

**SHELTER
SCOTLAND**

BEYOND PLEDGES

**THE IMPLEMENTATION
GAP FOR CHILDREN
IN TEMPORARY
ACCOMMODATION**

AUGUST 2026



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Scotland is in the grip of a housing emergency. Homelessness is the result of the political choice to keep housing scarce. Those most likely to become homeless are those with the least power: people living in poverty, disabled people and those with complex needs, Black and People of Colour, care-experienced people, people leaving prison, single mothers, and other groups facing discrimination.¹

At the last count over 14,000 children were assessed as homeless in Scotland. Of them 10,480 children are living in temporary accommodation (TA), the highest number on record.² Research Shelter Scotland published in 2025 showed that TA is often unsuitable, overcrowded, and far from children's schools and support networks.³ And it is anything but temporary, as couples with children now spend an average of 386 days in TA.^{4 5} In their recent report, Public Health Scotland warned that children experiencing homelessness "may not have their human rights realised" and are among those facing "the greatest inequalities" in society.⁶

The Scottish Government has made numerous commitments to tackle this issue, linking it to their number one priority to reduce child poverty in Scotland. But the statistics show that the situation is getting worse, not better. Without action to embed clearer, earlier accountability on the numerous commitments to reduce the number of children in TA, reduce the length of time they spend there, and improve the suitability of that accommodation, children will continue to be stuck in TA that doesn't meet their needs. *Building Hope*, a joint project between Shelter Scotland and Fife Gingerbread, aims to act as a catalyst for this action.

This report offers an overview of commitments made by the Scottish Government and the project's three focus local authorities: Glasgow City Council, City of Edinburgh Council and Fife Council. It demonstrates the scale of the implementation gap between these commitments and the reality for children trapped in TA. And it makes the case for urgent change.

Following this report, we will publish a route map outlining the specific, detailed actions needed to reduce the number of children in TA, reduce the length of time they spend there, and ensure that any stays in TA uphold the rights of the child. This will lay the foundation for a year of targeted action, building accountability to help address the implementation gap and make the changes that are urgently needed.

Children in temporary accommodation have heard too many unfulfilled promises; they deserve real change. Join us to make this vision a reality.

The current reality for children in temporary accommodation

The number of children in temporary accommodation in Scotland has been increasing for years, from the most recent low of 4,155 in March 2014, to a record high of 10,480 in September

2025.^{2 4 7} Households with children spend longer in TA – averaging 386 days for couples with children, compared to 238 days for all households. Black and People of Colour and people with support needs are overrepresented in homelessness statistics.⁴

Temporary accommodation affects children's safety, health, wellbeing and education, with families reporting overcrowding, damp and mould, maintenance issues, and moves far from schools and support networks.³ While most children are housed in local authority or housing association-owned TA,² there were 1,350 instances of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order being breached for children in 2024-25, denying children their legal rights.⁴

National commitments and progress

The Scottish Government has made numerous commitments to children in temporary accommodation, but implementation remains slow and mixed.

Preventing child homelessness

Homelessness occurs when there are not enough homes for the people who need one where they need it. Research, including the Affordable Housing Need research commissioned by Shelter Scotland, CIH Scotland and SFHA, demonstrates that Scotland lacks sufficient affordable housing of the size, type and in the places that we need it.⁸ Homelessness is therefore inevitable in Scotland unless we address the chronic shortage of affordable and, in particular, social housing.

And yet, on **delivery of affordable homes**, the Scottish Government is unlikely to meet its target to deliver 110,000 affordable homes over 2022-2032 at the current pace of delivery,⁹ and the funding committed – whilst at record levels – is well below what is needed.⁸ The creation of a national housing agency, announced in January,¹⁰ offers an opportunity to reverse current trends, but it must have a clear focus on reducing affordable housing need and tackling homelessness if it is to succeed.

Homelessness prevention duties for public bodies were introduced in 2025,¹¹ but without adequate resourcing they risk being bound to paper. There has been some progress on preventing homelessness for women experiencing domestic abuse and their children, including legislation allowing social tenancies to be transferred from a perpetrator to a victim-survivor,¹² and a national 'fund to leave' which has received 747 successful applications as of March 2026.¹³

Despite **tackling child poverty** being a key focus for the Scottish Government, statistics show Scotland is a long way from meeting its statutory child poverty targets by 2030, with 21% of children in relative poverty compared to a target of <10%.¹⁴

Reducing the length of time children spend in temporary accommodation

The Scottish Government has exceeded some commitments on **acquisitions** by spending £118m to acquire 1,683 homes in 2025-26.¹⁵ However, without any data on the size of these homes or

the household types they are allocated to, it is very difficult to track whether these acquisitions have supported children in TA into permanent housing as one of the intended beneficiaries.

Much attention has focused on making **better use of existing stock** and there has been some success with an increase in the proportion of social lets made to homeless households.¹⁶ However, patterns vary locally and there remains room for further increase to meet demand – the planned review of national social housing allocation policies is still awaited.¹⁷ Guidance has been published as promised to encourage the flipping of temporary accommodation to permanent where suitable,¹⁸ but similar guidance on void management has not yet materialised.

Delivery of commitments to support **move-on from TA** is lacking. For example, a commitment to support the introduction of a common housing register in Glasgow has not been fulfilled,¹⁹ and the Code of Guidance refresh to include more on this element has not yet happened.

The rights of the child in temporary accommodation

While the Scottish Government committed to developing a new funding framework for TA and funding pilot schemes to reduce the **use of unsuitable TA**, there is limited evidence of progress on these. The number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order experienced by households with children nearly doubled in just two years, from 685 in 2022-23 to 1,350 in 2024-25.⁴ Updated TA standards have been developed, however, with a consultation on legal enforcement closing in January 2026.²⁰

On improving **access to services**, Education Maintenance Allowance guidance has been updated to provide for flexibility in attendance specifically for children experiencing homelessness.²¹ A commitment to improve linked data on health and homelessness has had less success, with only 24 of Scotland's 32 local authorities providing data to Public Health Scotland's dashboard.²²

Contrary to their commitment to **human rights incorporation** and specifically to maximise the applicability of the UNCRC in Scots law,²³ the Scottish Government has continued to draft legislation in a way that leaves significant sections out of scope of the UNCRC. A commitment to review UK Acts in devolved areas²³ has not been taken forward. Plans to introduce a Human Rights Bill, which would incorporate other international treaties including the right to adequate housing into Scots law, have been delayed repeatedly and no public updates have yet been made in this parliament.

