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Improvement Plan:</b> the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME  
**CURRENT FWP**

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Report Author
<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2023</b>  <b>10am</b>          Page 15	<b>Results of the Tenants Survey &amp; Developing our Customer Involvement Strategy</b>	To outline the outcome of the Tenants Survey and to present the Customer Involvement Strategy	Consultation	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
	<b>Dynamic Resource Scheduler (DRS) System Update</b>	To provide an update following implementation of the DRS System.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager - Housing & Asset Management
	<b>Voids Management</b>	To provide an update to the Committee on Void properties and the work undertaken to bring the properties back into use.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Housing Assets
	<b>NEW Homes Business Plan</b>	To consider the NEW Homes Business Plan	Consultation	Strategic Housing & Program Delivery Manager
<b>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2023</b>  <b>10am</b>	<b>Homelessness Update inc: Rough Sleepers</b>	To provide an update on the work ongoing to mitigate Homelessness and support provided to rough sleepers	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention
	<b>Disrepair Update</b>	To provide an update on work ongoing to deal with disrepairs.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager - Housing & Asset Management

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	<p><b>Poverty</b></p> <p>To provide information on work being undertaken to mitigate the impacts of Poverty, specifically around food poverty.</p> <p><b>Temporary Accommodation Audit Update</b></p> <p>To provide a progress report on the action plan for service improvement following the audit of the Temporary Accommodation.</p> <p><b>Council Plan 2023-28 Development</b></p> <p>To share the Council Plan 2023-28 Part 1 and Part 2 draft content for review/feedback prior to sign off at Cabinet</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p> <p>Assurance Monitoring</p> <p>Consultation</p>	<p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p> <p>Service Manager – Housing &amp; Prevention</p> <p>Chief Officer (Housing &amp; Communities)</p>
<p>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2023</p> <p>10am</p>	<p><b>Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site</b></p> <p>To report to the Committee on a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site in the County.</p> <p><b>Estate Management</b></p> <p>To consider Estate Management and work being undertaken by the Council and the impact this has on tenants.</p> <p><b>Anti-Social behaviour</b></p> <p>To update Members on the Policy and to outline any proposed changes to the Policy.</p>	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Consultation / Assurance Monitoring</p> <p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p> <p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p> <p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p>
<p>Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2023</p> <p>2pm</p>	<p><b>Communal Heating Charges 2023/24</b></p> <p>To consider the proposed heating charges in council properties with communal heating systems for 2023/24 prior to Cabinet approval.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Corporate Finance – Accountant</p>



## COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	<b>Council Plan 2022-23 Year-End Performance</b>	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
<b>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2023  10am</b>	<b>Welfare Reform Update /Housing Rent Income</b>	To provide an update on the impacts of welfare reforms and the work that is ongoing to mitigate them.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement / Service Manager (Housing Welfare and Communities)

### Items to be scheduled

- **Refugees Update** - To provide an update on the settlement of Refugees across Flintshire. This item was on the FWP for November, 2022 but will be moved to an appropriate date in due course.

### **REGULAR ITEMS**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Responsible / Contact Officer</b>
<b>Quarterly / Annual</b>	<b>Performance Reporting</b>	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Chief Officer (Housing and Assets)
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Welfare Reform Update – including Universal Credit</b>	To update Members on the impact of Welfare Reform and the cost to the Council.	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Update on North East Wales Homes &amp; Property Management</b>	To update Members on the work of the North East Wales Homes & Property Management	Housing Strategy Manager

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
<b>Annually – September</b>	<b>WHQS Capital Programme – Delivery review update</b>	To provide an update on progress of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS), that the Council is delivering through its Capital Investment Programme. Report to include information around the use of local labour and number of apprentices and school leavers.	Chief Officer (Housing and Assets)
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Update on Housing Rent Income</b>	To provide an update on rent collection and current arrear levels	Revenues Manager

**ACTION TRACKING FOR THE COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	Cllr Rosetta Dolphin referred to the table showing the banded arrears for 2022/23 and commented on the different rent paid by tenants. She asked if the types of rents could be grouped in this table. David Barnes agreed to look into whether this could be provided in future reports.	David Barnes	This information will be included in future reports. The next update report will be presented to the Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023.	Will be reviewed prior to the report being submitted in July, 2023.
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	In response to a question from Cllr Attridge around comparisons with other Local Authorities and RSL's, David Barnes agreed to look at what benchmarking data could be provided in the future reports. This information may have to be anonymised.	David Barnes	This information will be included in future reports. The next update report will be presented to the Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023.	Will be reviewed prior to the report being submitted in July, 2023.
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	In response to a question from the Chair, Jen Griffiths agreed to provide information on the number of cases waiting to go back to court to the Committee following the meeting.	Jen Griffiths	This information will be included in future reports. The next update report will be presented to the Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023.	Will be reviewed prior to the report being submitted in July, 2023.

## ACTION TRACKING

## APPENDIX 2

11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	Cllr Dave Evans asked how many of the 454 household who were subject to a reduction in their housing benefit payment because of the Bedroom Tax were in rent arrears. Jen Griffiths agreed to provide this information to the Committee following the meeting.	Jen Griffiths	This information will be included in future reports. The next update report will be presented to the Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023.	Will be reviewed prior to the report being submitted in July, 2023.
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	The Chair asked if the percentage of arrears relating to water charges could be shown in future reports. David Barnes agreed to look at if it was possible to show what arrears were rent and what percentage was residual water charges for future reports.	David Barnes	This information will be included in future reports. The next update report will be presented to the Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023.	Will be reviewed prior to the report being submitted in July, 2023.
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	As shown at recommendation (c) that a letter be written to the DWP on behalf of the Committee.	Jen Griffiths / Ceri Shotton	Draft letter prepared	On-going



## COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Housing Support Grant
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Housing Support Grant regime and details of the Housing Support Delivery Plan, which is a requirement of receiving the Welsh Government (WG) revenue supported Housing Support Grant. The Housing Support Grant brings together what was the Supporting People Grant, the Homelessness Prevention Grant and Rent Smart Wales Funding streams into one single annual grant.

Housing Support Grant is a Welsh Government funded programme which provides housing related support services to people over the age of 16. It is an early intervention programme to support activity which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation. Increasingly support also enables people to exit homelessness by identifying and addressing unmet support needs, offering a range of support including helping people to explore their housing options. The funding available also enables the delivery of a wide range of supported housing schemes across the county.

Support offered to residents is person centred and trauma informed. It is aimed at supporting people to secure and maintain sustainable housing by addressing problems they may face to ease pressures on statutory services within the homeless system but also other statutory services such as health, social care and probation services.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note the overview of the Housing Support Grant regime and wide range of delivery of services locally.
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2	To support the Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan for 2023-2024 attached as Appendix 1
3	To note feedback on the impact of the Housing Support Grant a range of good practice examples shared through the report.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT (HSG) AND THE HOUSING SUPPORT DELIVERY PLAN</b>
1.01	<p><b>Background to the Housing Support Grant</b>  In April 2019 Welsh Government introduced the new Housing Support Grant (HSG). This is an early intervention housing related support programme targeted at people in housing need and at increased risk of homelessness. The HSG programme brings the historic funding streams for Supporting People, Homelessness Prevention and Rent Smart Wales grants into one single funding stream.</p> <p>For several years, there had been a standstill budget with Flintshire receiving £5,950,818 each year. In a statement issued by the Housing Minister Julie James MS in March 2020 a risk of funding reduction was identified for Flintshire through a process called “redistribution”.</p> <p>Redistribution was intended to ensure all Councils across Wales receive an appropriate share of the national HSG Fund. It has been felt that North Wales has fared more favorably compared to other regions of Wales. Through redistribution, Flintshire anticipated a 4.3% reduction in HSG, over the following seven years. Based on the 2020-2021 award of £5,950,818 the 4.3% reduction was anticipated to be a reduction in the value of the grant of £255,885.</p> <p>During the Covid pandemic, however, Welsh Government Officials advised that redistribution has been placed on hold and will be revisited in future years and funding was increased, strengthening Welsh Governments commitment to addressing housing needs and ending homelessness in Wales.</p> <p>Having initially anticipated a reduction in Welsh Government funding in December 2020 it was announced that a further £40m would be put into the national award for HSG. Since 2021-2022 Flintshire has received an enhanced allocation of £7,828,610 per year. Funding is provided to the local authority to support in-house services and the commissioning of specialist housing related services through a wide range of partners.</p> <p>There is an expectation that this additional funding provides a platform to transform services and build on the positive practice that had been developed during the response to Covid. The funding allows us to respond to the increasing pressures on housing and homelessness services post pandemic and the current cost of living crisis and should be aligned to the shift in service delivery towards Rapid Rehousing.</p>

	<p>It should be noted, however, that the HSG cannot be used for statutory services such as emergency or temporary accommodation costs, homeless officers, housing register administration. We do, however, use the HSG for complimentary services that function alongside these core statutory services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support staff assist people to sustain and move on from emergency housing.</li> <li>• Support staff work on cases open to statutory homeless caseload for specific additional support tasks linked to Personal Housing Plans.</li> <li>• Housing help and advice is provided to applicants who approach the Council for access to the Housing Register so they can explore their full range of housing options.</li> </ul>
1.02	<p><b>Current Housing Support Grant Services</b></p> <p>A wide and diverse range of housing related support activity is currently delivered in Flintshire. Some services are provided in-house, but most services are delivered by external partners, with specialism in areas of housing related support and accommodation.</p> <p>Detailed below are some examples of housing related support activities funded through the HSG Programme and attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of the Spend Plan for 2022-2023 which outlines committed spend for the current financial year by project type.</p> <p><u>Supported Housing</u></p> <p>A range of supported housing for those people who require short to medium term housing and intensive support (up to 2 years). Services and accommodation made available for a range of household types, singles, couples, families. Examples but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunraye Supported Housing Scheme for single females (Local Solutions)</li> <li>• Llys Emlyn young persons Supported Housing (Clwyd Alyn)</li> <li>• Complex Needs Dispersed Housing Project (Nacro)</li> <li>• Erw Groes Family Supported Housing (Clwyd Alyn)</li> <li>• Plas Belin Family Supported Housing (Local Solutions)</li> </ul> <p><u>Refuge Accommodation sand Domestic Abuse Services</u></p> <p>Male and Female refuge provision for those fleeing domestic abuse and needing access to specialist support and safe accommodation. Examples but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male Refuge (Domestic Abuse Service Unit)</li> <li>• Family Refuge (Clwyd Alyn Women’s Aid)</li> <li>• Target Hardening Provisions (Flintshire County Council)</li> </ul> <p><u>Homeless Hub in Queensferry</u></p> <p>Initially run as a Night Shelter and now developed into a 24/7 provision this service is run by The Wallich and provides temporary accommodation and support. A range of partners access the Homeless Hub on a regular basis to deliver structured activities and interventions so as to engage with</p>

residents who may at times find it difficult to sustain engagement with services for a variety of reasons associated with the complexity of their needs and vulnerabilities.

#### Housing Support – Time Critical Interventions

Housing related support and advice services that help people set up and sustain their tenancies across social and private rented sector properties. This can assist people with a wide range of housing issues to prevent these escalating to a risk of homelessness. This can be a short-term intervention, or on-going support up to two years. Examples but not limited to:

- Community Based Support for Older People (Flintshire Council)
- Generic Housing Support (Shelter Cymru)
- Offender Focused Housing Support (Kaleidoscope)
- Young Persons Housing Support (Local Solutions)
- Mental Health focussed Housing Support (Adferiad)
- Domestic Abuse Floating Support (Hafan Cymru)

#### Financial Inclusion & Debt Advice Services

Access to timely financial inclusion and debt advice is an important intervention as rent arrears and other household debt issues are significant triggers for homelessness. With high demand for debt advice services and often lengthy waiting times, it is important that we have a fast-track route into services for people with housing related debts. Examples:

- Welfare Rights Services (Flintshire County Council)
- Specialist Debt Caseworkers (Flintshire Citizens Advice)

1.03

#### **Accessing Housing Support Services**

The Council operates a Housing Support Gateway. The Gateway acts as a triage and assessment service and identifies the lead housing need for anyone seeking support and then matches the applicant to the most appropriate support service.

The Housing Support Gateway is available to members of the public who can refer themselves into the Gateway. Partners and agencies, including the third sector, can also refer people into the Housing Support Gateway, however this can only be done with the applicant's consent. Referrals can be made by contacting the Housing Support Gateway through the following channels:

- By the phone on 01352 703515
- By email on [Housing.Support@Flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:Housing.Support@Flintshire.gov.uk)
- By visiting Flintshire Connects Offices
- By a new [online referral form](#) available on the [Flintshire Housing Support](#) pages of the Council website

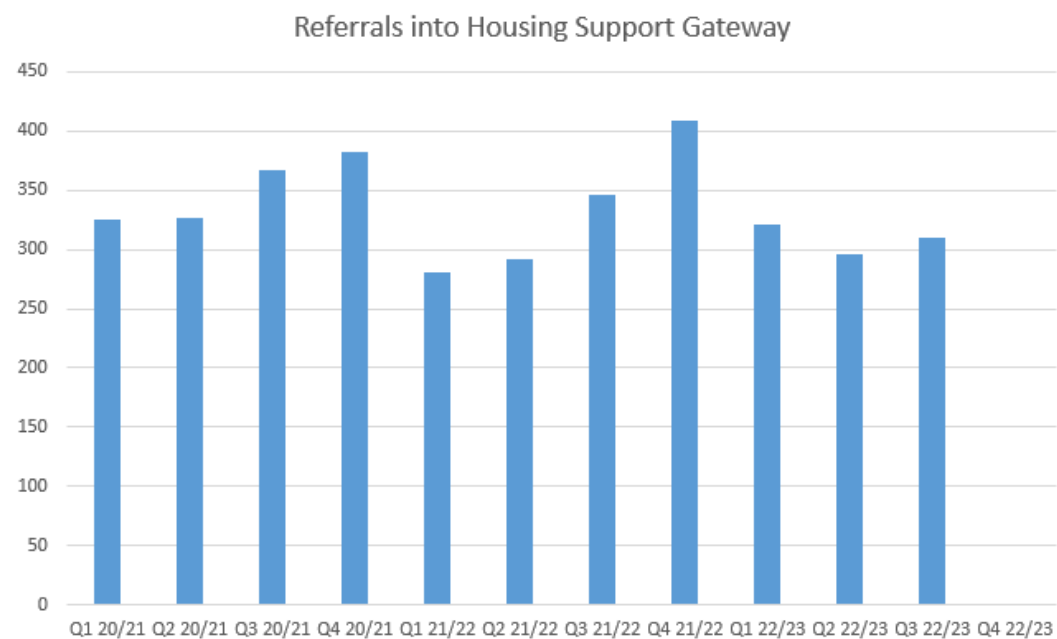
Officers within the Housing Register Team also identify peoples housing support needs and refer into the Gateway. When people apply for social housing, this is often due to them experiencing a lack of housing or a housing problems. Through the triage process information is gained from the applicant to not only assess their eligibility for social housing, but also



in the hope of identifying housing problems and fixing them by offering support.

Where housing problems cannot be fixed support can still be offered as its important people receive support in light of the lengthy waiting times that people experience waiting for social housing. Support also includes exploring other housing options such as private rentals and other forms of affordable housing. Where appropriate people are signposted to homeless services. Through the restructure of the Housing and Prevention service, consideration is currently being given to developing an integrated Gateway, Register and Housing Options Service that may operate as a “single point of access” to housing help.

Detailed below is a chart which highlights the demand for housing support services as evidenced by applications to the Housing Support Gateway.



1.04

**Developing the Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan**

Local Authorities are required to identify local needs and ensure that resources are targeted at areas of growing need and demand. The needs analysis pulls on specific data sets relevant to housing related support such as service requests via the Housing Support Gateway and other data such as homeless presentations, Citizens Advice Gateway, domestic abuse referrals etc.

Consultation with service users and with local stakeholders who deliver services and support people to access Housing Support is also drawn upon to inform our needs analysis. A number of consultation activities have informed the development of the Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan and survey findings have been detailed within the Housing Support Programme Strategy which was launched in April 2022.

1.05

**Housing Support Grant Local Delivery Priorities**

The additional funding for HSG since 2021-2022 has provided a significant opportunity to enhance the current Housing Support offer for Flintshire. Detailed below are some of the additional activities and service

enhancements that we have been able to deliver and commission in recent years.

#### Housing First

In partnership with Conwy and Denbighshire, Flintshire will be developing a Housing First Project. This is an intensive support service, targeted at people with highly complex needs and often with a significant history of rough sleeping. Elected Members from the Community Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a briefing about the roll out of Housing First on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and on the back of successful year 1 delivery the Housing First service has been enhanced to now include young people and a caseload of 20 individuals, who all benefit from enhanced support. The service is currently undertaking the Wales Housing First Network Accreditation process.

#### Homeless Hub - Emergency Bed Provision

There is a desire to develop an alternative accommodation setting to the current Homeless Hub at Glanrafon in Queensferry. Whilst it is necessary to sustain the current 24/7 delivery model at Glanrafon and support people onto alternative forms of longer-term housing, there will continue to be a need for emergency housing. The future offer will however need to ensure that a range of self-contained accommodation is available along with a multi-agency support model that builds on the lessons learnt from successful delivery of services at Glanrafon Homeless Hub to date. Initial designs have been developed for a 15 bed provision. HSG enables the 24 hour staffing every day of the year and a wide range of additional services are also delivered on site such as health and wellbeing session, debt advice and diversionary and social and sporting activities.

#### Opening up the Private Rented Sector

Limited social housing, increasing demand, and lengthier waiting times, means that supporting people to access the private rental sector is more important than ever. Whilst this is challenging as the market availability has reduced in recent years and rents are going up, additional officers working with landlords, letting agencies and prospective private renters to remove barriers to securing a privately rented home in Flintshire will hopefully support the move towards a "rapid rehousing approach" and seek to increase the access of affordable homes across all tenures. Additional funding through the HSG is also available for Rent in Advance, Cash Deposits, Tenancy Rescue Packages and Landlord Incentives to ease financial pressures on the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments budgets.

#### Additional Forms of Supported Housing

One of the priority areas relating to increasing capacity for supported housing will be for people over the age of 25 with complex needs. Flintshire already have a similar project for young people aged 16-25, which works extremely well with very positive outcomes for its residents. Developing this approach further to offer more supported housing units will be explored through the additional revenue funding, subject to a suitable property being identified.

	<p><b><u>Restructuring of the Housing &amp; Prevention Service</u></b>          Whilst several areas of the Housing &amp; Prevention Service deliver statutory services which cannot be funded through HSG (Homeless Officers, Tenancy Management for Temporary Housing, the Housing Register) a range of complementary support functions around the fringes of these services are eligible for HSG funding. Such services help people reduce risks of homelessness, support people to prepare for exiting homelessness, starting a new housing chapter positively when they secure a new home, and enable people to better sustain their housing. The restructure of the Housing &amp; Prevention Service will assist with the transition to a rapid rehousing model of housing support and homeless case management and will allow our teams to offer far a more person centered and time critical support in times of housing crisis.</p> <p><b><u>Increasing capacity within Tenancy Support Services</u></b>          Whilst we have not yet seen the full impact of the cost-of-living crisis it is clear there are increasing levels of hardship within many households and this will have a significant impact on people’s wellbeing, financial independence and housing sustainability. All these issues significantly heighten the potential risks of homelessness. Increasing a range of generic and specialist tenancy support services will assist with increasing pressures within our communities through early intervention and a targeted support.</p> <p><b><u>Workforce development, welfare and support</u></b>          It is important there is an acknowledgement that responding to the current and future demand for housing support and homelessness services is a significant challenge. Investing in the people who deliver these critical services will be important to ensure the workforce is skilled, resilient and ready for the challenges ahead. A range of training, development and support across all service providers, along with attractive terms and conditions will ensure the sector can retain and attract an appropriately skilled workforce.</p>
1.06	<p><b>Spend against the Housing Support Grant</b>          Delivering all the planned activities within the HSG Delivery Plan post the significant uplift in funding in 2021/2022 has been a challenge. This position was not unique to Flintshire and we were able to utilise an additional £1,392,656.27 of funding in 2021/2022, however, an underspend did occur due in the main to very tight criteria and grant conditions leaving no scope to fund anything other than HSG eligible activity in year.</p> <p>Recruitment issues along with workforce mobilisation has meant there have been delays to some planned activity; in addition, some planned activities have required accommodation settings in order to be able to deliver services. As a result, the significant uplift in funding for 2012/2022 was not fully utilised, but we are advised this is not uncommon across Wales following the significant uplift in grant.</p>

	Allocation	Spend	Underspend
19/20	£5,809,818	£5,803,655.94	£6,162.06
20/21	£5,950,818.85	£5,950,818.65	0
21/22	£7,828,610.23	£7,343,474.92	£485,135.31

1.07

**Commissioning and Reviewing Services**

A small in-house team funded through Council Fund and supported by our Procurement Service are responsible for commissioning and reviewing the Housing Support Grant.

A large-scale re-tendering exercise for a number of HSG funded services is scheduled for the financial year 2023-2024 and this will include Floating Support Services and Supported Housing Schemes. A number of these projects' contracts have been extended with the portfolio holder's approval and the re-tendering exercise will provide an opportunity to test the market and reshape services if needed to meet changing needs.

A significant change to the delivery of one project (Plas Belin Supported Housing) has seen the need for a variation to an existing contract this year. This is in response to the imminent sale of the site where the service is delivered in the Northop Ward. Plas Belin has historically provided housing and support for approximately 20 vulnerable families and due to the sale of the Plas Belin site, Local Solutions who deliver the onsite support and the council as commissioner of the service, have had to develop an exit strategy to rehouse and support the family's affected by the sale.

A number of families have already moved on in recent weeks and are settling into their new homes with support from Local Solutions staff. Packages of support for families will be tailored to meet their immediate and longer term needs and we anticipate once the initial move on process and settling in period is complete, the revised contract with Local Solutions will enable more capacity for housing related support for other families within the community. Over time this will enable us to support more families through pro-active early intervention and homeless prevention work across Flintshire.

It is rare that services have to be varied in such a scenario. We are confident all families affected will be supported with an appropriate housing solution and ongoing support. Most families will be rehoused in social housing or assisted to secure alternative supported housing if required.

1.08

**Regional Working Arrangements**

To facilitate regional working representatives from all six North Wales Councils and a range of service providers engage in the North Wales Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group (RHSCG).

Each local authority now has their own localised Housing Support Programme Strategy as is required by Welsh Government. This in part replaced the North Wales Regional Homelessness Strategy, but partnership working in the region remains strong and where opportunities for joint working present themselves partners across all six North Wales

	<p>Authorities engage and maximise opportunities for collaboration and economies of scale.</p> <p>In recent years significant regional work has been undertaken on domestic abuse services; prisoner resettlement, rough sleeping, mental health and responding to Covid pressures.</p> <p>A copy of the RHSCG Annual Statement for 2022-2023 is attached as Appendix 2 and details the successes of the Regional Working undertaken and the focus for Regional Working for 2022/2023.</p>
1.09	<p><b>Sector Wide All Wales Recruitment Campaign</b></p> <p>In the summer of 2022 Welsh Government and partners ran a recruitment campaign to encourage people to consider a career in the homelessness and housing support sector.</p> <p>Welsh Government are now preparing to roll out the second phase of the campaign which will involve a wider range of communication channels and we are actively looking to maximise opportunities locally to take advantage of this increased exposure to generate interest in vacancies within the council and across commissioned services in Flintshire.</p> <p>The objective of this campaign is to encourage more people to apply for jobs within the homelessness and housing support sector, promoting it as a rewarding place to work. Potential applicants will be directed to the <a href="#">campaign pages</a> where they will be able to view a variety of organisations who are advertising job roles within the homelessness and housing support sector.</p> <p>The intention is to launch the campaign on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and run in to March 2023. To maximise the impact of the campaign, Welsh Government want to ensure that as many relevant job opportunities are listed on the website during the campaign’s live period as possible.</p> <p>The communication channels selected for this campaign are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio (Heart and Capital Pan Wales)</li> <li>• Digital Radio (DAX)</li> <li>• Bus (Bus backs, interiors and sides)</li> <li>• Wales Online online/offline advertising</li> <li>• Relevant Job Boards</li> <li>• Social Media &amp; Google PPC</li> </ul> <p>The Council and many of our housing support partners have already advertised vacant posts on the National Website in the last six months and will continue to do so. The Council and partners will also use the national communications materials and link them to corporate website content and social media activities for the duration of the campaign period and beyond.</p>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	<p>Detailed below are the cost implications associated with the delivery of Housing Support Grant activity in Flintshire:</p> <p><b>Revenue:</b> The Housing Support Grant like any other Grant regime is subject to review by Welsh Government. Although there is strong commitment to the principles and objectives of the grant there is always a risk that the grant funding will reduce subject to budgetary considerations of Welsh Government. Redistribution as referenced in Section 1.01 of this report, also poses a risk and potential instability to the Councils income through the HSG but is not an immediate risk.</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> Whilst HSG is a revenue grant, there are implications for Capital expenditure. Some services need to be delivered from specific housing settings and there will be a need to identify and potentially build new accommodation that will meet the needs of people who experience homeless and require supported housing. The Homeless Hub and additional Supported Housing Schemes as referenced in Section 1.05 of this report will require significant capital investment and have been flagged early within the Councils Capital Programme. The Flintshire Housing Prospectus has been approved by Council and shared with our Housing Partners.</p> <p><b>Human Resources:</b> HSG funding provides significant staffing capacity across a range of services. Both the Council and our commissioned services have experienced significant workforce challenges in recent years, with a notable shortage of appropriately skilled people within the local labour market to fill some vacancies. The response to this challenge requires both a national and localised approach. Sector wide communication strategies are being developed as referenced within Section 1.08 of this report and the Council and its partners will seek to maximise opportunities on the back of these campaigns to generate interest in employment opportunities in the sector; whilst also investing in efforts to retain and develop the existing workforce.</p>

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
3.01	<p>The following risks and mitigations have been identified by way of control measures:</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Failure to secure or retain enough people in HSG funded services to fulfil the aspirations of the HSG Delivery Plan and meet local housing support needs.</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise communications and engagement opportunities for all recruitment activities</li> <li>• Ensure packages of training and development opportunities in order to attract, develop and retain appropriately skilled workforce.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure officers internally and through commissioned services are paid a good wage for the services they deliver.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b> Failure to utilise the full award of Housing Support Grant in future years following significant uplift for 2021/2022 onwards</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A robust delivery plan aligned to the Housing Support Programme and Needs Assessments</li> <li>• Prompt commissioning and varying of services as required to meet local needs within budget</li> <li>• Monitoring spend against the delivery plan through financial controls will reduce the risk of underspend</li> <li>• Maximise communications and engagement opportunities for all recruitment activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b> Reduction in Housing Support Grant in future years as a result of redistribution and/or budget cuts at Welsh Government</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal mitigations and this is part of services delivery being reliant on grant funding regimes</li> <li>• Lobby Welsh Government on the importance of HSG funding and showcase positive examples of service delivery to evidence impact through spend to save principles</li> </ul>										
3.02	<p><b>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1160 1385 1890"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1160 743 1308">Long-term</td> <td data-bbox="743 1160 1385 1308">Positive – Increase in targeted support and alternative delivery methods to ensure services are inclusive for all</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1308 743 1491">Prevention</td> <td data-bbox="743 1308 1385 1491">Prevention - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of people’s needs</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1491 743 1603">Integration</td> <td data-bbox="743 1491 1385 1603">Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1603 743 1742">Collaboration</td> <td data-bbox="743 1603 1385 1742">Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1742 743 1890">Involvement</td> <td data-bbox="743 1742 1385 1890">Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Positive – Increase in targeted support and alternative delivery methods to ensure services are inclusive for all	Prevention	Prevention - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of people’s needs	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users	Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred
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3.03	<p><b>Well-being Goals Impact</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 2033 1385 2112"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 2033 743 2112">Prosperous Wales</td> <td data-bbox="743 2033 1385 2112">Positive – With additional funding more jobs will be created to deliver housing</td> </tr> </table>	Prosperous Wales	Positive – With additional funding more jobs will be created to deliver housing								
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		related support on a greater scale within Flintshire. Opportunities to support the labour market through training and development opportunities are being considered in conjunction with colleagues from Communities for Work.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services that are prevention focused and build resilience to avoid households becoming homeless
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in rough sleeping, overcoming health inequalities associated with homelessness and poor housing conditions and investment to increase targeted support for people with housing issues and mental ill-health
	More equal Wales	Positive – Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all. Consideration has been given to local and regional gaps in provision for often marginalised communities such as the homeless, those with mental health or substances issues and the LGBTQ+ community.
	Cohesive Wales	No Impact
	Vibrant Wales	No impact
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	<p><u>Stakeholder Engagement</u> As referenced in Section 1.04 a number of consultation activities have been undertaken over recent years with providers and stakeholders to inform the development of the HSG Delivery Plan and the HSP Strategy and members endorsed the HSP Strategy in December 2021 and went live in April 2022. Contributions from key partners have been received by representatives from Health, Housing, Probation, Police, Youth Justice, Adults &amp; Children’s Social Services and a range local 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector agency.</p>
4.02	<p><u>Service User Feedback</u> An online survey for users of HSG funded services is available online for completion throughout the year (Regional Service User Questionnaire). Examples of some of the feedback gained from service users responses includes</p> <p>Question: Where do you think you would be now if it weren’t for the support you have received?</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would of lost my children and not knowing what I would do with my life</li> <li>• I would probably be in hospital due to mental ill health</li> <li>• In a very bad place mentally and physically</li> <li>• I don't know, I would have had the bailiffs at my door by now though</li> <li>• We would be homeless as I wouldn't have been able to afford my housing</li> <li>• I might have been in a care home, even though my family said they would never let that happen</li> </ul> <p>Question: How do you think that services could be improved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More awareness that this service is available - so that people like myself can access it at an early stage</li> <li>• I think the service works well but I think more advisors are need in order to meet the demands of the service</li> <li>• More group sessions to talk about stuff with people that have been through the same stuff I have</li> <li>• It couldn't be improved, I have everything I could asked for from the Integrated Young Persons Service</li> <li>• More support and help with my mental health</li> <li>• Advocacy services. When you are in my situation it can be quite overwhelming</li> </ul>
4.03	<p><u>Case Studies</u></p> <p>When looking to capture outcomes for the Housing Support Grant there are a wide range of monitoring returns that are submitted to Welsh Government to demonstrate impact and outcomes. Whilst this is important for performance reporting, staff across many services also capture people's stories and situations through the collation of case studies.</p> <p>Attached as Appendix 3 is a range of positive evidence for the impact of the HSG programme and case studies for people who have accessed HSG funded services across the North Wales region. The document also highlights some of the cost benefits of housing related support when considering the easing of pressures on other core public services through positive early intervention and prevention focussed time critical interventions</p> <p>Also attached to the report is a sample of Flintshire specific case studies that offer an insight into the wide range of outcomes and support that people have achieved following action and engagement with HSG funded services the Council and through our support partners. These further case studies are attached as Appendix 4 through to Appendix 9.</p>

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1: Housing Support Grant Spend Plan Summary – 2022/2023
5.02	Appendix 2: Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group Annual Statement 2022/2023
5.03	Appendix 3: Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group – Our Peoples Stories Report
5.04	Appendix 4: Local Case Studies outlining the impact of Housing Support Grant services in Flintshire

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>Housing Support Grant Guidance  <a href="https://gov.wales/housing-support-grant-practice-guidance">https://gov.wales/housing-support-grant-practice-guidance</a></p> <p>Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-2024  <a href="https://www.gov.wales/draft-budget-2023-2024">https://www.gov.wales/draft-budget-2023-2024</a></p> <p>Flintshire’s HSP Strategy 2022-2026  <a href="https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Housing/Housing-Support-Strategy/Housing-Support-Programme-Strategy-2022-26.pdf">https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Housing/Housing-Support-Strategy/Housing-Support-Programme-Strategy-2022-26.pdf</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Martin Cooil – Housing &amp; Prevention Service Manager  <b>Telephone:</b> 07880 423234  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk">martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>Regional Service User Questionnaire</b> – this is a live online questionnaire where service users from the 6 Local Authorities can provide feedback for the service, they have been provided through the HSG. Conwy host this questionnaire and provide annual reports for the region.</p> <p><b>Housing Support Gateway</b> – all referrals come through the gateway and are allocated to the most appropriate provider to deliver support.</p> <p><b>Cymorth Cymru</b> – is the representative body for providers of homelessness, housing and support services in Wales.</p> <p><b>Housing First</b> – is a housing and support approach which gives people who have experienced homelessness and chronic health and social care</p>

needs a stable home from which to rebuild their lives. Provides intensive, person-centred, holistic support that is open-ended. Places no conditions on individuals; however, they should desire to have a tenancy.

**Rapid Rehousing** - Rapid rehousing is about taking a housing-led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.

**LGBTQ+ community** – LGBTQ+ is a term that embraces diverse sexual and gender identities, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and more.

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## HSG Spend Plan 22/23 Categories

<b>Category</b>	<b>Spend</b>
PRS Access Systems	126,000.00
Rapid Rehousing – Housing Led Services	265,919.00
Emergency Accommodation Provision	478,950.00
Rough Sleeper Assertive Outreach	20,000.00
Enforcement, investigation or compliance with housing legislation	10,631.00
Floating Support	3,092,351.23
Temporary Supported Accommodation	1,789,169.00
Permanent Supported Accommodation	910,000.00
Extra Care Schemes	90,000.00
Refuges	239,797.00
Target Hardening Equipment	2,000.00
Non Statutory HSG Funded Posts	308,093.00
Other Homeless Prevention Posts	38,000.00
<b>Other</b> - Expenditure which does not fit under any other project type but which falls within the purpose of the grant as set out in the HSG Guidance. (e.g. ICT licence costs, training, discretionary payments).	457,700.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,828,610.23</b>

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# North Wales Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group

ANNUAL STATEMENT

2022-23

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Welcome to the North Wales Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group's (RHSCG) Annual Statement outlining our goals for the next twelve months. This statement addresses the progression made against 2021-22's work plan.

The North Wales RHSCG was set up in September 2020. The RHSCG replaced the former Regional Collaborative Committee (RCC) following Welsh Government's announcement in October 2020 to combine the Supporting People grant, Homeless Prevention grant and Rent Smart Wales grant into one funding pot; the Housing Support Grant. The former RCC for North Wales overlooked the Supporting People grant. However, a new grant meant a new grant delivery guidance and we therefore now have the RHSCG which overlooks the Housing Support Grant across the six local authorities and brings together a platform for regional working.

Local authorities are governed by the Housing Support Grant Guidance, updated in March 2021, and chapter five outlines the role of the RHSCG as followed:

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### *What is a RHSCG?*

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The Housing Support Grant Guidance states; the role of the RHSCG (Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group) is to provide a forum for collaborative working. Local authorities are expected to demonstrate how they have engaged with the RHSCG for their region. The guidance outlines regional working as:

- Development of specialist services for which there is not a critical mass locally
- Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale
- Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration
- Collaboration with other public services.