Local authority approaches

Alongside its national activity, the Building Hope project has a particular focus on three local authority areas: Glasgow City Council, City of Edinburgh Council and Fife Council. At the time of the project being developed, these authorities' homelessness services had been assessed by the Scottish Housing Regulator as being in 'systemic failure' – unable to meet their statutory duties to people experiencing homelessness. Glasgow and Edinburgh remain in this category while Fife has improved enough to move to being 'at heightened risk' of systemic failure.^{24 25 26}

Glasgow City Council

Glasgow City Council declared a housing emergency in November 2023.²⁷ There are 3,225 children in TA in Glasgow, a record high,² and couples with children spend an average of 425 days in TA.⁴

Affordable housebuilding completions have slowed, and without data on the size of the homes that have been built and acquired, it is very difficult to evaluate progress to increase the supply of affordable family-sized homes in the city.^{28 29}

The number of households assessed as homeless has decreased slightly,² but a significant proportion of people presenting as homeless are refugees²⁷ and this form of homelessness is not preventable by Glasgow City Council while the UK Government maintains its policy of 'homelessness by design' for newly recognised refugees. Fairer funding for frontline services from Scottish Government to reflect changes in how homeless applications are now distributed between local authorities is essential to ensure Glasgow receives the support it needs, in addition to action by the UK Government to adopt a more humane and effective asylum system that does not make homelessness inevitable for people seeking safety in the UK.

The council has had some success with the Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme^{28 29} and efforts to repurpose council-owned sites to accommodate larger families,²⁸ and the target set for the proportion of social lets to homeless households is rightly ambitious. However, more detail is needed to understand how this will be achieved and whether the impact is likely to be sufficient to begin reducing the number of children in TA in Glasgow.

City of Edinburgh Council

City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) declared a housing emergency in November 2023.³⁰ There were 3,640 children in TA in Edinburgh in September 2025 – as in Glasgow, a record high for the council.² Couples with children spend an average of 778 days in TA, the longest in Scotland.⁴

Social housebuilding completions and acquisitions in Edinburgh increased considerably between 2024-25 and 2025-26,^{31 32 33} but again, lack of data on the size of these homes makes analysis of full impact difficult and delivery hasn't yet increased to the scale required. Increased AHSP funding is clearly needed, alongside a sharp focus from CEC and delivery partners on building affordable family-sized homes, if the council is to meet its population's affordable housing need and reduce the number of children in TA.

The number of households assessed as homeless has also increased slightly despite more private renters being supported to keep their homes.² The UK Government's policy of 'homelessness by design' for newly recognised refugees continues to create homelessness that City of Edinburgh Council cannot prevent.

The council's suspension of its Letting Policy appears to have made a positive impact on responses to homelessness, with a related 197 direct lets reportedly being made to families

with children in unsuitable TA since the suspension began. Good progress has been made in halving the number of families with children in unsuitable TA, though 12 families are still stuck there.³⁴ Work to reduce the number of long-term void council properties also has potential to free up more stock for families.³⁵

Fife Council

Fife Council declared a housing emergency in March 2024.³⁶ There are 425 children in TA in Fife² and couples with children spend 201 days in TA on average.⁴

However, Fife has begun to see the numbers of children in TA falling, likely driven in large part by the council's focus on flipping temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation.³⁷ While affordable homes are not being built to the scale required,³⁸ the council considerably increased its acquisitions spending and number of homes delivered from 2024-25 to 2025-26,³² and its transfer-led approach to allocations means newly available properties can benefit more tenants.³⁹ The number of households assessed as homeless has decreased slightly² and the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order has decreased more considerably.³⁶ Fife is still in a housing emergency and 'at heightened risk' of systemic failure, but the council's focused efforts are beginning to show positive results.

Conclusion

The distance between national and local government commitments and the reality for children in temporary accommodation is stark. We cannot allow this situation to continue.

The harm temporary accommodation inflicts on children is clear. The symptoms of Scotland's housing emergency – childhoods spent in TA, overcrowding, damp and mould, rights routinely breached – cannot be accepted as the new normal.

Progress in Fife and other parts of the country has shown that change is possible, but this needs to be replicated at a far wider scale and faster pace than we have seen to date. Meaningful change has not been felt across Scotland, despite the number of commitments that have been made. We need a new approach and we need to focus on delivery and impact.

We ask our partners, allies and the wider sector to stand with children in temporary accommodation and their families, to help show that real change is possible, galvanise our communities, and build the pressure needed to turn commitments into action – until every child in Scotland has a place to call home.

1. INTRODUCTION

Scotland is in the grip of a housing emergency. Homelessness is the result of the political choice to keep housing scarce. Those most likely to become homeless are those with the least power: people living in poverty, disabled people and those with complex needs, Black and People of Colour, care-experienced people, people leaving prison, single mothers, and other groups facing discrimination.¹

At the last count over 14,000 children were assessed as homeless in Scotland. Of them 10,480 children are living in temporary accommodation (TA), the highest number on record.² While children experiencing homelessness who aren't in TA face their own challenges, there is a specific set of circumstances impacting those stuck in TA. TA is often unsuitable, overcrowded, and far from children's schools and support networks.³ And it is anything but temporary, as couples with children now spend an average of 386 days in TA, and 1,185 households with children currently stuck in TA have been there for over two years.⁴

Shelter Scotland published research into children's experiences in temporary accommodation in Scotland in March 2025, documenting the harmful conditions families are enduring.³ Despite some engagement with the research generated by a parliamentary debate the same month⁴⁰ – which saw politicians across the spectrum expressing outrage over children's experiences – and policy commitments over the following weeks and months, there has been little meaningful progress. Almost 18 months later, things have got worse, not better: there are now more children in temporary accommodation and the average length of time spent there has increased.

The Scottish Government has made numerous promises to end the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation for children, across multiple different strategies. However, without action to embed clearer, earlier accountability on the numerous commitments to reduce the number of children in TA, reduce the length of time they spend there, and improve the suitability of that accommodation, children will continue to be stuck in TA that doesn't meet their needs.

Building Hope: A Home for Every Child aims to act as a catalyst for this action. A partnership between Shelter Scotland and Fife Gingerbread with funding from the Robertson Trust, the project aims to influence national policy and local authority practice to reduce the number of children in temporary accommodation and ensure that where a stay in TA is necessary, children's rights are upheld. It seeks to build a coalition of partners across the housing, homelessness and wider children's sector – initially bringing people together at a rally event in August 2026. More information on the project can be found in Appendix 1.

This report offers an overview of existing commitments made by the Scottish Government and the project's three focus local authorities (LAs): Glasgow City Council, City of Edinburgh Council and Fife Council. It demonstrates the scale of the implementation gap between these commitments and the reality for children trapped in TA. And it makes the case for urgent change.

Shelter Scotland will use this analysis, and conversations with stakeholders across the sector, to produce a route map to closing the implementation gap for children in TA. We are not looking

for new plans or strategies; rather, the route map, which we aim to publish in autumn 2026, will outline the specific, detailed actions the Scottish Government and three focus LAs must take in 2027 to fulfil the commitments they have already made. It will lay the foundation for a year of targeted action, ensuring we can monitor progress in live time and hold decision-makers accountable to address the implementation gap and lead the change needed. After a year, we will reconvene the sector to evaluate progress and develop a further plan for action.

Children in temporary accommodation have heard too many unfulfilled promises; they deserve real change. Join us to make this vision a reality.