Annually each RHSCG across Wales is expected to submit an annual statement outlining their objectives. This is our annual plan for 2022-23.

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### *Where can I find the Guidance for the HSG?*

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The Housing Support Grant Guidance, first published in February 2020 and recently updated in March 2021 can be found by clicking on this link:

<https://gov.wales/housing-support-grant-practice-guidance>

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### *What is HSG?*

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HSG (Housing Support Grant) is an amalgamation of three existing grants; Supporting People Programme, Homeless Prevention Grant and Rent Smart Wales Enforcement Grant.

HSG is a grant mechanism which funds part of an overall ‘Housing Support Programme’ that encompasses both the statutory homelessness duty funded through the revenue settlement and the non-statutory housing support preventative services funded through the HSG. Viewing both as a whole allows Wales to take a systematic approach to reducing homelessness and the impact of homelessness and unstable housing.

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.

HSG supports vulnerable people to address the, sometimes, multiple, problems they face, such as debt, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, violent against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and mental health issues.

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*The North Wales HSG allocation*

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The Housing Support Grant for Wales was allocated an additional 40million pounds for the financial year 2021-22, following a bid by officials in Welsh Government. This increase to the 2021-22 HSG budget was in recognition of the investment that is needed to end homelessness, with the additional funding coming from the Welsh Government’s core budget, rather than from a Covid-19 related budget.

The grant allocation for 2022-23 has been awarded with the same amount as 2021-22 with a confirmation that the following two years have been confirmed by Welsh Government that this will be the grant allocation for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

The table below shows how significant the increase was to each local authority’s allocation:

Local Authority	HSG Allocation for this year 2022-23	HSG Allocation prior to uplift in 2020-21
Anglesey	£3,571,720.50	£2,714,998
Gwynedd	£6,802,616.45	£5,170,923
Conwy	£8,645,095.79	£6,571,460
Denbighshire	£7,356,535.02	£5,591,976
Flintshire	£7,828,610.00	£5,950,818
Wrexham	£6,721,499.09	£5,109,262
North Wales	<b>£40,926,076.85</b>	£31,109,437

Furthermore to the allocation being kept at these levels for the next 2 years, Welsh Government have also had engagement events in October 2021 on plans to align local/regional projects funded by the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) with the Housing Support Grant (HSG), the Minister for Climate Change did agree to start transferring funding and administration of these projects to the HSG from 2022-23.

The main features of the changes to the HSG and associated timescales, are the 'Main Programme' projects totalling £2.44m across Wales that will transfer to the Housing Support Grant from 2022-23, and will be ring-fenced for a transitional period of up to two years.

After the two year transition period, the totality of funding for these HPG 'main programme' projects, £2.44m, will be redistributed to LAs using the current HSG distribution formula. Welsh Government have stated this is to allow sufficient time for authorities to plan – through dialogue with project providers – for how and whether they will fund 'main programme' projects beyond the transition period.

This could have huge implications for some Providers across North Wales as well as those who use these services. People who access some of these services do not generally access local authority services in the first instance. This will be kept on the agenda for the RHSCG to discuss the implications of the changes of this grant.

There were however no updates on **redistribution** during 2021 or to date, therefore authorities continue to have the uncertainty of this looming and the following section remains in this statement to continue to share the amount North Wales could face to lose.

### Redistribution:

Background information, the original formula was developed back in 2003 when the Supporting People programme was introduced (prior to it being one combined grant) and local authorities were asked to "maximise the pot" based on Housing Benefit to depict the need for their authority. All 22 local authorities in Wales were then allocated their grant, the amounts differed considerably; but reflected the efforts made by authorities to reflect their current need at that time when they were asked to do so by Welsh Government.

Over the years this has brought tension to the former Supporting People programme; why some authorities receive more than others, and was covered in the Aylward Review of the Supporting People programme (now part of the wider grant – Housing Support Grant) when it was reviewed back in 2012 by Professor Aylward.

This review in 2012 subsequently introduced a new funding formula to distribute funds more fairly; however this formula would have a detrimental effect on services for the Local Authorities who would be set to lose a significant amount of funding. The formula was not implemented by Welsh Government. In 2019, Welsh Government revisited the Redistribution agenda and commissioned an external contractor (ALMA Economics) to review the Aylward formula and as a result a new funding formula was proposed in March 2020.

The new funding formula if approved during the Ministers term would result in the following changes to authority's allocation:

Local Authority	HSG Allocation for 2022-23	% increase / decrease proposed in March 2020	What this % will look like to the allocation
Anglesey	£3,571,720.50	<b>Plus 6.2%</b>	£3,793,167.17
Gwynedd	£6,802,616.45	Down 9.6%	£6,149,565.27
Conwy	£8,645,095.79	<b>Down 21.2%</b>	£6,812,335.49
Denbighshire	£7,356,535.02	<b>Down 15.8%</b>	£6,194,202.49
Flintshire	£7,828,610.00	Down 4.3%	£7,491,980.00
Wrexham	£6,721,499.09	Down 5.5%	£6,351,816.65
North Wales	<b>£40,926,076.85</b>		£36,793,067.07  <b>Reduction of £4,133,009.78</b> (includes Anglesey's increase)

Whilst the additional funding is much needed and welcoming, subsequently, the looming threat of redistribution at a time where we still don't know the true impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently how much assistance is required to accommodate Ukrainian refugees; it is concerning for authorities to be able to plan; and plan where **limited** accommodation is available.

### The North Wales RHSCG

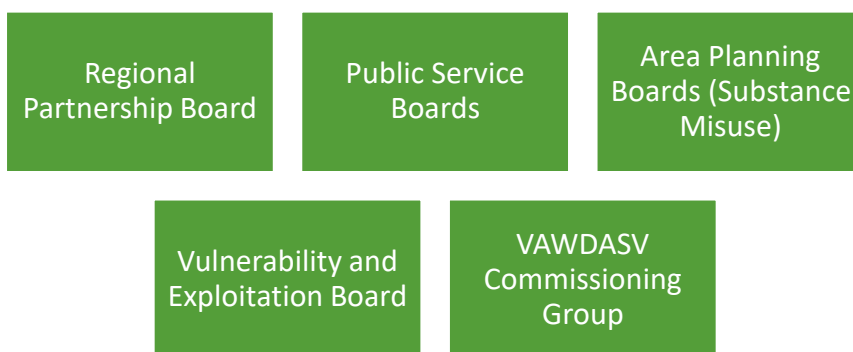
The North Wales RHSCG is made up of members from each local authority, Providers and Landlord representatives, Probation, OPCC, Mental Health, Substance Misuse Area Planning Board, VAWDASV representative, and a National Residential Landlords Association representative. Details of who these members are can be found in appendix one.

### Collaboration with other Partnerships

For regional working to be successful, the RHSCG will need to ensure links are made where a housing support is an element of another regional agenda. We have listed boards with a housing cross over below.

The Housing Support Grant guidance states "RPBs provide the mechanism through which collaborative working between Health, Social and Housing can be developed. They are therefore the right mechanism for RHSCGs to build a close working relationship". This is also mirrored in part 9 of the updated guidance for the RPBs where it states 'Sub group arrangements should also include groups to focus on housing and accommodation led solutions to health and social care'.

## NORTH WALES REGIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT COLLABORATIVE GROUP



The next twelve months we will focus on committing to enhance and explore potential collaboration with the above mentioned boards particularly the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Boards.

The RHSCG is satisfied with the links made with the Vulnerability and Exploitation Board which has a member from the RHSCG and the chair of the North Wales HSG Leads meeting chairs the VAWDASV Commissioning group. Last year we raised there were gaps for a dual diagnosis domestic abuse refuge for women with mental health and substance misuse issues and this has been progressed by the VAWDASV Commissioning group and projects have since been set up in a North Wales local authority.

The RHSCG will contribute for another year for the jointly commissioned Independent Domestic Violence Advisors with VAWDASV Commissioning Group and OPCC funding. Another years funding has also been committed for target hardening Equipment.

The RHSCG has strong working links with the North Wales Area Planning Board for Substance Misuse (APB). The RHSCG continues to contribute to the Collaborative Outreach Services which is a regional project commissioned jointly with the APB.

Additionally, priorities the RHSCG will be taking forward in 2022/23 the APB can help advance. The APB developed a co-occurring mental health agenda which will assist firming links with this agenda. The APB has commissioned Learning Events for prevention and reducing harm. Prevention and early intervention is a key priority for the RHSCG for 2022/23.

### RHSCG Achievements in 2021-22: Review of last year's priorities:

Last year we agreed the below objectives as the priorities for the RHSCG. Each authority transferred a percentage of their grant to a regional pot for the development of the following:

- Commission LGBTQ+ Training for both Providers and HSG teams
- Commission a bespoke Mental Health and Housing Training
- Commission a regional hoarding project
- Commission Advanced Homelessness Law Training
- Explore commissioning options for a Dual diagnosis domestic abuse refuge for women with mental health and substance misuse issues
- Post pandemic emerging issues

- Explore the commissioning options for increasing provision available for the LGBTQ+ community
- Explore a regional dispersed unit / refuge for male survivors / fleeing domestic abuse
- PIE (Psychological Informed Environments) – embedding this into our services

In 2021/22 the following priorities have been commissioned from the regional funded pot:

- ✓ LGBTQ+ Training
- ✓ Bespoke Mental Health and Housing Training
- ✓ Regional hoarding project
- ✓ Advanced Homelessness Law Training

The following table outlines progression made against each priority area from 2021/22's plan.

LGBTQ+ Training	<p>This was identified as a need across the region to broaden understanding and awareness to ensure officers are confident to support people that identify as LGBTQ+. The training was available to both HSG and Homeless local authority staff and external providers.</p> <p>Training was commissioned via Denbighshire's young people project in Rhyl with Viva. Further dates were added and paid for due to popularity and feedback of this training.</p> <p>A review of the training and evaluation forms from the Trainer are due May 2022.</p>
Mental Health and Housing Training	<p>Expressions of interest went out to providers in August 2021, the contract was awarded to Hafan Cymru. The first training dates started in November 2021 with dates up until April 2022.</p> <p>This was booked for 300 participants and was aimed specifically for local authority housing officers, housing options staff, tenancy support and welfare officers.</p> <p>Once all dates have been completed, a review of the training and evaluation forms will be completed and the possibility of additional dates to widen this training out to providers in 2022/23 will be explored.</p>
Regional hoarding project	<p>The HSG officers have collaborated with the North Wales Regional Hoarding Group to initiate a regional project that will include a coordinator post and hoarding officers to provide consistency with approach across the region and a dedicated team to support those who hoard.</p> <p>Work has commenced and hope to have people recruited by Summer 2022.</p>
Dual diagnosis domestic abuse refuge	<p>The RHSCG raised this as a gap in provision and shared the feedback we had received on lack of provision when compiling last year's RHSCG work plan with the Vulnerability and Exploitation Board. The Vulnerability and</p>

	<p>Exploitation Board were awarded capital funding specifically for dispersed units.</p> <p>Following an expression of interest exercise 3 dispersed units were awarded to two Providers in Conwy, and support will be funded by HSG in Conwy.</p> <p>All 3 units are now available for occupation.</p>
Post pandemic emerging issues	<p>The North Wales Regional Homelessness Strategy 2018-22 Group commissioned an external researcher to assess the current homelessness needs from the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The researcher interviewed local authority housing colleagues, providers and external providers and service users receiving housing support grant services.</p> <p>The report presented many key themes for authorities to consider for their four yearly strategies and the themes from the report were used as a basis for consulting with Providers and Service Users for the wider consultation of the local authorities Housing Support Grant strategies.</p>
Advanced Homelessness Law Training	<p>Shelter Cymru have been commissioned to provide the Advanced Homelessness Law training. This has been made available regionally to statutory team members in each authority. Dates in the diary of April and May 2022.</p>

Priorities outstanding from 2021:

- Explore the commissioning options for increasing provision available for the LGBTQ+ community
- Explore a regional dispersed unit / refuge for male survivors / fleeing domestic abuse
- PIE (Psychological Informed Environments) – embedding this into our services

Work has commenced on the above; and will continue to form part of the priorities for 2022/23. A work plan will be available at each RHSCG meeting updating on progress this can be obtained from the Regional Development Coordinator. Contact details in appendix one.

### Objectives for 2022-23

For the next twelve months, the RHSCG has identified regional priorities for its work plan against the HSG guidance categories on regional working:

- Cat 1) Development of specialist services for which there is not a critical mass locally
- Cat 2) Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale
- Cat 3) Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration
- Cat 4) Collaboration with other public services.

The RHSCG regional priority areas for 2022-23

**Cat 1: Development of specialist services**

Our North Wales service user feedback questionnaire and the local authorities HSG housing needs assessment data will highlight gaps in service provision.

Through the VAWDASV Commissioning Board the following will be raised as a priority of the RHSCG and a current gap in HSG service provision for the Vulnerability and Exploitation Board to work collaboratively with the HSG grant for:

**VAWDASV:**

- Explore regional dispersed unit / refuge for male survivors of domestic abuse
- Explore specialist refuge for dual diagnosis (Mental Health and Substance Misuse)
- Explore supported Housing specific for survivors of domestic abuse, to be disaggregated and separated from traditional provision of domestic abuse type services.
- Explore how we can access more funding for domestic abuse perpetrator schemes.
- Need for more safe houses for victims of domestic abuse, as an alternative to refuges, and safe house provision to accommodate disabilities.

**Cat 2: Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale**

**Continuation of regionally funded projects:**

The RHSCG will continue to contribute to the Collaborative Outreach Services. This is a regional project commissioned jointly with the area planning board for the North Wales.

The RHSCG will contribute for another year for the jointly commissioned Independent Domestic Violence Advisors with VAWDASV and OPCC funding. Another years funding has also been committed for target hardening Equipment.

**LGBTQ+ Provision:**

The RHSCG will finalise exploring the need to increase LGBTQ+ provision across North Wales. A data analysis will be completed and service user feedback will be undertaken to illustrate demand.

**Cat 3: Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration**

The RHSCG will continue to build links where a housing support is an element of another regional agenda and ensure there is collaboration and partnership working at a regional level to deliver improvements to services. Each local authority will be submitting a Rapid Rehousing Action Plan in June 2022, the RHSCG recognises there will be commonalities across the region where together an action under the Rapid Rehousing Plans can be progressed collaboratively.

**Early intervention:**

The HSG leads will be exploring for the RHSCG how we can ensure services are operating a psychologically informed environment approach. This is essentially a culture shift we are prioritising to embed trauma informed provision. The HSG leads will revisit discussions already taken place with the All Wales ACE Hub; previous discussions have been for two local authorities to pilot this project; this will be revisited in 2022/23.



**Workforce Development:**

Workforce development will be at the forefront of the RHSCG as we enter into the new financial year. The RHSCG will explore commissioning online roadshows to promote the sector, work collaboratively to seek ways to boost the recruitment sector within HSG.

It is essential for the RHSCG to prioritise the staff we have now, the RHSCG has gathered best practice from authorities and will continue to have as an agenda item to gather ideas from across the region and different sectors RHSCG members represent.

**Renting Homes Wales Act 2022:**

The implementation of the new Renting Homes Wales Act from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 will affect social and private landlords and tenants. To ensure the transition to be as smooth as possible for the Housing sector; the Housing Support Grant leads have commissioned training that is bespoke. This will include delivery of two training programmes, an overview that is tailored to housing and a specialist training package to assist with this transition. This has been commissioned regionally.

**Cat 4: Collaboration with other public services.**

The RHSCG will continue to improve links with the RPB and other regional boards / partnerships where there is a housing linkage / agenda.

**Mental Health:**

Strengthening links with Mental Health services has historically been an area to improve, HSG funded services are predominantly dealing with complex people with multiple presenting mental health needs where the linkage with Mental Health is required to assist this isn't always available and puts immense pressure on staff and the persons overall mental health and wellbeing.

A future RHSCG meeting will be dedicated to this agenda to tackle what the gaps and needs are to enhance partnership working, with the service users at the centre of this priority.

The previous bespoke Mental Health and Housing Training that was commissioned, will also be discussed as to whether this can be funded to provide training to Providers across North Wales, as initially this was local authority training to HSG and Housing teams.

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Future standard agenda items at the RHSCG will include the following:

- Updates against this Annual Statement work plan (appendix two)
- Updates on the Homeless Prevention Grant and lack of funding to projects across the region
- Rapid Rehousing
- Renting Homes Wales Act
- Workforce Development
- Ukraine Resettlement
- Service User Input

As previously mentioned the Redistribution funding formula on the HSG grant will continue as a priority within our work plan, a communication plan has been agreed at RHSCG and will be shared once an announcement is shared by Welsh Government.

The RHSCG will continue to have Rapid Rehousing as a standard agenda item going forward. It is crucial we use this platform to share the regions journey in progressing towards each authorities Rapid Rehousing Plans due June 2022.

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For any further information regarding the RHSCG please contact the Regional Development Coordinator, contact details are available in the appendix where the membership of the RHSCG has been shared.

Appendix One – Membership of the RHSCG

RHSCG Membership	Organisation / Service represented	Lead
Local Authority Strategic lead for Housing Support Grant	Anglesey	Elliw Llyr
	Gwynedd	Hedd Tomos
	Conwy <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	Sam Parry
	Denbighshire	Ann Lloyd
	Flintshire	Martin Cooil
	Wrexham	Shirley Jones and Tracy Hague
Provider Representatives appointed by Cymorth Cymru (four providers and 2 landlords to equal the local authorities)	North Wales Housing	Lynne Evans (Vice Chair)
	Digartref <b>CHAIR</b>	Wendy Hughes
	Clwyd Alyn	Linda Hughes (landlord rep)
	Hafan Cymru	Emma Wood
	Grwp Cynefin	Gwenan Ellis (landlord rep)
Mental Health Representative	BCUHB	Phil Forbes
Probation Representative	North Wales Probation Service	Charlotte Davies
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Representative	OPCC	Hannah Roberts
Substance Misuse Area Planning Board (APB) Representative	APB	Paul Firth
VAWDASV Board Representative (Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence)	VAWDASV Team	Elwen Roberts
Private Rented Sector Representative	NRLA (National Residential Landlords Association)	Tim Thomas
Advisory Members - Housing Support Grant Lead Officers and Lead officers for the RHSCG Sub Group	Anglesey	Arwel Jones
	Gwynedd	Gwyn Roberts

NORTH WALES REGIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT COLLABORATIVE GROUP

	Conwy	Debbie Lambe
	Denbighshire	Claire Owens
	Flintshire	Lisa Pearson
	Wrexham	Debbie Williams
Regional Development Coordinator (RDC)	North Wales RDC	Rachel Pierce-Jones <a href="mailto:Rachel.pierce-jones3@conwy.gov.uk">Rachel.pierce-jones3@conwy.gov.uk</a> 01492 574234



# OUR PEOPLE'S STORIES

2022

This document includes six case studies from across the North Wales authorities. These are stories from people who have received housing related support in temporary accommodation to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Support provided from the Housing Support Grant

What is the Housing Support Grant? ..... 2

What is housing related support?..... 2

The grant allocation for North Wales ..... 2

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Welcome to Our People's Stories for 2022, an updated paper on the 2020 publication presenting six case studies from people who have received a Housing Support Grant funded service whilst in temporary accommodation.

This document embraces six case studies from each authority, each presented in the same format and the cost of the support is included for all. The names have been changed for data protection and confidentiality. All illustrate the service and support they have received whilst in temporary accommodation.

### What is the Housing Support Grant?

The Housing Support Grant (HSG) is a grant mechanism which funds part of an overall Housing Support Programme that incorporates both the statutory homelessness duty funded through the revenue settlement and the non-statutory housing support preventative services funded through the **HSG**. Viewing both as a whole allows Wales to take a systematic approach to reducing homelessness and the impact of homelessness and unstable housing.

North Wales fund thee most remarkable Providers of housing related support across the region, yes six are named in this document illustrating the support they have delivered, however; for this document the North Wales authorities would like to give thanks to all providers they fund from HSG, for the daily life changing work they do to prevent people from becoming homeless.

### What is housing related support?

Our housing related support services across North Wales helps people flee and be free from domestic abuse, improves people's mental health, reduces alcohol and drug use, keeps people away from the criminal justice system, and enables older people to remain independent in their home, to name but a few.

The grant helps support vulnerable people to address the, sometimes, multiple, problems they face, such as debt, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, violent against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and mental health issues.

### The grant allocation for North Wales

The Housing Support Grant for Wales was allocated an additional 40million pounds for the financial year 2021-22, following a bid by officials in Welsh Government. This increase to the 2021-22 HSG budget was in recognition of the investment that is needed to end homelessness, with the additional funding coming from the Welsh Government's core budget, rather than from a Covid-19 related budget.

The grant allocation came with confirmation that the following two years have been confirmed by Welsh Government that this will be the grant allocation for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

The table below shows how significant the increase was to each local authority's allocation:

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Wrexham	£6,721,499.09	£5,109,262
North Wales	<b>£40,926,076.85</b>	£31,109,437

HSG aims for effective early intervention to prevent problems escalating and ending up on Social Services, Health or the Criminal Justice System doorstep. The programme helps prevent problems from escalating to mainstream services.

### Preventing costs to mainstream services

This section illustrates the costs saved to mainstream services when preventative work such as the Housing Support Grant is administering the support early to prevent problems accelerating. The figures with the \* have been derived from the unit cost database which was developed as part of work under the Investment Agreement and Partnerships Exemplar project to produce a framework to assist local partners in reforming the way they deliver public services in England in 2019. The project was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Troubled Families Unit, and delivered by Greater Manchester and Birmingham City Council. Work to develop and update the database is being undertaken by the GMCA Research Team (formerly New Economy), with support from a number of government departments.

The costs without the \* have been taken from the 'Costs and Benefits of the Supporting People Programme, executive summary in 2006'. This study follows on from the Benefits Realisation of the Supporting People Programme study conducted for England (ODPM, 2004), also undertaken by Matrix.

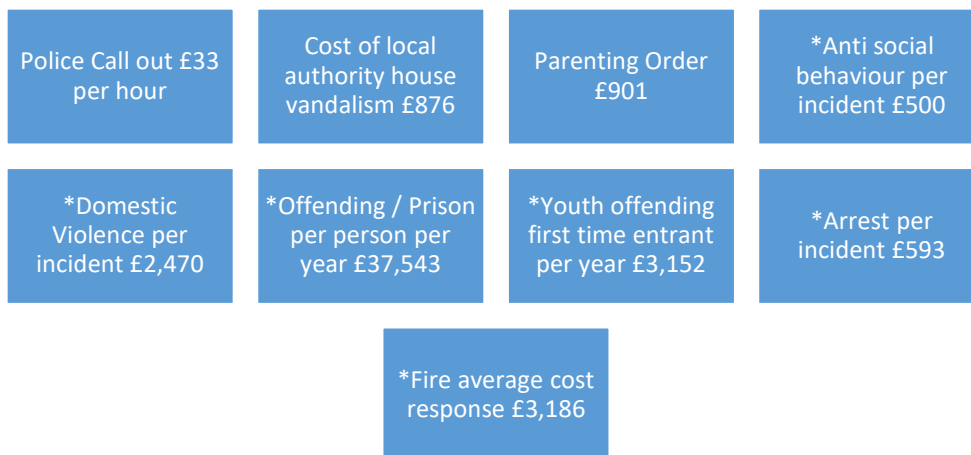
The figures, therefore, are very approximate and may vary slightly in Wales. However, they are for illustration purposes only to illustrate the cost of services when early intervention and prevention programmes are not in place.



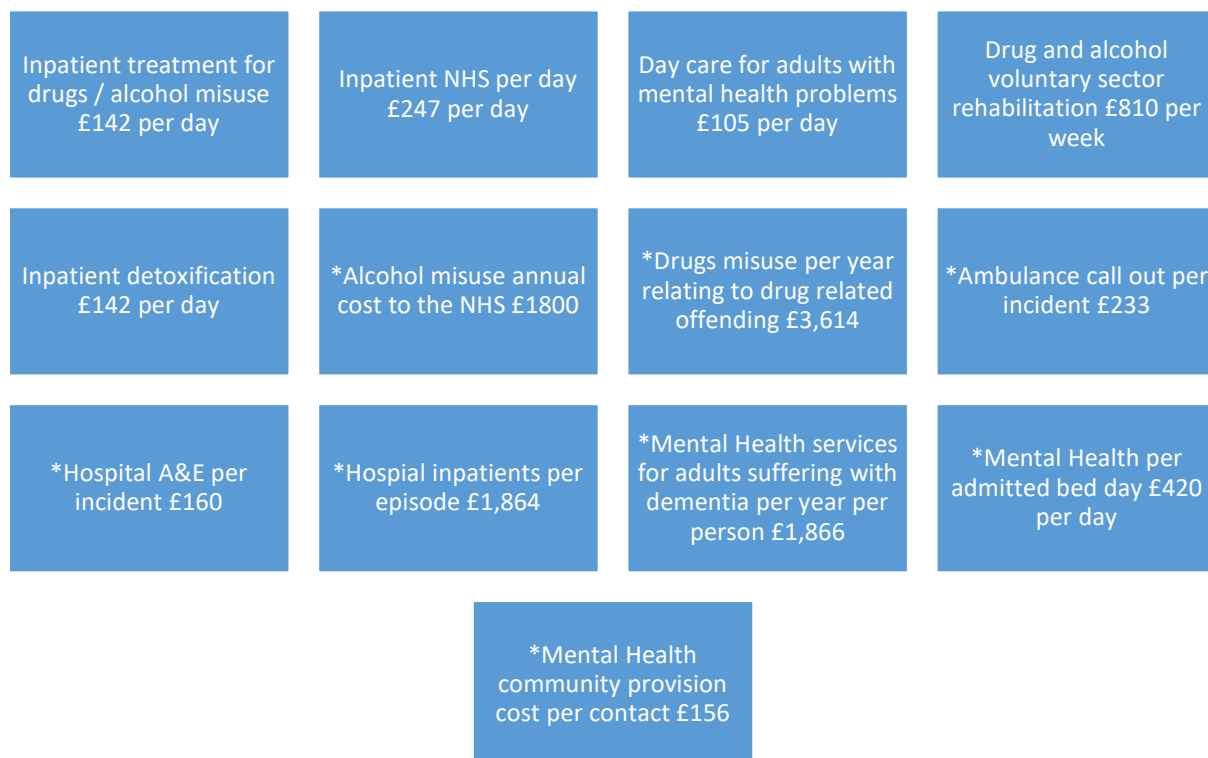
## OUR PEOPLE'S STORIES

These are the costs that Health, Social Services and the Criminal Justice services have to pick up when early intervention is not in place, or when people simply refuse the help and it escalates to this level.

### Crime:



### Health:



## OUR PEOPLE'S STORIES

### Social Services:

Social Care Child being taken into care (LA Foster Care) £6,036 plus £1,898 per month	Child Protection Plan £6,186 plus £381 per month	*Adult residential / Nursing Care per week £403
*Intermediate social care per person £5,965	*Reablement per person £2,261	*Adults with Mental Health support needs in residential care support only £587 per week

### Housing:

Informal intervention cost to Local Authority £87.82	Legal Action £3,745	Nuisance Behaviour - legal action to local authority £16,830
Nuisance behaviour Eviction £7,072	Notice of seeking possession £766.00	*Complex eviction per incident £6,680
*Homelessness Application per application £2,501	*Homelessness rough sleepers annual local authority cost £7,900	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671

The work of the Housing Support Grant is crucial, the following pages are real life stories from people receiving HSG funded support whilst in temporary accommodation in North Wales. These case studies in the following pages evidence the significant impact the programme has on our communities.

[Case Studies pages 6-17](#)

For some readers these true events may be difficult for some to read.

Anglesey

John, age 34

**Project Information - Housing First.** The Housing First service on Anglesey provides intense floating support to people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

**Personal History**

John is an ex-marine who had been working as a paramedic for a number of years. He lost his license to practice due to drug addiction to Heroin and has a criminal case pending.

John become homeless due a relationship breakdown. John has left the family home and his children. John received a placement in temporary accommodation as he was unable to live in shared accommodation due to his anxiety and inability to cope with the social dynamics.

John has also recently been discharged from a psychiatric ward following a suicide attempt.

**Support Received**

John was referred to the Housing First internal counselling service which he states benefited him and was able to make decisions he had been finding hard to make.

John was then supported to enrol on an electrician level 2 college course and was supported to secure funding to study and was supported to work with the DWP so his benefits could remain in place, and was supported to apply for PIP which he was awarded.

It was his decision to learn a trade as a backup but his main goal was to get his paramedic licence back. In order to get the licence back he would have to satisfy the HPCC that he could abstain from substances, improve his mental health and to settle the criminal case that was pending.

John later moved to another temporary property, near where his college course was based and closer to his children. John began to have his children stay with him and continued with his course.

**Outcomes**

John's criminal case against him has now ended and he was found innocent. John had his HPCC licence reinstated and via the testing funded through his Individual Budget, John proved 12 months of abstinence from all opiates and Benzos.

John is now close to being a qualified electrician and has secured paid work with council maintenance.

**The Future**

John's goals were to gain education, work, improve his mental health and have a better relationship with his children.

John has achieved these goals and is now working towards moving to another part of the country once he finishes college and is fully qualified.

John feels he will have the freedom to choose which career path he follows and will have more options.

“John is an example of what can be achieved when a person has dedication drive and works proactively with all support available. He has worked very hard to get where he is today”

## Costs prevented / escalating to other services:

Inpatient treatment for drugs / alcohol misuse £142 per day	Inpatient NHS per day £247 per day	Day care for adults with mental health problems £105 per day	Drug and alcohol voluntary sector rehabilitation £810 per week
Inpatient detoxification £142 per day	*Alcohol misuse annual cost to the NHS £1800	*Adults with Mental Health support needs in residential care support only £587 per week	*Homelessness Application per application £2,501
	*Homelessness rough sleepers annual local authority cost £7,900	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671	

## Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£135.77 per week**

“You were there at a time I needed help, I can't believe how much support is there when needed. One thing I would change is making sure everyone knows these services exist”

Gwynedd

Robert, age 56

**Project Name – Gorwel.** Gorwel support complex clients with multiple support needs who are homeless or at threat of becoming homeless. They support people with numerous support needs. A lot of clients are prison leavers and have often substance misuse issues and are current or ex drug addicts.

**Personal History**

Robert came to our services after leaving prison and was seeking accommodation on his release from custody. Robert was given temporary accommodation away from his normal area as he had been involved with county lines and that's what resulted in his imprisonment.

Robert wanted to move to a different area away from this as he was scared they would target him again. He wanted support to ensure he got to his probation meetings, Mental Health appointments and GP appointments.

Robert also has children involved with Social services and wanted support to work with them to see his children. Robert didn't have a good relationship with his immediate family either so was isolated where he was placed.

**Support Received**

Gorwel supported Robert to be put on the social housing register and ensured the areas of choice were correct as he couldn't go back to some areas due to concerns for his safety with county lines.

Gorwel supported Robert to ensure he was available to the Community Mental Health Team. Robert was diagnosed with anxiety and depression and wanted support from the CMHT for this. Robert was supported to register with the local GP to get his medication for his Anxiety and Depression. Gorwel also helped Robert have someone attend appointments with him as he wasn't comfortable attending alone.

Due to his chaotic nature and use of drugs at times Robert didn't know what appointments he had. Missing these appointments could have had detrimental effects on his situation and also get him into trouble. Gorwel would often liaise with other services to ensure Robert knew what was going on, where and when.

**Outcomes**

Robert has started to engage well with all services; Probation, Social Services (with his children), GP appointments and SMS appointments and engages well with them.

Robert is much more stable and maintaining a good working partnership with these services and this was not the case before support.

**The Future**

Robert is doing well and is not long before he should be offered a secure tenancy via social housing in the areas of his choice where he will be happy.

Robert would like to work and keep a steady job and be able to see his children on a regular basis and in the future possibly get custody of his children back. If he continues to work well with Social Services and other agencies he might be able to do this.

Robert would like to be clean of drugs and this is something he is working towards currently and getting the support to enable him to do this in the near future.

Robert was referred to Gorwel by Probation Service as he didn't fit anyone's criteria for intense support like Gorwel provide. Probation said that he needed intense support after his release from custody or he would find it very difficult to develop personally and maintain support from all services needed to get better.

There are a lot of people that need this type of support that the Housing Support Grant fund.

## Costs prevented / escalating to other services:

Police Call out £33 per hour	*Offending / Prison per person per year £37,543	*Arrest per incident £593	Inpatient treatment for drugs / alcohol misuse £142 per day
Day care for adults with mental health problems £105 per day	Drug and alcohol voluntary sector rehabilitation £810 per week	*Alcohol misuse annual cost to the NHS £1800	*Drugs misuse per year relating to drug related offending £3,614
*Mental Health per admitted bed day £420 per day	Child Protection Plan £6,186 plus £381 per month	*Adults with Mental Health support needs in residential care support only £587 per week	Legal Action £3,745
	*Homelessness Application per application £2,501	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671	

## Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£169.51 per week**

Conwy

Shaun, age 22

**Project Name – Nacro.** This project supports Prison leavers, people with substance misuse and alcohol addiction, mental health issues and vulnerable adults.

**Personal History**

Shaun has been moved from the family home owing to an investigation into the possession of illegal images on his mobile phone. Shaun has younger siblings, hence the decision to move him into a B&B whilst the investigation takes place. Shaun doesn't like meeting new people and avoids situations where he is required to engage.

Shaun had never lived away from home prior to this and was unable to manage his own affairs, including money. Shaun initially struggled to engage but over time, he began to feel more comfortable and able to share things that he had not felt able to discuss when living at the family home, notably, concerns he had around the control his Mum had over him, particularly, his financial affairs. It became apparent that his Mum had access to his benefits and income from his employment. Being able to share this information was empowering for Shaun and in his words, he felt in control of his own life for the first time.

Shaun had rarely visited his GP; this again was a decision that his Mum controlled. When we discussed this, he felt he would benefit from seeing his GP, to see if he could be referred for an assessment for Autism.

**Support Received**

Appointments were made to see his Work Coach and his GP. Shaun also agreed that a referral to Vulnerable Adults was appropriate based on his situation.

Shaun was also happy for Nacro to liaise with the Homeless Prevention team, in order to help him explore his long-term housing options. For now, Shaun feels safe, comfortable and happy at the guesthouse.

After a joint visit to his GP, Shaun has been referred to the mental health team for an assessment and a referral to Autism specialist.

The housing team are exploring the possible need for supported living, which Shaun feels would be very useful. This will progress, depending on the outcome of his investigation.

**Outcomes**

Shaun is now in control of his own finances and is beginning to make appointments for himself, with services such as the Job Centre and is exploring employment options.

Shaun would very much like to return to work at the animal sanctuary and we are investigating the option of volunteering there now his work placement has ended.