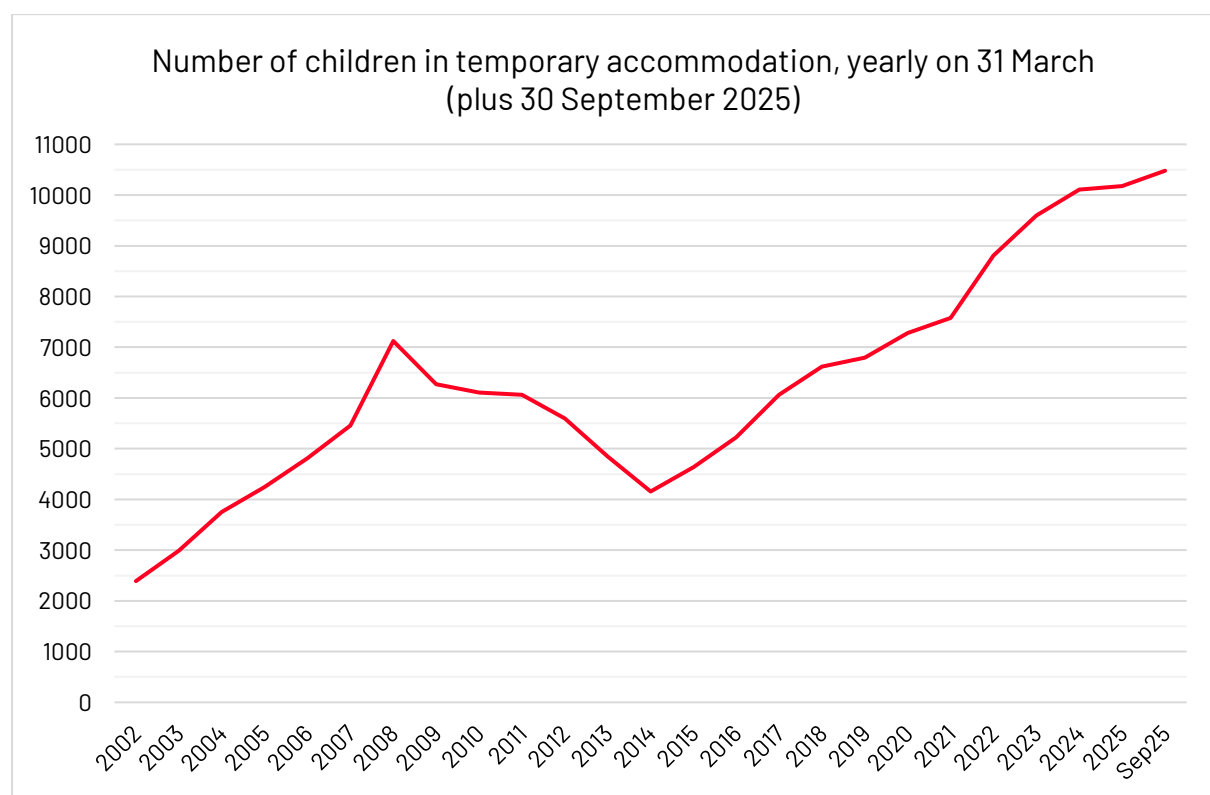
2. THE CURRENT REALITY FOR CHILDREN IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

This section outlines recent trends in the numbers of children in temporary accommodation in Scotland and the length of time spent there. It then summarises qualitative evidence on children's experiences in TA, to illustrate the impact of TA on real lives, beyond the numbers.

2.1. Homelessness statistics

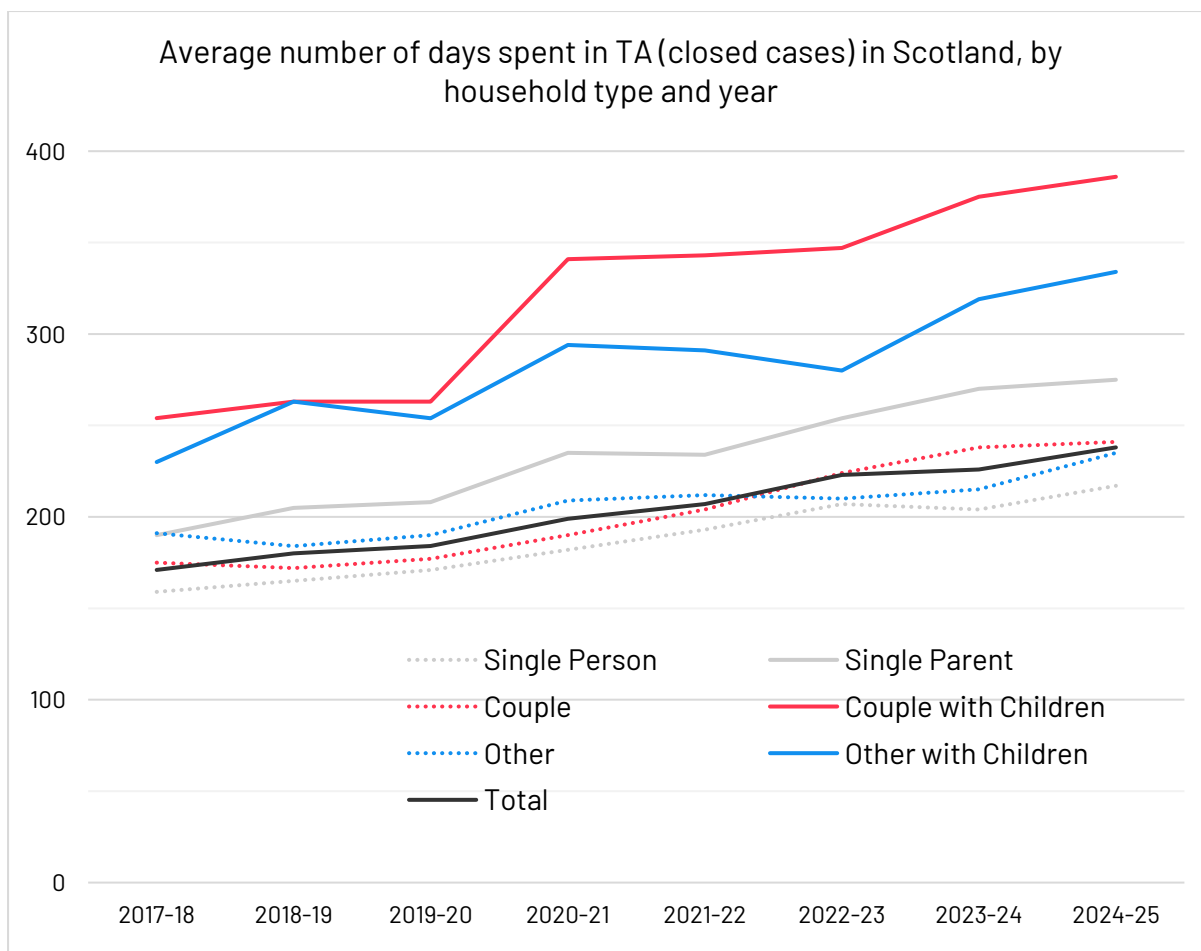
The number of children in temporary accommodation in Scotland has been increasing for years, from the most recent low of 4,155 in March 2014, to a record high of 10,480 in September 2025.²

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While most children are housed in local authority or housing association-owned TA,² the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order experienced by households with children nearly doubled in just two years, from 685 in 2022-23 to 1,350 in 2024-25, denying children their legal rights.⁴

The length of time households spend in TA in Scotland has also been increasing in recent years, to an average of 238 days for all households whose cases closed. Households with children spend longer in TA – averaging 386 days for couples with children, 275 days for single parents, and 334 days for other households with children.⁴



In 2024-25 there were 1,470 households with children whose cases closed who had spent over a year in TA, including 280 who had been there for two to three years and 275 who had been there for over three years. As of 31 March 2025, there were a further 2,250 households with children whose cases were still open who had been in TA for over a year, including 585 who had been there for two to three years and 600 for over three years.⁴

Larger families spend longer in TA. For example, a family of five is almost five times as likely to spend over three years in TA (14%) than a single person household (3%).⁴¹

The Scottish Government does not publish data on the ethnicity or support needs of households in temporary accommodation, but Black and People of Colour are overrepresented in homelessness statistics compared to their share of Scotland's population, and make up an increasing proportion of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness (9% in 2024-25, compared to 3% in 2020-21). People with support needs are also overrepresented in homelessness data; most households assessed as homeless (51%) have at least one identified support need, the most common being mental health problems.⁴

2.2. Lived experience of temporary accommodation

Case study from Gary, a Shelter Scotland client

Gary and his now six-year-old daughter have been in temporary accommodation for over three years. After two unreasonable permanent offers, Gary and his daughter were moved into TA that wasn't accessible for his daughter, who uses a wheelchair and walking frame. The pathway to the property is shared and is often blocked and used as a driveway. Gary has to carry the wheelchair over three steep steps to the entrance and also has to carry his daughter, which is very painful due to his arthritis.

"This has had a great effect on my mental health, I've been experiencing a lot of ups and downs. The feeling of finally being made an offer and then finding out this is unsuitable has been heartbreaking and has triggered my mental health. My daughter as well has been deeply impacted. This situation and the lack of suitable and comfortable accommodation has made her lose her independence. I have to carry her up the stairs and in our previous property the toilet was not suitable so I had to lift her to use it. She is getting to an age where she feels more embarrassed and conscious of these things, she wants her own privacy but the properties we have been in did not allow this."

Case study from Laura, a Shelter Scotland client

Laura has been in temporary accommodation with her husband and three children for four years. Last summer they also had a bed bug infestation, which was treated slowly and poorly. This caused significant distress to the family as all five of them had to sleep in the living room, the only uninfected room in the flat.

"My family and I have been in temporary accommodation for nearly four years. During this time, we've experienced an exhausting cycle of waiting, uncertainty, and worry – not just about when we'll be permanently housed, but whether it will be in the community we now call home. We have more of a chance of being moved to another temporary accommodation than permanent because of the housing crisis."

"We've done everything asked of us: we bid every week, we respond to all communications, and we've stayed hopeful – even when it's been difficult. But living in limbo for this long wears you down. It's hard to plan for the future when your present is so uncertain."

Shelter Scotland's casework with families demonstrates the prevalence of issues such as overcrowding, damp and mould, long-distance moves and unsafe environments for households with children in temporary accommodation. However, formal evidence on the subject has previously been limited. Shelter Scotland commissioned researchers at De Montford University and University College London to address a significant gap in qualitative evidence, publishing 'In Their Own Words: Children's Experiences in Temporary Accommodation' in March 2025. The researchers heard from 23 children and their parents about their current or recent experiences

in TA, shedding light on the profound impact of lengthy stays in unsuitable TA on children's health, safety, education and development.³

One of the most common experiences reported by the families was overcrowding. Children told of sharing rooms with multiple family members and even sharing beds, sleeping on sofas or on the floor. This resulted in strained relationships, poor sleep and a lack of privacy. Overcrowding also meant some children had no space to study or play.

Participants frequently described issues with the quality of their temporary accommodation. Damp and mould were particularly common, harming children's health and exacerbating existing health conditions like asthma. Some children were unable to use their beds due to damp or mould. Families experienced responses from housing authorities as dismissive and uncaring.

Mother of child aged 13: *It is very cold. And in winter is like all damp and wet. I tried to clean it with, because I have two boys who have asthma, I try always to clean, open the window but it is very, very cold.*

Maintenance issues were also common. Broken or non-existent heating left families to cope with cold temperatures or forced them to buy expensive and ineffective portable heaters. Multiple families reported water damage including leaks across ceilings, walls and stairs.

Essential amenities were often lacking from participants' TA. Many families reported having no freezer, limited fridge capacity, or no cooking utensils, making it difficult to cook and store food. Some had to rely on microwave meals or use food banks, restricting their access to nutritious food. Others had no laundry facilities, leading to a buildup of dirty laundry.

Families described bugs and spiders entering TA through structural gaps, and infestations including moths and rats. The most extreme cases saw

children discovering "dead rats, cat faeces, and prescription drugs left behind by previous occupants". One child had to be hospitalised due to an infection linked to exposure to rats.

As well as the direct health impacts of these poor conditions, many children felt embarrassed or ashamed of their TA and would not invite friends round, with one child saying their friends would find the conditions "disgusting". This resulted in feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and exclusion from activities like hosting sleepovers and playdates.

In addition, the physical location of TA was not always suitable for children. Dangers ranged from busy roads and a lack of safe places to play outdoors, to areas with high levels of violent

Child aged 6: *I know what happened, people were pooing on the ground.*

Researcher: *On the ground, really, outside or inside?*

Child: *Inside, inside the toilet. Sometimes, if they poo, they get them on the wall, and sometimes they poo on the ground.*

Researcher: *Was it very smelly?*

Child: *Yeah, it was.*

Researcher: *What do you think about that?*

Child: *That was the worst time.*

crime, antisocial behaviour and drug use. Noise disturbances from neighbours, including loud music and arguments, affected children's sleep and caused distress and anxiety. Poorly lit outside spaces exacerbated their feelings of fear and insecurity.

Mother: ...they always put them in the roughest streets. We had neighbours across from us that fought consistently every week and threatened to kill each other at 3 o'clock in the morning. That's all she could hear when she was a baby.

Child aged 4: Yes, when our neighbours were shouting it made me sad.

Child aged 15: Yeah, so in the winter, and obviously there's drug users and stuff that stay near our flat, and then the light doesn't work it's just creepy.

Mother: It is, it's like something from a horror film, what is awaiting me when I get up the stairs.

The location of TA was often far from children's existing schools and friends, necessitating long journeys or disruptive school moves. Long journeys resulted in frequent lateness – which, for older children, affected their eligibility for Education Maintenance Allowance – while changing schools meant having to adapt to a new environment during a period already characterised by instability, affecting educational progress and social belonging. Moving long distances also affected access to health services.

The effects of these experiences on children were numerous. Poor sleep, inadequate nutrition, heightened stress, unhygienic conditions and social isolation affect children's physical and mental health profoundly. Parents noticed emotional and behavioural changes in their children; for example, the mother of a child aged 13 described him as "more sensitive and sad", and the mother of a child aged 6 said "she became a bit more violent towards me". Children were unable to settle, knowing they could be moved at any time.

Child aged 15: Yeah, it was also hard, because we're only meant to be in the temporary for six months or something. It's just annoying waking up every day and you're like well, they could tell us oh move house today. And you can't really, like I don't want to properly deck out my room or anything. And it wasn't really that nice, but I just kind of wanted security.