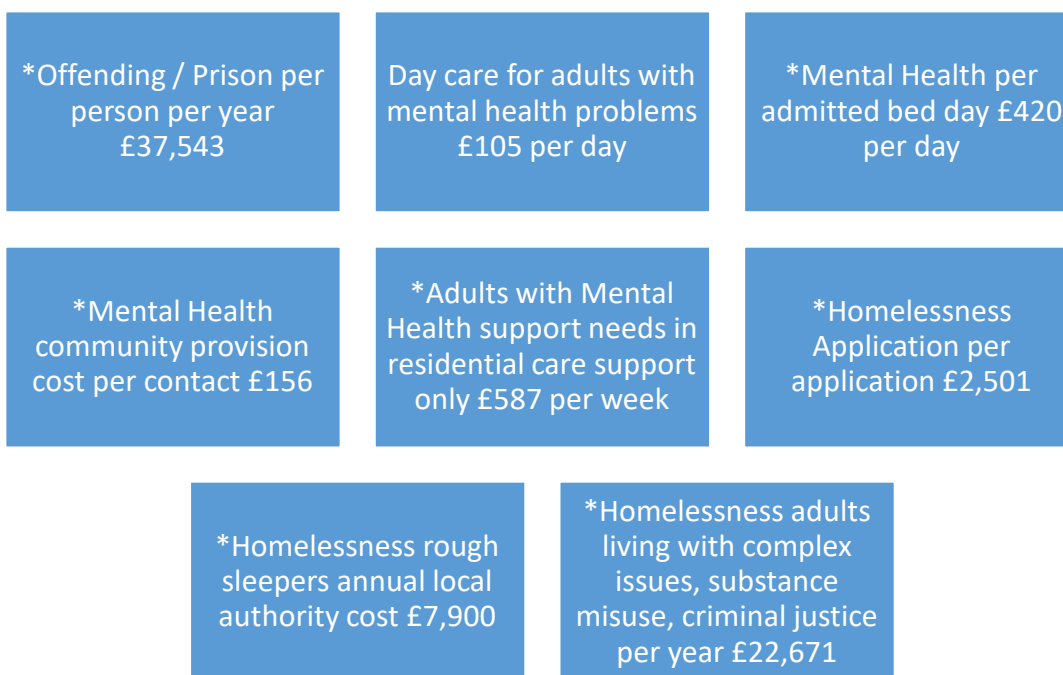
Shaun is now in control of his benefits and his Mum no longer has access to his finances. Because Shaun feels more in control of his decisions now and less at the mercy of his Mum's financial control, he feels he can visit Mum on his terms and is finding that this has improved their relationship.

**The Future**

Shaun would like to work with animals. We are working with a voluntary organisation who will help him explore his options once the investigation has been drawn to a conclusion.

“For Shaun I have seen immense progress. He could barely utter a word to me when we first met, in our last meeting, he spoke for over 30 minutes. He was animated and far less lethargic, which was always something he struggled with. Shaun is developing his independence for the first time in his adult life and becoming more confident in his decision making”

### Costs prevented / escalating to other services:



### Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£62.00 per week**



Denbighshire

Ezra, age 48

**Project Name – Clwyd Alyn over 25's.** Support people at risk of eviction, pre tenancy, rough sleepers, prison leavers, and individual in temporary accommodation.

**Personal History**

Ezra was street homeless and had been for three years. Ezra had spent 18 years of his life in and out of prison. Ezra was using crack cocaine and heroin and other substances up until a year ago. Ezra is now on a methadone programme.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Ezra remained on the streets, he was offered temporary accommodation however due to the location he felt he had to refuse it as this is where his addictions and criminal activity started.

Ezra would spend his days outside the local supermarket, his nights were spent in a tent by a local castle. Ezra was well known by the police and other agencies, when the referral came to me the only place I could do the support was at the side of the supermarket on the floor with him until he was ready for temporary accommodation.

**Support Received**

Ezra received intense support with regarding resettlement into the community. Ezra received support with managing money; together we have completed an income and expenditure predicting the average monthly cost to run a home and live independently.

Ezra has been supported with a new GP as his GP was in a town that was too risky for him to go.

Ezra was well known for his criminal activity within the community, the community can now see that he is trying and are now supporting him with his journey.

We have worked towards an active and healthy lifestyle Ezra enjoys walking when he is not in too much pain he was eating healthy even when on the streets prior to agreeing to accommodation.

**Outcomes**

Ezra has now moved into temporary accommodation and is being supported by a support provider.

**The Future**

Ezra is proof that with the correct support, belief, encouragement and a resettlement programme; goals can be achieved even if at times the goal posts move a little.

However at times he says he does get lonely, he still goes and sits at the supermarket, but this time to chat to people and tell them his journey.

Homelessness is not just about finding a property and putting the individual in it. Resettlement is the key and Ezra is happy now.

### Costs prevented / escalating to other services:

Inpatient treatment for drugs / alcohol misuse £142 per day	Day care for adults with mental health problems £105 per day	Drug and alcohol voluntary sector rehabilitation £810 per week	Inpatient detoxification £142 per day
*Alcohol misuse annual cost to the NHS £1800	*Drugs misuse per year relating to drug related offending £3,614	*Mental Health per admitted bed day £420 per day	*Homelessness Application per application £2,501
	*Homelessness rough sleepers annual local authority cost £7,900	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671	

### Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£57.84 per week**

Flintshire

Terry, age 42

**Project Name – Accommodation Support within the Flintshire Housing Solutions Teams.** This project provides temporary accommodation to those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

**Personal History**

Terry presented after a relationship breakdown. Terry had a long history of substance misuse, and alcohol dependency, but had lost contact with his substance misuse worker. Terry also suffered with his Mental Health, Anxiety and Depression.

**Support Received**

During his 10 weeks support at the hostel Terry was supported with re-establishing contact and support from his substance misuse worker.

Terry was supported with his referral to CAB. Terry did not receive the correct benefits, and was unaware he was eligible for PIP due to medical condition – Terry engaged with this service and his PIP claim was reinstated.

Terry was assisted with Foodbank requests and cooking on a budget until his benefits were in place. Terry received support with a referral for Mental Health agency, which he engaged well and signed up with a volunteering project in the local area.

Terry was also assisted with Discretionary Assistance Fund application for household goods once he had been offered a Council Starter tenancy.

**Outcomes**

Terry secured a Council Starter Tenancy through Flintshire’s Rapid Rehousing. Support received to ensure smooth transition.

Terry stated his relationship with ex-partner was toxic and volatile, and at times says he felt like ending his own life.

His alcohol abuse brought on seizures, due to the stressful situation he was under.

These seizures were more frequent resulting in numerous ambulance call outs.

Terry had rebuilt his relationship with his young daughter due to having a suitable property of his own.

Terry’s seizures began to reduce as he was in a stable environment.

## Costs prevented / escalating to other services:

Inpatient NHS per day £247 per day	Day care for adults with mental health problems £105 per day	*Ambulance call out per incident £233	*Hospital A&E per incident £160
*Mental Health per admitted bed day £420 per day	Inpatient treatment for drugs / alcohol misuse £142 per day	Drug and alcohol voluntary sector rehabilitation £810 per week	*Alcohol misuse annual cost to the NHS £1800
*Drugs misuse per year relating to drug related offending £3,614	*Homelessness Application per application £2,501	*Homelessness rough sleepers annual local authority cost £7,900	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671

## Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£48.07 per week**

Wrexham

Megan, aged 40

**Project name – The Wallich**, which supports people with complex needs who often have chaotic lifestyles and may be at risk or experiencing homelessness.

**Personal History**

Megan used drugs at the age of 17 for recreational use, which grew into an addiction of several illegal substances including Heroin, Cocaine, and Benzodiazepines.

Her youngest children were taken into social services care, which led to a break down and attempted suicide. After several attempts of detox and rehab there was a family breakdown which resulted in Megan having no support and became street homeless. To fund her addiction, she turned to prostitution making herself vulnerable to street life.

**Support Received**

Megan was referred to substance misuse services. Megan was supported with meetings to discuss her physical and mental health.

Megan received support with budgeting and her finances including benefits.

Megan received support to re-engage with family and build trust as a family unit.

Megan had support and assistance with housing applications with Wrexham Council and all other housing associations in the area.

Megan was supported and introduced to the harm reduction team to help keep her safe from STD's and learn about keeping herself safe.

**Outcomes**

Megan has drastically reduced her substance use, she no longer injects keeps to her methadone script and is reducing that also, and can now choose to use or not.

Megan has a good relationship with all her family now. Megan keeps herself safe from STD's letting others within her close circle know her whereabouts.

Megan is positive that she will have her own home again and is very proactive in keeping all her housing applications updated. She now enjoys days of creative arts and crafts.

Megan would like to be permanently housed within the Wrexham area to be close to her mum and son who she sees daily with the hope that she can have her son stay over again one day.

Megan's reduction plan involves having monthly injections which will take away the daily methadone pick up which is a trigger to use.

Megan was very unsure of the support she would receive when moving in but says she feels safe and now trusts her support team that they have her best interest in mind.

## Costs prevented / escalating to other services:

Police Call out £33 per hour	Parenting Order £901	Inpatient treatment for drugs / alcohol misuse £142 per day	Inpatient NHS per day £247 per day
Drug and alcohol voluntary sector rehabilitation £810 per week	Inpatient detoxification £142 per day	*Alcohol misuse annual cost to the NHS £1800	*Drugs misuse per year relating to drug related offending £3,614
*Ambulance call out per incident £233	*Hospital A&E per incident £160	Social Care Child being taken into care (LA Foster Care) £6,036 plus £1,898 per month	Child Protection Plan £6,186 plus £381 per month
*Homelessness Application per application £2,501	*Homelessness rough sleepers annual local authority cost £7,900	*Homelessness adults living with complex issues, substance misuse, criminal justice per year £22,671	

## Weekly cost of Housing Support Grand funded service:

**£258.73 per week**

## Summary

These six case studies speak volume for the preventative and early intervention agenda the Housing Support Grant provides across North Wales. The grant has helped these people in our communities improve their quality of life, improve their health. For some of the case studies it has lessened dependence they had on families and helped strengthen family relations.

The support has given them hope again in their community, allowed them to participate again in their community. Support has helped them feel heard, and reduced isolation and given them stability to continue on their journey. The support the HSG offers can have a potential lifetime effect. Early intervention may have a lasting impact on re-offending, and substance misuse issues.

The grant has helped build stability in their families again which will have a huge impact on their child(ren) which we know from the Adverse Childhood Experiences will help give children a nurtured environment to grow.

Having early intervention programmes like the HSG is vital for individuals, families and communities.

## Acknowledgements

Thank You to all Providers across North Wales that sent across case studies for this document, in particular to the service users / providers that have had their stories shared in this document, and to all other providers who sent case studies across.

## Disclaimer

For the purpose of this document, service users' names have been change. The weekly cost for the case studies has been calculated by the annual Housing Support Grant contract amount, and then divided by 52 weeks and finally divided by the amount of units commissioned for that project.

## References

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-08/110608-costs-benefits-supporting-people-programme-summary-en.pdf>

[Research: Cost Benefit Analysis - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/research/cost-benefit-analysis-greater-manchester-combined-authority)

[More information / contact details](#)

For more information on the Housing Support Grant please visit the Welsh Government website where the guidance for the grant can be found. [Housing Support Grant | GOV.WALES](#)

The contact details for the local authority Housing Support Grant teams are:

Anglesey	<a href="mailto:SPOA@ynysmon.gov.uk">SPOA@ynysmon.gov.uk</a>	01248 751937
Gwynedd	<a href="mailto:GwynFoulkesRoberts@gwynedd.gov.uk">GwynFoulkesRoberts@gwynedd.gov.uk</a>	01286 682656
Conwy	<a href="mailto:sppathway@conwy.gov.uk">sppathway@conwy.gov.uk</a>	01492 574215
Denbighshire	<a href="mailto:homeless.prevention@denbighshire.gov.uk">homeless.prevention@denbighshire.gov.uk</a>	Freephone 0300 456 1000
Flintshire	<a href="mailto:housingsupportreferrals@flintshire.gov.uk">housingsupportreferrals@flintshire.gov.uk</a>	01352 703512
Wrexham	<a href="mailto:housingsupportgateway@wrexham.gov.uk">housingsupportgateway@wrexham.gov.uk</a>	01978 298812



## Case Study

### A

My client A was referred to our Flintshire Outreach support service due to poor mental and physical health. My client, who is 50 years old, lives with her partner and her dog. Both my client and partner are on a substance misuse programme that they both attend regularly together.

My client unfortunately incurred drug debt and has in the past been a victim of drug related violence. Because of this the local authority agreed to relocate her to a different town where she is not known.

Since working with A I have successfully supported her through the process of moving, notifying the correct people that her tenancy has ended in her 2 bed council house, and notifying the utilities , benefits and the local authority that she had successfully started a new tenancy in a new purpose built one bedroom flat in a different location.

A has been supported to successfully applied for a Discretionary Assistance Fund for a new electric cooker as her old one was gas and there is no gas supply to the new flat.

A has also received £200 of food vouchers for 4 of the main supermarkets that can be used on separate occasions, this was a grant applied for from charity Family Action who are a partner organisation to Adferiad Recovery.

I have also supported her in filling out her PIP form and I consequently supported her in person at her telephone assessment.

She is now settled in her new home but has incurred large expenses in moving and therefore I have applied to The Biscuit Fund to see if they will grant her a one off payment.

## Case Study

### B

When B came onto the project, she was homeless and sofa surfing at her mother's house. Her relationship with her family was strained and she was still using heroin. All of B's previous tenancies had failed mainly due to her chaotic lifestyle and a lack of support.

Since B has been in the Doorstop property she has started making much better, more informed decisions and having her own tenancy has allowed her to stop using illicit substances which also means that she has stopped associating with other drug users. As B is no longer using drugs she is no longer getting in trouble with the police and all of the anti-social behaviour has also ceased. B has now made friends with her neighbours, settled into her local area and feels safe in her own home.

With support B has learnt to manage her accommodation and tenancy very well, her property is always kept clean and tidy, her bills are always paid in full and on time and she is always available for any health and safety checks.

When B began her support with Nacro her physical health was poor, she had just had a major heart operation but had continued using drugs during and after the procedure. Her legs were completely ulcerated which left her unable to walk for more than a few minutes at a time.

Over the last 2 years B has engaged well with her surgeon, GP, SMS key-worker and district nurse well and attended all of her appointments and her physical health has improved massively. B has reduced her methadone script from 90ml daily to 27 ml before swapping her medication over to Espirinol for the final stages of her reduction plan. B has stopped using her pregabalins and even given up smoking. After over a year of district nurse appointments her legs have healed up really well and she is now able to walk much further without any pain and states that her physical health is the best it has been for years.

Managing relationships and engagement has always been an issue for B in the past and she has a young son who lives with foster parents in England. With support, B has really worked hard on her relationships and she now gets on very well with her family. She is having her son for overnight stays while she is being assessed by social services with a view to having full custody again. Her relationships with her support services has also improved and she engages extremely well with her key-workers and social services.

Both before and during the lockdown B has made meaningful use of her time and has taken responsibility herself to enrol on and attend educational and recreational courses and groups in the community and online. She has completed a level 2 Health and Social Care college course.

B has been supported to receive the correct benefits. She is now currently in receipt of UC and PIP which she manages very well on her own. TW does have outstanding rent arrears which in the past she would have ignored but she has made a conscious effort to clear all of her debts and has set up repayment plans for any monies owed.

B reached the point where she wanted to start working again and successfully applied for a part time job which she really enjoys. She was quickly promoted to a senior member of her team in work which she is very proud of.

Having been through the move on panel, she has just been offered her own tenancy in a 2 bed property. B is now 10 months pregnant now and in a long term relationship with her partner who she would eventually like to live with as a family unit. B is very excited about this and the prospect of potentially getting her son back and she sees it as the next stage in her life.

## Case Study

### C

C arrived at the Glanrafon Homeless Hub in mid 2022, after spending a period of time sleeping on a workshop floor for a few months. He had found himself homeless after an assault by a family member he had previously been living with. C felt too unsafe to remain with his family member and they have subsequently been charged with assault.

C's health took a decline while he was living the workshop as he was unable to control his diabetes and became malnourished due to having no cooking facilities and was unable to maintain a balanced diet to control his diabetic ketone levels, which were dangerously high when he arrived and was on the verge of being admitted to hospital.

During his time at the Homeless Hub C has been supported to use the kitchen facilities and has been issued a slow cooker to be able to cook and maintain a balanced diet in line with his diabetes requirements. This along with his medication has resulted in his Ketone levels stabilizing and a 3kg gain in weight.

Now C is more stable and settled he has been attending all his medical appointments. C now has regular appointments with a diabetic nurse to monitor his levels and adjust his medication. He has also been encouraged to attend appointments with audiology and now has new hearing aids, which has alleviated his fear of attending appointments, which he did not like doing because he got frustrated not being able to hear what was being said.

As well as his physical health, his mental health has improved substantially. He has been attending counselling sessions which have helped him process the trauma he experienced when assaulted by his brother. He is also less stressed now the court case has been dealt with.

C has also been supported to manage his finances and apply for all the relevant benefits. This has all resulted in a positive outcome for him. He is now ready to live independently and has had an offer of a property which he has accepted and is waiting for a move in date.

## Case Study

### D

D was referred to the project due to losing his previous accommodation, in Denbigh. But was in temporary accommodation in Connahs Quay. He had rent arrears with previous private landlady; He was unsure of the amount owed; staff supported him to contact the landlady to set up a payment plan.

Although he left messages and phoned her, he didn't receive any communication for months. So, he put the money aside each month, for when he could pay the rent arrears that he owed. which he adhered to; He also was paying off HB arrears from his previous tenancy which he paid off while at GBV fulfilling his debt within his stay here.

He was put forward for move on which was declined in the interim, but then when explained to FCC the situation regarding the rent arrears and he was put forward again and accepted on to Band 1. He is now waiting to hear about a property. D has engaged excellently since the beginning and showed early on that he is capable of independent living.