The impact of these experiences on children's wellbeing demonstrates the need for urgent change to reduce the harm caused by TA. The conditions described by children in the research are also in clear contravention of their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).^{42 43} Living with damp, mould, vermin and a lack of cooking and washing facilities denies children their right to an adequate standard of living and the best possible health. Overcrowded accommodation, with multiple people sharing bedrooms and no space to play or study, prevents children from realising their rights to privacy, relaxation and play. And moves far from children's schools and GPs threaten their rights to education and good quality healthcare. The Scottish Government took an important step in incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law in 2024, but this must be matched by action to ensure the UNCRC is a reality for every child in Scotland.

3. NATIONAL POLICY COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

The Scottish Government has made numerous commitments to children in temporary accommodation – yet without focused action, delivery remains slow, and the everyday reality for many children in TA is far from government intentions. This section begins by setting the context to recent Scottish Government publications. It then outlines the key commitments made in these publications and summarises progress against them, organised under the three key priorities of the Building Hope project: reducing the number of children in TA, reducing the length of time children spend in TA, and ensuring that when a stay in TA is necessary, it meets the needs and upholds the rights of the child.

3.1. Strategies and policy frameworks

The Scottish Government published the first Ending Homelessness Together (EHT) action plan in 2018,⁴⁴ and an updated plan in 2020,⁴⁵ with progress reports published annually since 2020.⁴⁶
^{47 48 49 50 51} These focused on homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing. Housing to 2040 (H2040) was published in March 2021,⁵² setting out a long-term approach to housing policy. It introduced new supply targets for affordable and social housing and stated a vision that homelessness is only rare, brief and non-recurrent.

The Scottish Government established the Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group (TAFG) as a subgroup of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group in 2022. Co-chaired by Alison Watson of Shelter Scotland and John Mills of the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO) and Fife Council, it published its final report in March 2023.⁵³ The Scottish Government published a response in July 2023, prioritising actions including scaling up supply of social housing, maximising the use of existing stock, implementing a national acquisition programme, and flipping – converting TA into permanent lets – where possible.⁵⁴

Most recently, after declaring a housing emergency in May 2024,⁵⁵ the Scottish Government published the Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) in September 2025.⁵⁶

The Scottish Government's commitments on child poverty are contained in their Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plans, the latest of which was published in March 2026.⁵⁷

3.2. Preventing child homelessness

Scottish Government rhetoric on homelessness often places considerable emphasis on prevention. Indeed, the best way to reduce the harm temporary accommodation causes children is to prevent them from entering the homelessness system in the first place. But delivery does not always live up to this ambition.

3.2.1. Affordable housebuilding

At a systemic level, homelessness is currently inevitable in Scotland due to the lack of social and affordable homes of the types and sizes needed, where people need them. The Scottish Government has made some important commitments on housebuilding:

- H2040 committed to delivering 100,000 affordable homes over 2022-2032,⁵² which the 2021 EHT annual report increased to 110,000, at least 70% (77,000) of which for social rent.⁴⁷ The HEAP committed to £4.9bn for this over four years.⁵⁶
- The TAFG response committed to exploring innovative financing models, and H2040 committed to maximising use of the Scottish National Investment Bank.⁵⁴
- The Scottish Government committed in January 2026 to creating a new national housing agency to accelerate delivery.¹⁰

However, these commitments fall short of what is required to reduce affordable housing need. Research commissioned by Shelter Scotland, CIH Scotland and SFHA shows that Scotland needs 15,693 more affordable homes each year, at an estimated annual cost of £1.64bn if 75% of these were for social rent, or £1.76bn if 100% were for social rent.⁸ While what remains of the government's own 110,000 affordable homes target by 2032 is a similar figure to the 78,465 needed over five years, the budget allocated is well short of the £8.2-8.8bn required. Moreover, later documents specify that only £4.1bn of the £4.9bn budget will be public funding, with the remainder to be generated from unspecified private sources.

At the current pace of delivery, it is highly unlikely that the Scottish Government's own commitments will be met. By the end of March 2026, a total of 35,368 affordable homes (including 27,297 social homes) had been completed towards the Scottish Government's 110,000 target – leaving 74,632 (49,703 social) still to be completed by 2032.⁹ This means just over halfway into the timeframe, only 32% of the affordable homes target and 35% of the social homes target has been delivered.

The government also committed that 10% of the 110,000 affordable homes will be in rural areas.⁴⁷ Aside from that, there is no commitment on the size, type or location of the homes to be delivered. Audit Scotland has previously highlighted the limitations of this approach in their 2020 report on the Scottish Government's affordable housing supply target, noting that "Setting a broad national and numbers-based target creates the risk that the homes delivered are not located in the places with the greatest levels of need, or are not the right type to best meet people's housing needs."⁵⁸ While information shared with Shelter Scotland outlines that the average number of bedspaces per home delivered through the AHSP in the last two years was four (meaning either two or three bedrooms), and that homes delivered ranged from two to ten bedspaces,¹⁵ data is not routinely published on the size of homes delivered under the AHSP. This makes it difficult to track the impact of this policy for children in temporary accommodation.

The creation of a national housing agency, More Homes Scotland, offers an opportunity to reverse current trends and deliver the homes needed. But the agency must have a clear and explicit focus on reducing affordable housing need and tackling homelessness – areas the housing market cannot be relied upon to address, which should be the starting point for any government intervention. An intensive design phase for the agency is currently underway.

3.2.2. Homelessness prevention activity

As well as affordable housebuilding, the Scottish Government's work on preventing homelessness has included activity targeted at the level of individuals or specific groups of people at higher risk.

- The Scottish Government first committed to developing a new homelessness prevention duty for local authorities, wider public bodies and delivery partners in the 2018 EHT action plan.⁴⁴
- The 2018 EHT action plan committed to providing support for choice-based lettings and formalising implementation advice into the updated homelessness Code of Guidance.⁴⁴
- The Scottish Government has developed homelessness prevention pathways for numerous groups including women experiencing domestic abuse⁵⁹ and a broader 'Ending Destitution Together' strategy for people with no recourse to public funds.⁶⁰
- Following a pilot in 2023-24, the HEAP committed to establishing a £1m national 'fund to leave',⁵⁶ which the 2025 EHT report increased to £1.5m,⁵¹ for women experiencing domestic abuse and their children.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2025 introduced homelessness prevention duties for public bodies.¹¹ These require public bodies to 'ask and act' where they think someone may be at risk of homelessness, extending responsibility for prevention beyond just the homelessness system. But without adequate resourcing, these protections risk being bound to paper, never becoming a reality for people. £4m was allocated for 15 prevention pilots in 2025-26 but no clarity has been provided on future funding. With local authorities already struggling to uphold people's statutory homelessness rights, it is crucial these new measures are accompanied by the resources needed to deliver them.

On support for choice-based lettings, an interim update to the homelessness Code of Guidance was published in 2019,⁶¹ but this only briefly mentions choice-based lettings. A fuller update to the Code of Guidance began in 2026.