D felt quite low about the situation he had found himself in. Being in supported living. This was originally due to a relationship breakdown. At the time Barry was in a bad place in his life But being at GBV and having the support from the staff he feels he is in a much better place in his life. D said that he didn't suffer with depression, that he just felt low now and again. He didn't have outside agency intervention for this as he doesn't feel he needs it.

D has a few medical issues. He has diabetes, which he found difficult to find the right diet for him, staff supported him by printing off healthy diets for people with diabetes, he used a few recipes that staff have provided and eats more healthily now.

He has a back injury for which he is on prescribed medication for. But at times he does find it difficult to walk distances and especially upstairs. Staff supported him to apply and receive a bus pass as he is registered disabled. D had been supported in registering with a local GP he collects his medication on a weekly basis. He is also registered with a dental surgery, in the area. D was an active person in the past, but due to his physical health this isn't possible. He has helped family members with less strenuous jobs in their property, he feels he likes to stay active. But knows if he over does something he will be in a lot of pain.

D no longer has issues with drugs and alcohol. As he said this led to offending behaviour in his youth. He does have the occasional social drink with his son now and then. But states this isn't a problem.

D has worked well with staff, attending support. He respected everyone in the project, as they did him. He also keeps in contact with his family who he visited regularly. He has a good family network around him. He hopes to move to a property near them, so they can continue to support him.

## Case Study

### E

E self-referred to the service when they visited a community hub based at Salvation Army in Connah's Quay. E explained that their neighbour was making excessive noise at inappropriate times and made them feel uncomfortable in their own home. E didn't feel safe or comfortable at home.

E explained that they were living in a HMO and they worked early shifts which meant they needed to ensure they had enough sleep. Due to the noise, they had not been able to sleep properly and had been missing shifts and falling behind on the rent, putting them at risk of losing their home.

E also explained that they are autistic. They had not tried approaching their neighbour as they did not have the confidence to do so.

Staff explained about the Conflict Resolution Service and mediation to E, and E asked to be referred to the service. Staff advised E to contact their landlord to inform them of their situation and that they have been referred to the service.

After some thought E contacted their landlord and the landlord consented for staff to contact them. The landlord was unaware of the noise being made by the neighbours having a negative effect on E and was keen to make things right. The landlord proceeded to work with the neighbour and E to come to a solution and things improved.

E is now comfortable again at home and submitted a compliment to the service for the support received.

## Case Study

### F

I have worked with this gentleman for the past 18 months, I started to visit him on a weekly basis as a welfare visit. I was made aware by neighbours that he was a vulnerable person, and they said he didn't appear to be himself.

After several months F had the confidence to approach me on one of my visits, he stated that his bank account was empty and that he had spoken to the bank to request a new card. After being shown his bank statements it was clearly apparent that he was victim of fraud. After several hours of speak to his bank, cancelling his card, going back over 12 months through his statements, and logging the fraud with the Police.

With support F managed to retrieve just over £4,000.00. We contacted Safeguarding and after 6 months of persistent emails and calls, I finally managed to secure specialist Social worker to look into F's long term Welfare.

I made a referral to Social Services to ask for assistance for F as he was asking me to assist him with reading his mail and making appointments for him. I had liaised with his GP surgery via calls and emails to get assistance as he was having issues with his balance. F has had several falls, one at a family wedding including numerous at home. It was clear that he hadn't had a review for his medication either for several years.

Since then I have assisted F with booking hospital appointments, Psychiatrist, mental health team to link back in, Chiropody, Community Nurse Assessment, and community transport. F has been having input from Occupational Therapy to ensure he has a ramp outside the front door to ensure he can access his community on his new scooter.

With support F has been liaising with the Housing Officer, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and the Police due to issues with his new neighbour around anti-social behaviour and dog fouling outside his patio door.

He's now open to Social Services and I am now in contact with his support worker from Safeguarding again as he has been a victim of fraud for the second time and I have suggested again that he requires an appointee to manage his finances.

Over the last 3 months we have been running the Warm Hubs and as F resides in his community. Due to his current mobility issues I have ensured and delivered to F a ready meals and soup on a daily basis.

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## COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Common Housing Register (Single Access Route to Housing – SARTH)
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing & Regeneration
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) is a partnership between all the major providers of social housing in North Wales, covering the local authority areas of Conwy County Borough, Denbighshire and Flintshire.

The Council manages the housing register on behalf of Flintshire's Social Housing Partners (Flintshire County Council, Clwyd Alyn Housing, Wales and West Housing, Grwp Cynefin and Adra Housing Association) and a single Common Housing Register provides the list of all eligible applicants for social housing.

This service to applicants includes the housing triage assessment, housing solutions triage for those who present as homeless or at risk of homelessness and a wide range of housing options advice. The service also manages all the applicants accepted onto the Common Housing Register once a clearly evidenced housing need has been identified. Only those applicants with a housing need are accepted onto the Housing Register, but all applicants benefit from housing options advice.

Numbers of applicants accepted onto the Common Housing Register has grown significantly over the past three years. This is putting increasing pressure on the administrative burden and management of the register and is also leading to increased wait times for the limited amount of social housing that is available each year. The report will outline the increases in housing needs and the disparity with the availability of social housing which is not increasing at the same rate as the levels of housing needs that are prevalent within our communities.

A customer survey has been undertaken to gauge customer experience, satisfaction with service delivery and opportunities for service improvements. This is informing a service improvement plan and will inform the future direction of delivery of the service with a focus on making the service more efficient and user friendly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To receive the report and note the significant increases in housing needs across the county and the growing pressures in regard to social housing which is not in line with the supply of available homes locally
2	To note the customer feedback following survey work and the progress in relation to opportunities for service improvement and in particular digital transformation

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER</b>
1.01	<p><b><u>Background to the Single Access Route To Housing Partnership</u></b></p> <p>SARTH is a partnership between all the major social landlords covering the local authority areas of Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire. Conwy is not a stock holding authority but both Denbighshire and Flintshire have social housing available through their Council Housing Departments.</p> <p>In addition to the above Councils, the partnership also includes Housing Associations; Cartrefi Conwy, Clwyd Alyn, Grwp Cynefin, North Wales Housing, Wales and West Housing and Adra. The SARTH partnership has been in place for over 10 years and is recognised as a strong partnership by all partners involved and externally by Welsh Government and other housing sector and public sector peers.</p> <p>An Operational Panel has been in place from the outset to maximise the benefit of collaboration through the SARTH partnership. The panel is formed of operational managers from each partner organisation. The panel meets monthly, and its primary purpose is to ensure consistency in the application of the policy across the three counties and to review complaints and appeals from applicants. The panel has been instrumental in addressing wider topics than the register such as approaches to changes in legislation and issues arising from welfare reform, Covid and more recently elements of the introduction of the Renting Homes Act 2016. The panel considers lessons learnt from appeals, complaints and identifies policy challenges. Issues are escalated as required for consideration of the SARTH steering group which is the “board” for the partnership.</p> <p>The SARTH Steering Group includes senior officer representatives from all partner organisations across all three counties. The group meets on a regular (at least quarterly) basis to serve as an escalation point for strategic issues arising out of the Operational Panel. The group has further strengthened partnership arrangements between housing organisations across the region and agreed spend and pooled resources enable the partnership to have budget for IT developments, training and staff support where necessary and data monitoring and policy compliance issues.</p>

	<p>Conwy and Flintshire were early adopters of SARTH. Approximately 7 years ago Flintshire were successful in bidding to deliver the Housing Register service for Denbighshire Council and have successfully managed the register for both Flintshire and Denbighshire since. In the last 12 months Denbighshire County Council have progressed a restructure of their housing and homeless services and have now made a strategic decision to bring the Housing Register function back in house. This will happen as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and handover work is well progressed.</p>
1.02	<p><b>The Common Allocations Policy</b></p> <p>All partners work within the framework of a shared or Common Allocations Policy. This policy identifies the main principles of the eligibility and prioritisation of applicants seeking social housing, as well as the allocation of social housing across the counties of Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire. Applicants who approach the Council applying for social housing are assessed through a housing triage. Only those applicants with a housing need are accepted onto the Register, but all applicants will receive housing options advice. Where it is possible to do so, housing help will be offered to overcome housing problems.</p> <p>The policy recognises that there is a high demand for social homes and too few vacant properties to meet demand. That was true when the policy was first developed, and now even more so, as evidenced in the charts within the housing needs data found within section 1.06 of this report. The numbers of applicants presenting with a wide range of housing needs is growing significantly and the availability of social housing during the same period has not increased at the same rate – indeed it has decreased significantly in recent years. Consequently, waiting times for rehousing are increasing as there are not enough homes to meet the growing demand.</p>
1.03	<p><b>Housing Options Advice</b></p> <p>The Housing Register Team provide the most useful, consistent, and accessible advice and information to everyone who approaches them looking for housing or presenting with a housing problem. It is intended that where possible fixing housing problems is the priority, to avoid the need for a move. Issues such as disrepair, financial problems, neighbour disputes may be addressed through advice and support and referrals to appropriately placed support services. This avoids disruption for households and reduces demand for the limited social housing that is available in the county.</p> <p>When a move is required, applicants are accepted onto the Common Housing Register and housing options advice is still offered, enabling customers to make the most informed choice about how to find a home to meet their needs. This advice covers a whole range of affordable housing options, including social housing options and locations, private rented accommodation, supported housing, extra care, home ownership and other affordable housing alternatives. The policy provides the following commitment:</p> <p><i>“All partners will allocate housing stock in a transparent, fair, consistent, and accessible way, which prioritises the people in our communities according to their housing needs and which meets our legal requirements.</i></p>

	<p><i>Working together in this way, partners can share strengths and good practice and place the customer at the heart of everything we do.”</i></p>
1.04	<p><b>Policy Development</b></p> <p>The Common Allocation Policy is principally governed by The Housing Act 1996 and the Code of Guidance for Homelessness and Allocations 2016 and Welsh Statutory Instruments 2014 No. 2603 (w. 257) – Housing Wales – The Allocation of Homelessness (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations 2014. Other relevant legislation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of Information Act 2000</li> <li>• Equalities Act 2010</li> <li>• Social Care and Well Being Act 2014</li> <li>• Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014</li> <li>• Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015</li> <li>• Renting Homes Wales Act 2016</li> </ul> <p>In recent years and as a direct response to the Covid pandemic and significant pressures on homelessness services following the “no one left out” directive from Welsh Government, a variation to the Common Allocations Policy by way of a 50% nominations to homeless households was introduced. Take up of the 50% quota for homeless households has always been well below 50% and the table below provides analysis of the offers made to homeless households through the homeless nominations process. The policy variation is intended to free up the limited resource of emergency and temporary housing and ensure local authorities can still fulfil their statutory duties through the provision of “interim housing (s.68 Housing Wales Act 2014).</p> <p>The tables below outline lettings data over a 4-year period from April 2019 to December 2023. The additional category of SARTH Homeless Direct Lets reflects the opportunity to utilise up to 50% of the available social housing stock to ease pressures on homelessness services within the three counties.</p>

### Allocations by Landlord and Category of Offer (Flintshire Register)

Tenancies Started Between 01/04/2019 and 31/03/2020

By Category Offer Code	Landlord	Number	Percentage
SARTH Banding Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	79	10.62%
	Flintshire CC	497	66.80%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	28	3.76%
	Wales And West Housing Association	67	9.01%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>90.19%</b>
SARTH Management Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	10	1.34%
	Flintshire CC	48	6.45%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	2	0.27%
	Wales And West Housing Association	13	1.75%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>9.81%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>744</b>	

### Allocations by Landlord and Category of Offer (Flintshire Register)

Tenancies Started Between 01/04/2020 and 31/03/2021

By Category Offer Code	Landlord	Number	Percentage
SARTH Banding Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	72	11.08%
	Flintshire CC	381	58.62%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	3	0.46%
	Wales And West Housing Association	34	5.23%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>75.38%</b>
SARTH Management Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	28	4.31%
	Flintshire CC	71	10.92%
	Wales And West Housing Association	13	2.00%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>17.23%</b>
SARTH Homeless Direct Let	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	11	1.69%
	Flintshire CC	22	3.38%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	1	0.15%
	Wales And West Housing Association	14	2.15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>7.38%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>650</b>	

### Allocations by Landlord and Category of Offer (Flintshire Register)

Tenancies Started Between 01/04/2021 and 31/03/2022

By Category Offer Code	Landlord	Number	Percentage
SARTH Banding Offer	Adra	2	0.32%
	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	62	9.92%
	Flintshire CC	333	53.28%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	7	1.12%
	Wales And West Housing Association	61	9.76%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>465</b>
SARTH Management Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	24	3.84%
	Flintshire CC	54	8.64%
	Wales And West Housing Association	17	2.72%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>95</b>
SARTH Homeless Direct Let	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	15	2.40%
	Flintshire CC	39	6.24%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	1	0.16%
	Wales And West Housing Association	10	1.60%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>65</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>625</b>	

### Allocations by Landlord and Category of Offer (Flintshire Register)

Tenancies Started Between 01/04/2022 and 31/12/2022

By Category Offer Code	Landlord	Number	Percentage
SARTH Banding Offer	Adra	4	1.00%
	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	23	5.74%
	Flintshire CC	198	49.38%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	3	0.75%
	Wales And West Housing Association	48	11.97%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>276</b>
SARTH Management Offer	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	5	1.25%
	Flintshire CC	27	6.73%
	Wales And West Housing Association	17	4.24%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>49</b>
SARTH Relationship Breakdown-Direct Let	Flintshire CC	3	0.75%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>0.75%</b>
SARTH Homeless Direct Let	Clwyd Alyn Housing Association	10	2.49%
	Flintshire CC	53	13.22%
	Grwp Cynefin Housing Association	1	0.25%
	Wales And West Housing Association	8	2.00%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>72</b>
SARTH Hard To Let Property (Direct Let)	Flintshire CC	1	0.25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>0.25%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>401</b>	

	<p>Without this policy change, the Councils expenditure on emergency and temporary housing would be far greater. However whilst this variation in policy has assisted with the homeless pressures during and post Covid period, it is of significant concern that when looking at the needs of households who are homeless or imminently homeless, single people and couples under the age of 55 account for approximately 80% of the current homeless cohort in emergency or temporary housing offered by Flintshire County Council Homeless Team.</p> <p>This disconnect between supply of social housing and the local homeless cohort profile is what accounts for the lower than permitted take up on the 50% homeless quota. With more families and older people (over 55s) experiencing homelessness this year than in 2020/2021 and more again in 2021/2022 the take up on the homeless nominations has been greater as there are more family homes and older person homes available than 1 bed general needs properties each year and more household are experiencing homelessness .</p>
1.05	<p><b>Future Policy Direction for Social Housing Allocations</b></p> <p>There are significant changes with regards to the guidance relating to the allocation of social housing on the back of Welsh Governments ambitions to end homelessness and adopt a Rapid Rehousing approach.</p> <p>As outlined in previous reports to Members in late 2022, the principles of Rapid Rehousing are as much about the prevention of homelessness through early intervention as it is about rehousing people who experience homeless. Welsh Government have supported the prevention agenda through significant investment in the Housing Support Grant (HSG) encouraging Councils and partners to support proactive approaches to ending homelessness.</p> <p>Whilst resources such as HSG are important, so are changes to homeless legislation (currently the Housing Wales Act 2014) and housing law through the introduction of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, with both pieces of legislation strongly supporting the homeless prevention agenda. Reforms and amended guidance on the allocation of social housing will also likely be required.</p> <p>It is expected that the future changes to allocations guidance may further strengthen the links between homelessness and social housing as a significant tool within the prevention and relief of homelessness.</p> <p>Whilst many positive things have been achieved through the increased access to social housing for people who have exited homelessness by securing social housing, there have been some challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of supply of the right types of homes in the right places</li> <li>• Refusals of offers from those who had been lined up to benefit</li> <li>• Issues of anti-social behaviour in some communities</li> <li>• Challenges around tenancy sustainment</li> <li>• Concerns over risk of increasing homeless presentation as a gateway to social housing</li> </ul>

- Complaints from other residents who experience even longer waiting times for social housing

Whilst not all of these issues have been significant concerns within Flintshire, the SARTH partnership is eager to review and reflect upon what has been achieved in recent years, but also to understand the impact so where needed lessons can be learnt, and successes built upon.

Consideration is being given to engaging in a piece of research to evaluate the 50% homeless nominations process and to use this evidence to inform future policy direction both local, regionally and nationally.

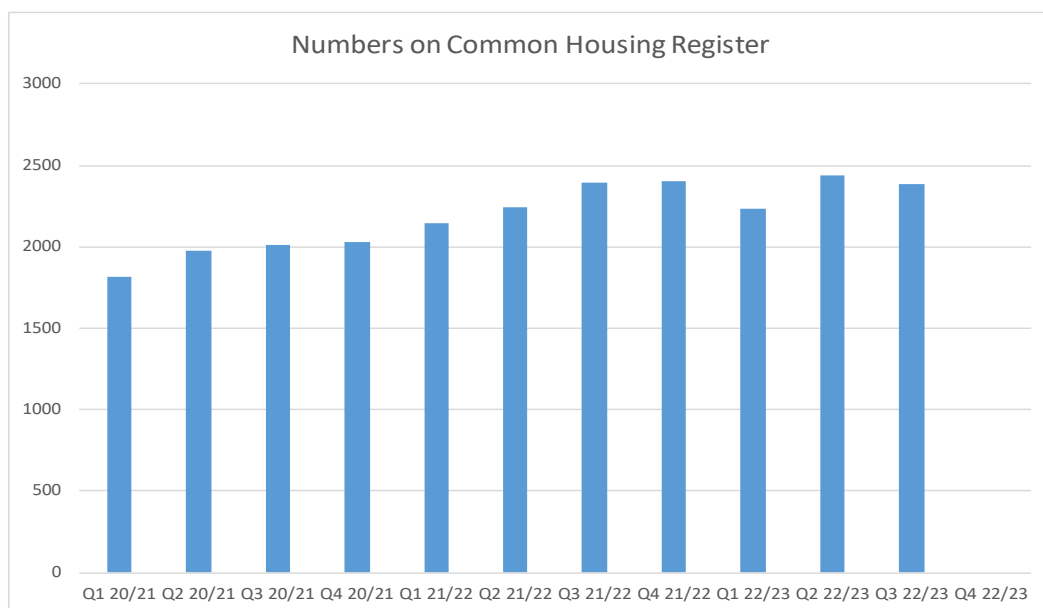
Discussions with Welsh Government to consider this matter further are scheduled in the coming months and will be fed back to Chief Officers Team and Members as well as Boards of housing partners.

1.06

### **Social Housing Need**

Whilst some may refer to the numbers on the housing register as “demand” data, it is important to differentiate between demand and need. All applicants accessing the Common Housing Register have clearly evidenced housing needs. They either have no current settled housing due to homelessness or risks of homelessness or their existing housing is unsuitable. This is clearly different to wanting a move so housing need is a more appropriate title as opposed to demand.

The numbers on the social housing register are increasing and as such waiting times for properties are becoming longer. There were 1,816 households on the Common Housing Register at the end of Q1 in the 2020/2021 period. As evidenced in the chart below demand has grown significantly in the following years and the current number of eligible households on the Common Housing Register at the end of Q3 2022/2023 was 2,386.





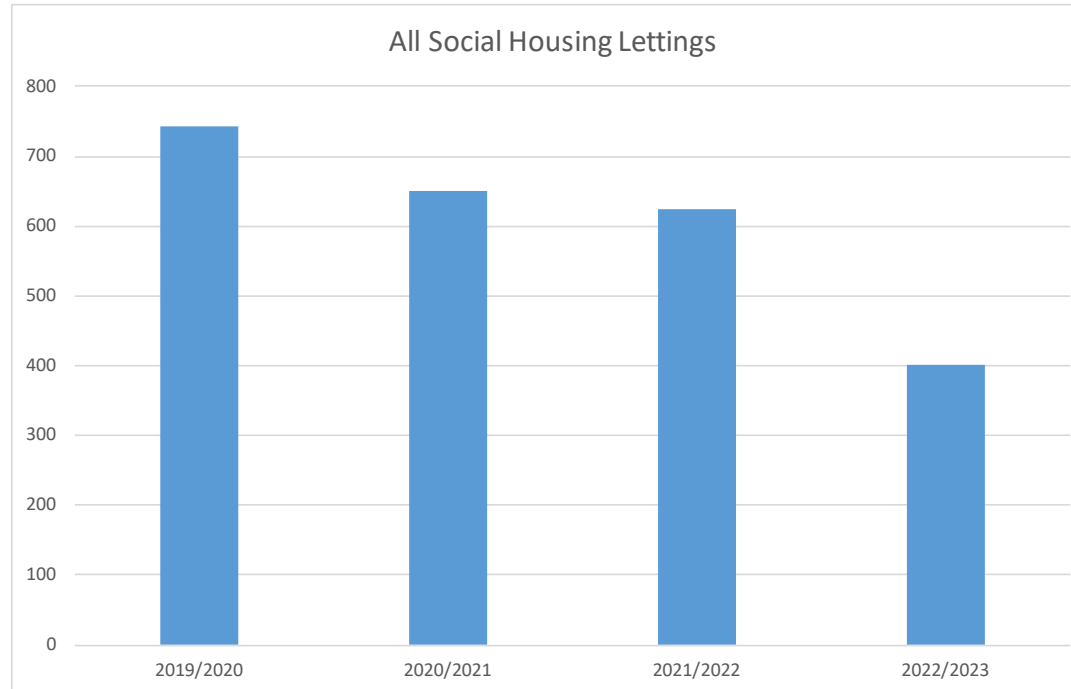
The chart below shows the breakdown of all the eligible applicants on the register by band as the end of Q3 of 2022/2023 reporting period (31<sup>st</sup> December 2022).

<b>REGISTER BREAKDOWN</b>	<b>NUMBER OF APPLICANTS</b>
<b>BAND 1</b>	143
<b>BAND 2</b>	1765
<b>BAND 3</b>	5
<b>BAND 4</b>	504
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2387</b>

1.07

### Social Housing Supply

When looking at the supply of social housing across all social housing providers operating in Flintshire it is noted there has been a significant slowdown following Covid in the numbers of available homes. This downward trend of supply alongside the upward trend in housing need as evidenced by the numbers of applicants accepted on the social housing register is a significant concern. This is not unique to Flintshire.



1.08

### Specialist Housing Needs

The vast majority of applicants' housing need will be met from the available housing stock, although not quickly. However, some applicant households require properties to meet needs arising from disability and properties need to accommodate wheelchairs, bed hoists, stair lifts and accessible bathing rooms. Such housing is in particularly short supply within the social housing stock and these requirements would not necessarily be met within an acceptable timescale or within existing stock without some further intervention.

In Flintshire presently, the current specialist housing register has 37 applicants awaiting significantly adapted properties and the applicant's priority banding is detailed below:

Band 1 – 20	Band 2 – 16
Band 3 – 0	Band 4 - 1

A significant lack of larger homes (5 bedrooms plus) is also noted across Flintshire. There are currently 36 applications on the Common Housing Register for families requiring larger properties (5 bedrooms plus). This includes one family with a need for 9 bedrooms. Of these, the applicants can be broken down into the following bands:

Band 1 – 1	Band 2 – 26
Band 3 – 0	Band 4 – 9.

1.09

**Specialist Housing Needs Supply**

Over the last 2 years and 9 months there have been a total of 38 households with significant specialist housing requirements (major adaptations) who have benefited from the support of the Specialist Housing process.

- April 2020 – March 21 – 17
- April 2021 – March 22 – 11
- April 2022 – March 23 – 10

Specialist housing needs are met through a range of significant adaptations to existing homes, purchase of properties and further investment to bring these homes to the standards and specifications required for disabled household members, or through the creation of purpose built new build homes funded through the Social Housing Grant (SHG) programme.

Sourcing suitable accommodation for applicants with specialist needs and identifying properties that are suitable for complex adaptation work within our housing stock is difficult and budget constraints makes this even more challenging as many of our existing homes that become available each year are not suitable for major adaptations

The desire to build more specialist and larger homes is therefore appropriately recorded as a desired outcome within the Councils Housing Prospectus, and both the Council and Housing Association partners intend to explore solutions to adapt or extend existing social housing to meet these needs.

**2.00**

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

2.01

Detailed below are the cost implications associated with the delivery of Common Housing Register, housing advice services and meeting housing needs in Flintshire:

**Revenue:** The cost of delivering Flintshire’s Common Housing Register are in the region of £150,000 per year with the vast majority of costs relating to staff in Customer Services and Housing Register Team.

- 50% of the cost is apportioned to the Council Fund as the local authority has a statutory duty to hold a register.
- 50% is apportioned to Housing Partners based on their stock levels on an equitable split based on the number of homes they have in the County. Example of cost share for 2022/2023 is detailed below:

Partners Split 22/23	Stock Profile	% Split	Costing
Flintshire Council Fund	---	50%	£74,961.25
Housing Partners Contributions	9927	50%	£74,961.25
<b>Total</b>			<b>£149,922.50</b>

**Breakdown of costs for Housing Partners 50%**

<b>Flintshire Housing Dept</b>	7307	73.61%	£55,176.98
<b>Clwyd Alyn</b>	1583	15.95%	£11,953.63
<b>Wales &amp; West</b>	893	9.00%	£6,743.27
<b>Grwp Cynefin</b>	136	1.37%	£1,026.97
<b>Adra</b>	8	0.08%	£60.41
<b>Total Housing Partners</b>	<b>9927</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£74,961.25</b>

**Capital:** Whilst administering the Common Housing Register is a revenue cost, there are implications for Capital expenditure if we are to meet the housing needs of the people of Flintshire. Housing needs data as identified through the Common Housing Register informs the build programmes of both Flintshire Council and our Housing Partners. The Social Housing Grant (SHG) is the vehicle for build programmes and for purchase options along with Landlord Capital contributions when developing new build schemes or for any one-off purchases linked to the “Specialist Housing Needs” referenced in Section 1.08 of this report. Flintshire’s Housing Prospectus which has been approved by Council and shared with our Housing Partners focusses current and future developments around the increased supply of social housing and specific areas of unmet or growing needs.

**3.00 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

3.01 The following risks and mitigations have been identified by way of control measures:

**Risk:** Failure to meet the needs of applicants for social housing as housing need increases and availability of social housing reduces resulting in excessive waiting times for social housing and possible impact on levels of homelessness and other forms of housing hardships.

- **Mitigation:** Build more social housing at scale and pace in line with current and projected demand
- **Mitigation:** Continue to support people to explore all of their housing options including renting privately, supported housing, as well as other affordable housing products such as low cost home ownership, shared equity housing and intermediate rentals

**Risk:** Emergency housing costs continue to increase at a greater rate due to more households becoming homeless at great cost to the local authority through significant revenue expenditure on the Council fund.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Sustain the 50% nominations approach as we transition to the Rapid Rehousing model longer term as outlined in the Councils Rapid Rehousing Transition Action Plan.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Successfully deliver on the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and ensure the prevention of homelessness is a shared priority across the public sector</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Build more homes that meet the needs of the homeless cohort such as 1 bed general needs housing, of which there is a significant shortage.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Support the Sheltered Housing Review process and share learnings with Housing Partners to consider the long term suitability of some low demand older persons housing to better meet the wants and the needs of older people and explore opportunities to address disparities in the local housing supply.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Build more specialist housing to avoid those with significant and complex housing needs becoming homeless</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b> Satisfaction levels for those residents accessing the Housing Register services drops due to a failure to respond to opportunities to modernise service delivery and embrace elements of digital self-service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Continue to develop online services and self-help tools to enable people to access more modern and dynamic Housing Register service with a full range of housing options advice.</li> </ul>										
3.02	<p><b>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1272 1385 2047"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1272 743 1420">Long-term</td> <td data-bbox="743 1272 1385 1420">Positive – Increase supply of high quality sustainable homes and make best use of the housing stock</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1420 743 1608">Prevention</td> <td data-bbox="743 1420 1385 1608">Prevention - Preventing homelessness and housing hardships through positive interventions that relieve pressures on an already strained housing market</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1608 743 1720">Integration</td> <td data-bbox="743 1608 1385 1720">Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1720 743 1868">Collaboration</td> <td data-bbox="743 1720 1385 1868">Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1868 743 2047">Involvement</td> <td data-bbox="743 1868 1385 2047">Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective housing and services so that access to homes and housing advice and support is timely and person centred</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Positive – Increase supply of high quality sustainable homes and make best use of the housing stock	Prevention	Prevention - Preventing homelessness and housing hardships through positive interventions that relieve pressures on an already strained housing market	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users	Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective housing and services so that access to homes and housing advice and support is timely and person centred
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3.03	<b>Well-being Goals Impact</b>	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – Jobs will be created to deliver housing on a greater scale within Flintshire.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services and neighbourhoods that are prevention focused resilient communities
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in health inequalities associated with homelessness and poor housing conditions
	More equal Wales	Positive – Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all.
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – Creating services and neighbourhoods that are prevention focused and creating strong cohesive communities
	Vibrant Wales	No impact
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	<p><b>Customer Survey Baseline Results 2021/2022</b></p> <p>Although lots of data is gathered in relations to housing needs associated with the administration of the Housing Register, there has never been any significant engagement around the quality-of-service delivery or customer insight and applicant feedback sought with view to improving service delivery.</p> <p>In the reporting year 2021/2022 a baseline survey was undertaken with a small sample of applicants from across the Flintshire and Denbighshire areas to gauge the customer experience and satisfaction levels for the Housing Register Service. Whilst this provided a baseline for a “Customer Satisfaction Measure” for tracking in future years through follow up surveys, it was equally important to understand what works well and what needs improving for people who are accessing the Housing Register service.</p> <p>Overview of the customer satisfaction survey 2021/2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of satisfaction with the Register Overall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 32% Satisfied with Register Service Overall</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Desire to access more services online</li> </ul>

- Applicants want to be able to access their housing application information in a similar manner to which they access online banking
- Applicants don't like long waiting times for social housing
  - Lack of ongoing contact and would like live data for how their application is progressing
- Some applicants don't want advice about housing options and just want access to social housing
  - Housing partners cannot meet the needs of all applicants, so housing options advice is important.

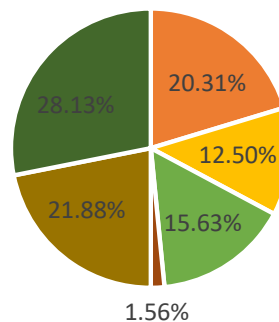
4.02

**Customer Survey Results 2022/2023**

The latest set of customer satisfaction and insight data from 2022/2023 survey is shown below. 300 applicants were approached and invited to take part in the survey. 64 responses were received.

Along with demographic data of gender, age household type, one of the first questions asked of the respondents was "how did you find out about the Housing Register".

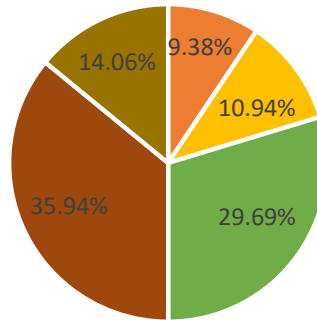
How did you find out about the Housing Register?



■ Through friends or family   
 ■ Shelter Cymru   
 ■ Other - not Specified  
■ Online - other website   
 ■ Online - Council Website   
 ■ Rang the council

Respondents were asked to rate the standard of service when they first approaching the Housing Register for housing advice and help.

### How would you rate the service when you first applied?

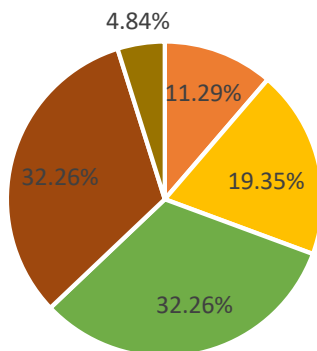


Very poor    Poor    Satisfactory    Good    Excellent

When first approaching the Housing Register Service, 50% of applicants stated the service received was Excellent or Good. It is however noted in the following table that satisfaction drops when later asked to rate the “Overall satisfaction with the Housing Register Service” where the response of Excellent or Good drops to 37.10%. This likely accounts for the fact that:

- 1) Residents are experiencing increased waiting times for social housing which creates general dissatisfaction with the services and assistance offered
- 2) That the changes being implemented to enable more digital access are yet to be fully rolled out.

### Overall satisfaction with the Housing Register Service?



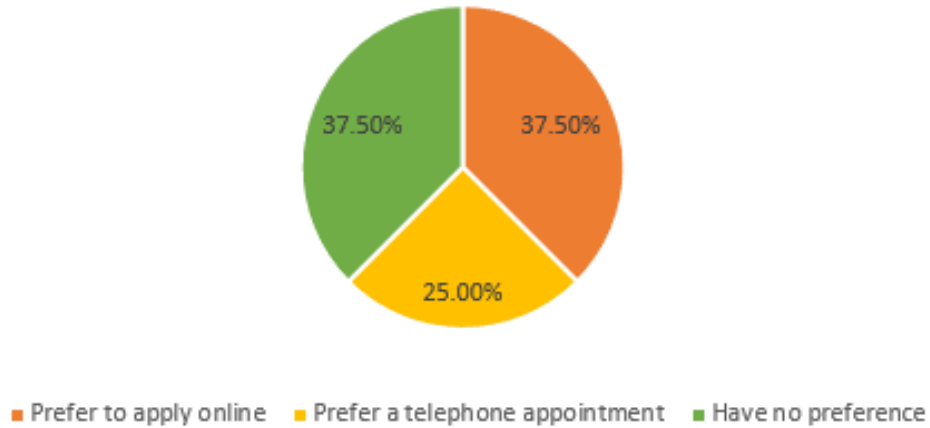
Very poor    Poor    Satisfactory    Good    Excellent

Although there was lots of feedback in the initial survey about the desire to access Housing Register Services digitally it is noted in the second survey applicants were split as to a preference for digital or telephone based



services. This reflects the need for us to be mindful of offering a range of communication channels for applicants to access.

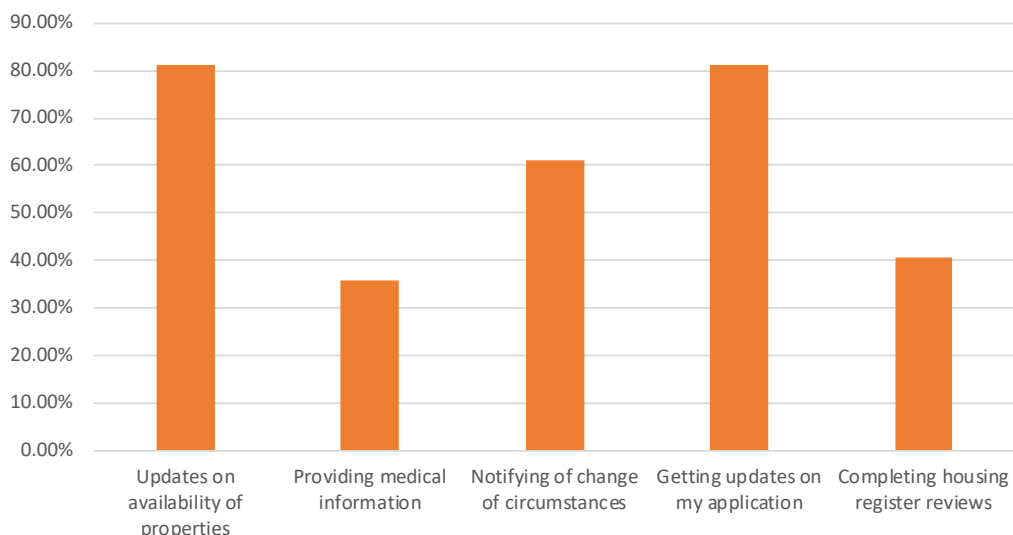
### Would you prefer to access Housing Register via phone or online?