An implementation and monitoring group was convened on the domestic abuse pathway in 2022, and as of August 2026, legislation is in force to allow social tenancies to be transferred from a perpetrator to a victim-survivor so they can stay in their home.¹² The £1.5m national 'fund to leave' was launched in February 2026 and by 31 March 2026, Scottish Women's Aid had

received 747 successful applications totalling £423,533, with an average award of £570, supporting 1,010 dependent children.¹³

The three-year evaluation of Fair Way Scotland, an action learning partnership tackling destitution and homelessness among people with no recourse to public funds, shows the partnership has delivered significant benefit for its service users. However, the report also states that “Ending destitution and homelessness in Scotland – explicit aims of the current Government – is simply not possible without increased political will, investment and more ambitious contributions from Scottish Government, local authorities, housing associations, and independent funders.”⁶²

3.2.3. Tackling child poverty

The Scottish Government has named tackling child poverty as its number one priority.⁶³ There are many reasons people might face losing their home, but poverty and unaffordable rents are key contributors. 180,000 children in Scotland (19%) are in relative poverty before housing costs, rising to 210,000 (21%) after housing costs, meaning 30,000 children being pushed into poverty by housing costs.¹⁴ While private rents across all property types have increased by over 65% between 2010 and 2025, family-sized homes have seen disproportionate increases, with average rents rising 71.4% for 3-bedroom properties and 88.3% for 4-bedroom properties.⁶⁴ The Scottish Government’s commitments on child poverty are therefore an important part of the picture to prevent child homelessness and reduce the use of TA for children.

- The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2026-2031 committed to continued funding for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs), including £106m for DHPs to mitigate the bedroom tax and benefit cap and £9m to mitigate the Local Housing Allowance freeze.⁵⁷
- The plan also committed to continuing to deliver various other forms of financial support including £41m for the Scottish Welfare Fund; uprating the Five Family Payments in line with inflation; and increasing Scottish Child Payment to £40/week for children under one from 2027-28.
- The plan set out funding for advice services and committed to increasing benefit take-up and using data-sharing to target support.
- The plan pledged further funding for whole family support, including £50m for the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding Programme and establishing a £20m Whole Family Support Third Sector Delivery Fund.

These are relatively new commitments, so it is too soon to evaluate progress. However, the latest child poverty statistics show that Scotland is a long way from meeting its statutory child poverty targets by 2030, with 21% of children in relative poverty compared to the target of <10%, and 16% in absolute poverty compared to the target of <5%.¹⁴

3.3. Reducing the length of time children spend in temporary accommodation

Where a stay in temporary accommodation is necessary, it should be just this – temporary. But currently, children are spending months or even years in TA. The most effective way of reducing the length of time families spend in TA is increasing the supply of permanent social housing and making best use of existing stock. The Scottish Government has recognised this through their commitments on acquisitions, void management, flipping and allocations. They have also made several commitments on encouraging move-on from TA and supporting families to access private or social housing.

3.3.1. Acquisitions of private and empty homes

Acquisitions contribute to both preventing homelessness and reducing the length of time spent in TA, but they are included in this section given the relative speed with which they can be delivered, allowing them to contribute to rehousing families currently trapped in TA. The Scottish Government has made commitments to supporting acquisitions on the open market as well as through compulsory purchase:

- The TAFG response committed to at least £60m through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in 2023-24 to support a national acquisition plan,⁵⁴ and the HEAP committed to doubling the second year of the targeted ‘voids and acquisition’ fund from £40m to £80m, with a particular focus on family homes.⁵⁶
- The TAFG response,⁵⁴ and 2023 and 2024 EHT reports,^{49 50} committed to modernising the compulsory purchase system to enable quicker acquisition of empty homes.

In 2023-24, the Scottish Government spent £83m on acquisitions, delivering 1,499 homes, of which 1,414 were for social rent. In 2024-25, national spending on acquisitions increased to just under £87m, delivering 1,348 homes, of which 1,324 were for social rent.³² And in 2025-26, spending increased to £118m, delivering 1,683 homes, with 98% of these (1,648) for social rent.¹⁵

Unfortunately, without any data on the size of these homes or the household types they are allocated to, it is almost impossible to track the benefits for children in temporary accommodation. The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan Progress Report 2025/26 contains only an imprecise estimate: “Doubling housing acquisition funding to £80 million is estimated to help take between 600-800 children out of temporary accommodation”.¹³ And other than a factsheet published in December 2024, there does not appear to be a ‘plan’ behind the national acquisitions programme.⁶⁵

As for the compulsory purchase system, the Scottish Government consulted on compulsory purchase reform from September to December 2025, with questions both on modernising the compulsory purchase system and on introducing compulsory sale and lease orders. Analysis of consultation responses is underway.⁶⁶

3.3.2. Making better use of existing social housing stock

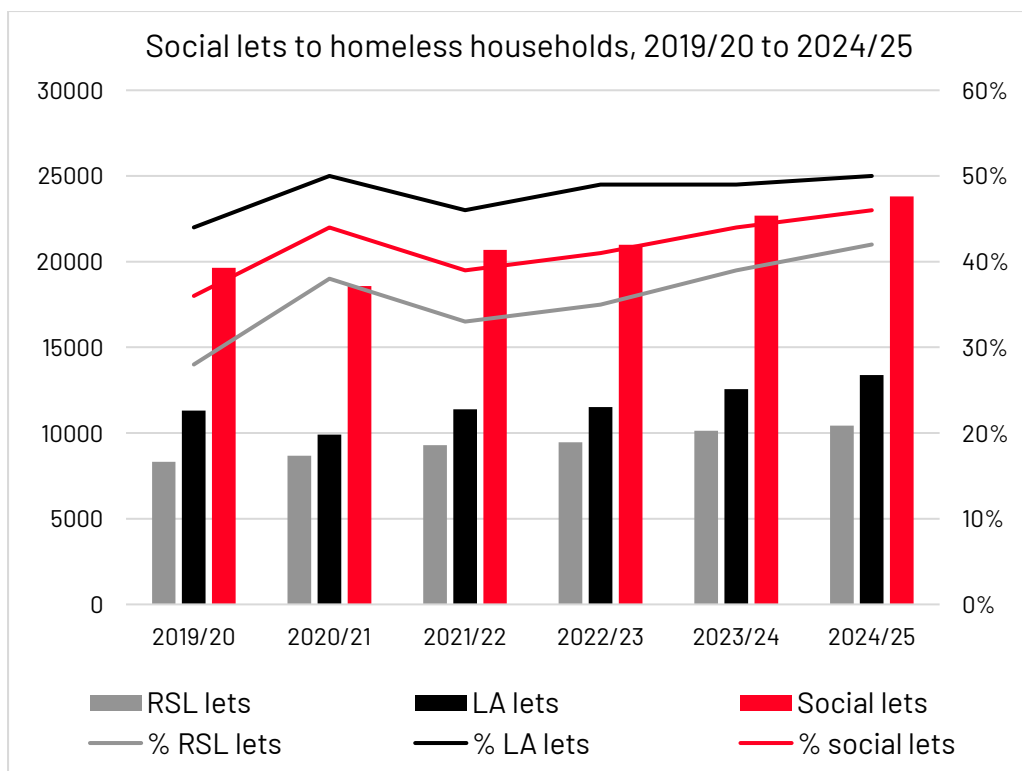
Much attention has focused on making better use of existing housing stock to tackle the housing emergency. The Scottish Government made a general commitment in their TAFG response to working with individual areas on solutions to void management that are right for them.⁵⁴ They have also made the following more specific commitments:

- The 2023 EHT annual report committed to producing guidance on converting TA into permanent lets and on void management.⁴⁹
- The HEAP committed the Housing Secretary to asking all LAs to contact households with children in good quality TA about the prospect of flipping their TA into a permanent home.⁵⁶
- The TAFG response⁵⁴ and 2020 EHT updated action plan⁴⁵ committed to increasing the proportion of social housing allocations to people who are homeless. This is a longstanding recommendation dating back to the 2018 report of the Scottish Government-convened Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group.⁶⁷
- H2040 committed to reviewing the approach to identifying housing need and determining social housing allocations;⁵² the TAFG response committed to developing a broad set of allocation parameters.⁵⁴

ALACHO has produced a good practice note on converting TA into permanent lets,¹⁸ but guidance promised on void management has not been published.

The then-Housing Secretary wrote to all LAs in October 2025 asking them to contact every household with children in good quality TA to explore if the property is suitable for flipping, but the outcomes of this are unclear.⁵¹

Both the number and percentage of social lets made to homeless households have increased in the last year, although the lack of numerical targets makes it difficult to judge the adequacy of progress. 46% of social lets – including 42% of lets by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and 50% of lets by local authorities (LAs) – were made to homeless households in 2024/25, up from 44% of social lets (39% of RSL lets and 49% of local authority lets) the previous year.¹⁶



There have been no updates to the Social Housing Allocations Practice Guide since the latest publication in February 2019.¹⁷

3.3.3. Supporting move-on from temporary accommodation

The TAFG response included a broad commitment to supporting LAs' efforts to help families with children trapped in TA for years to move into suitable permanent housing.⁵⁴ Several more specific commitments have also been made:

- The 2018 EHT action plan committed to updating the homelessness Code of Guidance to ensure regular reviews are conducted to identify early options to move on from TA.⁴⁴
- The TAFG response committed to supporting local areas to introduce common housing registers; maximising the impact of additional Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan funding; and seeking a shared approach to funding arrangements for LAs.⁵⁴
- The HEAP committed to up to £2m through Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to support households to find settled homes in the private rented sector.⁵⁶

Progress on these commitments has been mixed. The latest interim update to the homelessness Code of Guidance published in 2019 contains little mention of conducting regular reviews to identify early options for move-on from TA,⁶¹ although as above, a fuller update to the code began in 2026. Many areas still do not have common housing registers, and the latest update from the government on this was then-Housing Secretary Mairi McAllan's statement in November 2025 that she had asked her officials to "look further" at the issue of establishing one

in Glasgow.¹⁹ Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan funding for 2026-27 is distributed by the number of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness, but not by supply or availability of TA.⁶⁸ Finally, £3m was allocated to DHPs for the HEAP during 2025-26, of which any remaining funds can be carried forward to 2026-27,⁶⁹ but it is unclear whether this was all spent on helping households in TA find settled homes in the private rented sector.

3.4. The rights of the child in temporary accommodation

The 'In Their Own Words' research revealed instances of children in temporary accommodation in Scotland being denied basic rights including to an adequate standard of living, the highest possible standards of health, education and play.³ Children's access to these rights depends both on the physical quality and location of their TA, and on wider factors such as decision-making processes and routes to legal remedy if rights are not upheld. Similarly, we know that when temporary accommodation is needed, taking steps to ensure it is suitable and meets the needs of the child can make a crucial difference to their experiences.

Case study from Fife Gingerbread: meet Jamie⁷⁰

Jamie is 14 years old and has lived in temporary accommodation for more than two years with his mum, dad and three older brothers. The family are in a three-bedroom house far away from school, work, friends and family. It takes Jamie an hour and a half on two buses to get to school. Last year, Jamie was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, adding regular healthcare appointments to the many challenges his family already faced.

The distance affected every part of family life. Jamie and his brothers were unable to spend time with friends outside school, becoming increasingly isolated from the people and places that mattered most to them. His mum, Louise, was forced to leave her job because the long journeys and lack of flexibility from her employer made work impossible to sustain.

The pressure of managing daily travel, rising living costs and overcrowded accommodation created significant stress within the household, impacting relationships and wellbeing. The family were struggling financially and emotionally when Louise was referred by her Housing Officer to Fife Gingerbread's Team Around the Home project.

Through regular one-to-one support, Louise gradually built the trust needed to share her family's story. Losing a private tenancy they had lived in for years had been traumatic, and having never needed support before, asking for help was difficult.

Together, Louise and her Fife Gingerbread worker identified practical steps that could improve day-to-day life while working towards longer-term housing solutions. This included support to address fuel debt, establishing sustainable household budgeting and making the temporary accommodation feel more like a home. One simple but meaningful change was securing different furniture for the family.

"You don't know how good it is not to have those black couches stacked up in my living room."

Through consistent support and advocacy, the family developed stronger links with the Local Authority housing team and chose to pursue a complaints process. This ultimately resulted in a transfer to a larger property much closer to their schools, healthcare services and support networks.

"Jamie is over the moon as it's within walking distance of his friends."

Although still living in temporary accommodation, the difference of being in a property that meets the needs of the whole family has been life changing. Jamie now has space for his belongings and the freedom to spend time with friends and family.

"It's so much better than before. I can see my friends and my Gran."

The family are looking beyond simply getting through each day. Instead of focusing on survival, they can focus on living, rebuilding relationships and looking forward to the future.

3.4.1. Standards and suitability of temporary accommodation

The Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO) 2004 and subsequently the UAO 2014 set legal requirements for the standards of temporary accommodation provided to households with a pregnant woman or children, which were later expanded to include all households.^{71 72} Despite this, the UAO was breached 1,350 times for households with children in 2024-25, up from 1,080 times the previous year and 685 the year before.⁴ Additionally, while most of the 10,480 children in temporary accommodation as of 30 September 2025 were in local authority furnished (39%) or housing association (27%) accommodation, 3% (360 children) were in bed and breakfast accommodation, and 28% were in 'other' accommodation – which includes "all other property not owned by the local authority, such as mobile homes, caravans or chalets".²

The Scottish Government has made several commitments to providing funding and introducing standards that could help raise the quality of TA in general:

- The first commitment to TA standards was made in the 2018 EHT action plan.⁴⁴
- The HEAP committed to funding pilot schemes including private sector leasing to reduce the use of unsuitable TA such as hostels, hotels and B&Bs.⁵⁶

On the first commitment, TA standards have been developed, and a consultation on legal enforcement closed in January 2026.²⁰ However, there is limited publicly available evidence of progress on the second commitment.

3.4.2. Children's wellbeing in temporary accommodation

The 2018 EHT action plan committed to supporting the homelessness system to respond more appropriately to the shared needs of mothers and children,⁴⁴ but there is very little detail in this or subsequent plans on how this would be achieved. A more specific commitment was made on children's wellbeing in TA:

- The 2018 EHT action plan committed to incorporating child wellbeing assessments into the homelessness Code of Guidance⁴⁴ and the 2021 EHT annual report pledged to include practical advice on them in this.⁴⁷

As noted previously, the Code of Guidance was only partially updated in 2019⁶¹ – and it contains no mention of child wellbeing assessments – but a fuller update began in 2026.