Although not offered as a preference for communication channels, few if any applicants ever request their contact to be in person but this offer is available through our Flintshire Connects Offices.

Residents were asked to identify what services or functions they would like to access digitally. Applicants could provide multiple choice responses to this question to capture all the functions they would like to access online.

### What services would you like to be linked to the Housing Register online?



The survey will be routinely delivered each year to track progression customer's satisfaction and additional questions will be introduced to monitor the impact and satisfaction with some of the digital enhancements that will be implemented over the next 12 months.

	<p>Significant improvements have already been made to online content for housing services through the creation of a “<a href="#">Housing Hub</a>” on the Councils Website. This includes a <a href="#">Social Housing Mapping tool</a> is now available on the Housing Hub which helps people identify the areas of the county where the greatest amount of social housing is available and helps them make informed decisions about their choices for their housing application area preferences.</p> <p>A Housing Waiting List Calculator is also soon to be launched to enable people to see what the likely waiting times are for social housing in certain areas of the county based on priority banding, application registration date, property requirements and local supply figures for previous years</p> <p>Both of these enhancements to digital access are referenced as positive practice in a report by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales when seeking to promote awareness of social housing supply challenges, thus enabling people to make more informed choices about their housing options, particularly for those people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Whilst it is always acknowledged that applicants may have specific reasons for only wanting to be rehoused in certain areas and officers promote choice and control when offering housing options advice, it should be noted that those applicants who are flexible with their area choices will in many cases be rehoused sooner.</p>
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1: Digital Improvement Action Plan

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - Own initiative investigation into the homelessness review process in Wales (October 2021) <a href="https://www.ombudsman.wales/blog/2021/10/06/ombudsman-publishes-his-first-ever-own-initiative-investigation-into-the-homelessness-review-process-in-wales-finding-evidence-of-systemic-maladministration-by-local-authorities/">https://www.ombudsman.wales/blog/2021/10/06/ombudsman-publishes-his-first-ever-own-initiative-investigation-into-the-homelessness-review-process-in-wales-finding-evidence-of-systemic-maladministration-by-local-authorities/</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<b>Contact Officer:</b> Martin Cooil – Housing & Prevention Service Manager <b>Telephone:</b> 07880 423234 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk">martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p><b>Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH)</b> – the project that enabled the development of the Common Allocations Policy and the label for the Housing Options and Housing Register Partnership.</p> <p><b>Housing Triage</b> – the initial discussion with residents about their circumstances and their housing needs.</p> <p><b>Housing Solutions Triage</b> – the initial discussion with residents about their circumstances and their housing needs where homelessness or a risk of homelessness is identified.</p> <p><b>Common Allocations Policy</b> – the shared policy that Local Authority and Housing Partners have signed up to in regards to the eligibility and prioritisation of housing applications for social housing in Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire.</p> <p><b>Rapid Rehousing</b> - an internationally recognised approach which ensures that anyone experiencing homelessness can move into a settled home as quickly as possible, rather than staying in temporary accommodation for long periods of time.</p> <p><b>Housing Waiting List Calculator</b> – an online resource that enables applicants to receive live data to project how long they may be waiting for social housing as a method of managing expectations and informing their housing options choices.</p> <p><b>Flintshire’s Housing Prospectus</b> – the strategic document that clearly highlights the housing needs and aspirations of the local authority in regards to its new build housing programme linked to the Social Housing Grant.</p>

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# Housing & Prevention Digital Pipeline

**draft**

Digital Development (applications)	Description/Background
Interactive Map	Let housing stock, type of property, number of bedrooms, location
iCalendar (CRM)	Non-urgent (not homeless on day). Julie Bellis team complete CRM online form to produce calendar to book appointment. Customer receives email/SMS. Would like customer to self serve via Portal
Self Service Portal (over-arching portal)	Would like Customer to self serve eg Change of Circs, update basic details (mobile) that integrates with OPEN Housing system. Scripting/self help for customers such as if service user is pregnant; they are required to produce a MATB1 form
FCC and DCC Declarations (medical form)	Declarations for the medical forms. Only the first page for FCC applies
Social Housing Wait Time Calculator	Data is reported out of OPEN Housing system (INSIGHT) as a spreadsheet. Would like to be online via Self Service Portal and independently as an online checker without logging in
Medical forms	Paper forms posted to customer, sent back to department, scanned in and manually updated onto system. Would like this to be online form via CRm/Self Service Portal. Enable customer to view previous medical forms and view current form (read-only)
Mental Health Questionnaire	Questionnaire additional to Medical Form
Upload MATB1 Form (functionality)	Paper forms posted to customer, sent back to department, scanned in and manually updated onto system. Would like this to be online form via CRm/Self Service Portal. Should be automatically triggered upon Change of Circs - INTEGRATED FORM
Change of Circumstance Form	No existing form; customer will ring or send by post or email documents. Linked to above MATB1. Need online form via self service portal, triggered on Change of Circs, enable customer to take photo and upload once completed
Online Register Interest Form (Housing Register Application)	New Online Register Interest eForm. Customer completes and books CRM Triage call . Similar UC model on Journal. With paper applications, if the customer sets up my account we could enable self service to view the Status. Integrate with Capita OPEN Housing

<b>Income &amp; Expenditure Form</b>	Word document used for Change of Circs with income
Info share with cross cutting services)	Map out and identify data that could be shared / read only to benefit customer and service retaining access levels

Status	With	Client
Completed	Live	Sian H
Completed	Live	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
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Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H

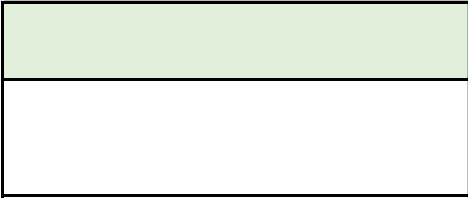
Commissioned with IT	IT	Sian H
In Progress	IT	Sian H



Initial Review KM	Technical Review (IT)
Need more info on this - do they book time in with housing officer to triage them and then send application form ? Or is it for a housing officer to visit the customer ?	
Initial triage form via CRM for NEW TENANTS ? Check OPEn housing they have not got application in already. Attach all documents and correspondance to the CRM record (replacing file shares and Exchange) READ Capital Open Housing on application status [this is the child form on Application Summary Screen]. Push email/SMS notifications. Existing tenants - either want to Change of Circs or Cancel ? - customer can self serve if online application; if not; they complete COC's online that sends email to Back Office to process	draft IT spec
This can be replaced online as part of the new online medical form	draft IT spec
Should be completed ready to go live. Can we have link on new website ?	
Housing Application Reference Number, Name, Address, DOB, Tel, Email. Property info, Income Q's (savings, arrears) link to Sheila Martin ? Medical conditions and medicine/dosage (community support have drs surgery info and medical info links with C Flint). Is OH Assessment internal ? Do they have a system, can we integrate ? People in the household name, address, contact. substance misuse (links to C Flint) Elected Member Declaration. Only 1 form per 12 months.	Est. start October 2022
Is the DP notice applicable from the medical form ?	Est. start October 2022
Midwife issues MATB1 form after 20wks as part of NHS process. Scripting to customer if they tick Pregnant; "Please upload a copy/picture of your completed MATB1 form" as part of the evidence for back office processing - add link to Gov website to help/guidance. Pregnancy indicators are part of the community support C Flint. What else is part of this process ?	with Jase 07/06
need copy of this form. Add link to help/guidance eg affordability checker (HB Calculator), medical form, MATB1 scripting, Job Centre	Est. start October 2022
"to be" customer completes self service via customer account portal, look up Capita Housing Reference. Attach correct metadata to the .PDF - send email to global inbox that document has arrived for COC, flag as 'not read'. Once officer opens document; tag 'document read' and 'officer' and 'date'. The officer will then need to open Capita Housing system and upload to that system	Est. start October 2022

	Est. start October 2022

<b>Notes</b>
iCalendar is to schedule a call in with Housing Officers for TRIAGE ASSESSMENT
over-arching customer account/self service portal. There could be cross-cutting links with other services such as community support; they hold the same information.
draft medical form spec with integrated mental health questionnaire. Need to review and integrate with register process to see how we can digitise from end to end.
Integrated with medical form
Sian to send paperwork. Review w/c 23 May





## COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Garage Sites and Plot Sites update
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Council's continued investment works towards maintaining the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), the garage sites across the County have been assessed in terms of their condition, investment requirements and revenue generation / income.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's garage demolition programme along with providing an insight into how the Council assesses the land for future use.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Community, Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee to support the garage demolition programme proposals for addressing those sites and assets in a poor condition.
2	Community, Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment on the decision matrix, outlined in the report, on the criteria for assessing the garage sites for demolition.

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	HRA COUNCIL GARAGE SITES AND GARAGE PLOT SITES
1.01	<p>The Council have approximately 100 garage sites across the county and 25 garage plot sites.</p> <p>The garages, circa 1,500, vary in condition and desirability in terms of their location (close to renters home) and their usefulness (size etc.).</p> <p>The Council plot sites, where there are various privately owned garage structures, can all be found in a range of condition, size and construction type.</p>
1.02	<p>As part of the Councils continued investment plans and compliance with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS), which the Council continues to maintain, there is a requirement to ensure that our tenants live in attractive and safe environments (WHQS Guidance (Part 6, section 7 - section heading 'Located in attractive and safe environments').</p> <p>There are a number of garage sites that require major investment and continued maintenance (repairs etc.) in order for them to be available for use as many are in a state of disrepair.</p> <p>Many cars on the road today are larger in size when compared to the garages due to the date most of the Councils garages were constructed, many of these garages are no longer fit the purpose in terms of storing a vehicle (car).</p> <p>It is also a requirement that the Council provide suitable parking solutions and make best use of the Councils land where feasible.</p>
1.03	<p>In the context of all of the elements within part 6 of the WHQS standard, all garages are considered to be secondary elements and broadly fall into the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Roads and footpaths;</li><li>● Soft and hard landscaping with planting;</li><li>● Street lighting (adequate);</li><li>● Adequate and safe play space;</li><li>● Adequate and practical and maintainable communal areas;</li><li>● Dwellings clearly identifiable with definable boundaries;</li><li>● Utility services practically located and well identified;</li><li>● Adequate and practically located parking clearly visible;</li></ul>
1.04	<p>The Council have developed a scoring matrix to allow an objective assessment of each Garage Site.</p> <p>Each of the categories below are scored and re-scored during any new surveys / assessment. The total score assists with the prioritisation of the demolition programme.</p> <p>Those scoring the highest are those garages in the poorest condition, those least rented or a combination of both</p>

- **PC1) Condition**
  - 0 = New/ Already Refurbished/ Already Demolished
  - 1 = Good Condition
  - 2 = Work needed
  - 3 = Poor Condition
  - 4 = Extremely Poor
  - 5 = Dangerous structure
  
- **PC2) Presence of Asbestos**
  - No presence of asbestos = 0 points
  - Presence of asbestos = +5 points
  
- **PC3) Feasibility study and cost estimate completed:**
  - No plans or cost estimates completed = 0 points
  - Plan & up to date cost estimate = +5 points
  
- **PC4) Percentage of occupied garages**
  - 0 points – 100%
  - 1 point - 90% to 99%
  - 2 points- 80% to 89%
  - 3 points- 70% to 79%
  - 4 points- 60% to 69%
  - 5 points- 50% to 59%
  - 6 points- 40% to 49%
  - 7 points- 30% to 39%
  - 8 points- 20% to 29%
  - 9 points- 10% to 19%
  - 10 points- 0% to 9%
  
- **PC5) Documented consultation with positive feedback**
  - No = 0 points
  - Yes = +10 points
  
- **PC6) Scheme improves parking facilities for council tenants**
  - No impact = 0 points
  - Positive impact: +10 points
  
- **PC7) Expenditure over the last 5 years (Repairs & Maintenance)**
  - 0= £0-£100
  - 1= £101-£1000
  - 2= £1001-£2000
  - 3=£2001-£3000
  - 4=£3001-£4000
  - 5= £4000+
  
- **PC8) SHARP Development suitable?**
  - No = 0 points
  - Suitable = 5 points
  - Approved = 10 points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>PC9) HRA Development suitable?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No = 0 points</li> <li>○ Suitable = 5 points</li> <li>○ Approved = 10 points</li> </ul> </li>   <li>● <b>PC10) Rent loss per annum if demolished</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 points- £4501+</li> <li>○ 2 points- £4001 - £4500</li> <li>○ 3 points- £3501 - £4000</li> <li>○ 4 points- £3001 - £3500</li> <li>○ 5 points- £2501 - £3000</li> <li>○ 6 points- £2001 - £2500</li> <li>○ 7 points- £1501 - £2000</li> <li>○ 8 points- £1001 - £1500</li> <li>○ 9 points- £501 - £1000</li> <li>○ 10 points- £0 - £500</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Programmes are developed using information flowing from stock condition surveys, in addition to feedback from our tenants, Members and officers. Condition survey data is regularly reviewed and adjusted to reflect the revised, improved condition of properties following refurbishment.</p>
1.05	<p>When undertaking an evaluation of environmental work in a specific area there needs to be an objective base and criteria with which to make decisions. The matrix used by officers when assessing schemes has been used successfully for a number of years in other investment programmes, however, Members may consider that it does not fully reflect requirements, and if so, feedback would be helpful so that officers can consider further.</p>
1.06	<p>During the assessment stage, the Capital Works Surveyor will identify what the possible options / future use options there are for the garage sites / plot sites.</p> <p>These can vary from creating additional car parking for Council owned properties, creating green open spaces, development in terms of new build or disposal of the land.</p> <p>The Council Surveyor will assess the size of the garage site, the number of Council owned properties which would benefit from additional car parking and the number of privately owned properties that would also benefit.</p> <p>If the size is suitable for creating additional car parking for Council owned properties, the scheme is passed to another Surveyor for introduction into the Council's WHQS Environmental Works Programme.</p> <p>If the size and location of the garage site is suitable for development (new build), the scheme is passed over to the SHARP Team for their consideration before the Housing Assets Service progress with any further plans.</p>



	<p>We plan to demolish approximately 150 - 200 garages each financial year over the next 5 years with over 200 garages previously demolished due to condition or new build requirements.</p> <p>The matrix will assist with prioritising those garages that need to be demolished sooner, and the programme will remain flexible so that any garages that require urgent demolition can be scheduled.</p> <p>There will be some garages that are unable to be demolished as they form part of another structure, such as a block of flats or multi-storey car park. These garages will be assessed for alternative uses.</p>
1.07	To date, there have been several garage sites that have been passed over to the SHARP Team for their consideration with some of those sites progressing to the next phase of further options appraisals and some already developed providing new homes (Leeswood & Mostyn).
1.08	<p>The Council have a five year demotion programme which focuses on those garages which score the highest through the scoring matrix.</p> <p>Any garages deemed dangerous in terms of their condition can be introduced into the programme at any time, with investment / regeneration works planned when budget / funding can be secured and made available.</p>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The HRA Business Plan covers the period of the garage demolition programme and beyond. It sets out the Council's investment strategy for its social housing stock, associated assets (i.e. garages) and land.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	<p>Informal discussions with tenants, housing officers, local Members often highlight the environmental issues within a community.</p> <p>Before any scheme commences, our proposals are shared with tenants via letter or consultation days through our local Connects Centres.</p> <p>The Capital Works Team held Tenant Consultation Workshops in late 2014 and sent over 7,000 questionnaires to the tenants of Flintshire to understand their priorities for their home and community with regards to the WHQS upgrade works. Most tenants asked for their internal upgrade works to be completed first, followed by external works and then finally the environmental works to tackle the community wide issues such as car parking. The Capital Works Team organised Member consultation workshops for all Councillors to attend, to ensure they could be part of the decision-making process.</p>

	The garage demolition programme continues with the Council's investment programme to ensure it continues to maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standards.
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<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
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4.01	<p><b>Risk</b> Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) is only guaranteed year on year so the risk is that MRA funding ceases.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure delivery of the investment programme of work continues as originally planned.</li> <li>○ Maintain WHQS Compliance.</li> <li>○ Complete MRA returns to Welsh Government.</li> <li>○ Lobby Welsh Government on the need for MRA to continue so as to invest in the Housing stock.</li> <li>○ Continue to monitor at HRA Programme Board.</li> </ul>
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
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5.01	None.
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<b>6.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
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6.01	<p><b>Contact Officers:</b> Sean O'Donnell - Service Manager - Housing Assets Sean.O'Donnell@flintshire.gov.uk</p>
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<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
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7.01	<p><b>Major Repairs Allowance (MRA)</b> – A capital grant which must be used to meet the WHQS by December 2020 and maintain it thereafter.</p> <p><b>Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)</b> – Is a standard Welsh Government expects all Social housing to meet. It addresses the physical conditions of the property and also integrates social, environmental and economic concerns. The standard ensures that dwellings are of a good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents.</p>
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