3.4.3. Access to services for children in temporary accommodation

In March 2025, then-Housing Minister Paul McLennan stated in Parliament that the Scottish Government expects local authorities to “work to meet the needs” of households in temporary and settled accommodation, and “For children and young people, that means reducing moves between properties, living in a home close to their school so that they can maintain social connections, and having access to outdoor areas and gardens.”⁷³ However, again, few commitments have been made to tangible actions that would help deliver this expectation.

- In April 2025, responding to a written parliamentary question on the ‘In Their Own Words’ research, Graeme Dey, then-Minister for Higher and Further Education, committed to ensuring the next version of Education Maintenance Allowance guidance issued for 2025-26 includes strengthened guidance on applying flexibility in attendance specifically for children experiencing homelessness.⁷⁴
- The 2025 EHT annual report committed to continuing work to make Public Health Scotland’s (PHS) linked health and homelessness dashboard available to all LA areas.⁵¹

Updated 2025/26 guidance on the Education Maintenance Allowance states that “flexibility should be extended to applicants in difficult circumstances” including homeless young people.²¹

24 of Scotland’s 32 local authorities currently supply homelessness data to PHS’s linked health and homelessness dashboard.²² Officials note that supplying this data to PHS is not mandatory, and barriers to doing so include limited capacity and systems that do not easily support data sharing and transfer. PHS are working with colleagues in the Scottish Government to explore more practical and sustainable solutions.⁷⁵

3.4.4. Human rights incorporation

The UK, and therefore Scotland, is a signatory to numerous international human rights treaties.⁷⁶ Incorporating these treaties into domestic law makes them legally enforceable in domestic courts, giving people greater protection against violations of their rights.

The UNCRC (Incorporation)(Scotland) Act 2024 enshrined the UNCRC in Scots law, making it unlawful for Scottish public bodies to breach children’s rights.⁷⁷ However, due to a legal challenge from the UK Government, the Act only applies to public bodies exercising duties under Scottish legislation passed post-devolution. This means children’s rights aren’t enforceable in cases where public services are exercising duties placed on them by laws made

before the Scottish Parliament was established in 1999, or by more recent laws that amend laws made pre-devolution – which includes most relevant homelessness legislation.

The Scottish Government has made several commitments to try to address this, as well as a commitment to incorporate other international human rights treaties into Scots law.

- In a letter in November 2023, Shirley-Anne Somerville, then Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, committed to trying to draft future legislation in a way that maximises applicability of the UNCRC Incorporation Act, including by drafting legislation anew rather than amending pre-devolution legislation.²³
- In the same letter, Somerville said she had asked officials to commission a review of UK Acts in devolved areas, “to identify provisions in UK Acts that may benefit from being re-enacting [sic] in Acts of the Scottish Parliament.”
- The 2021 EHT annual report committed to introducing a Human Rights Bill, including the right to adequate housing, in the last parliament;⁴⁷ the 2025 EHT report delayed this to the first year of the current parliament.⁵¹

Contrary to the first commitment, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2025 and Children (Care, Care Experience and Services Planning)(Scotland) Act 2026 made numerous amendments to pre-devolution legislation, meaning significant sections were out of scope of UNCRC incorporation. Government sought to justify this decision for the Children’s Care Act by announcing a review of children’s care legislation,⁷⁸ which has now commenced, but no such commitment has been made for homelessness legislation. The wider review of UK Acts in devolved areas committed does not appear to have been taken forward. No public updates have yet been made on a Human Rights Bill in this parliament.

3.5. Summary

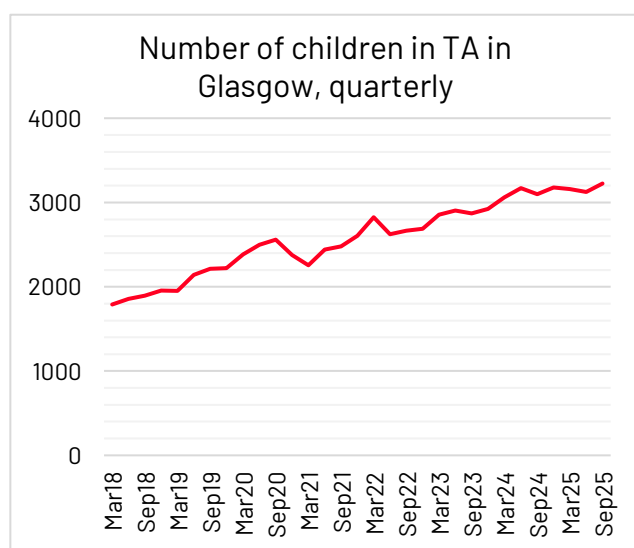
This section demonstrates the large number of commitments the Scottish Government has made in relation to children in temporary accommodation, and the mixed and often limited progress made against them. Some of the commitments are too vague for progress to be meaningfully evaluated, while others relate to pieces of work that have stalled or been discarded, with varying levels of public acknowledgement. This underscores the need for a more coherent policy approach with clear, measurable targets and progress against them assessed continually and transparently.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROACHES

Alongside its national activity, the Building Hope project has a particular focus on three local authority (LA) areas: Glasgow City Council, City of Edinburgh Council, and Fife Council. These LAs were chosen because at the time of the project being developed, the Scottish Housing Regulator had assessed their homelessness services as being in 'systemic failure' – meaning they could no longer meet their statutory duties to people experiencing homelessness. As of the latest update from the regulator, Glasgow and Edinburgh remain in this category while Fife has shown enough improvement to move to being 'at heightened risk' of systemic failure.^{24 25 26} This section considers commitments the three LAs have made in relation to children in temporary accommodation, and progress against these.

4.1. Glasgow City Council

As of September 2025, there are 3,225 children living in temporary accommodation in Glasgow² – up from 1,895 in September 2018, the year quarterly data recording began.⁷⁹ This is a rate of 295 children in TA per 10,000 children, compared to the national rate of 105 per 10,000, in 2025.^{2 80} Households in Glasgow spend an average of 275 days in TA (the ninth longest in Scotland), while couples with children spend an average of 425 days there (second longest), and single parents spend 347 days (fourth longest).⁴



Glasgow City Council declared a housing emergency in November 2023. The council published its Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) in January 2025,²⁷ and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for 2026/27-2030/31 was approved in November 2025.⁸¹ Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership published a 10-year Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Strategy in May 2026, replacing the previous five-year strategy, although it contains no mentions of children in TA.⁸²

Notably, Glasgow City Council is a stock transfer authority, meaning it does not have its own social housing stock, instead relying on Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to provide social housing. Glasgow and the Clyde Valley's Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) was published in June 2024.⁸³

4.1.1. Affordable housebuilding

- The HNDA estimated that Glasgow City needs between 543 and 616 new social rented homes each year until 2040.⁸³
- The HEAP committed to “Fund and work in partnership with RSLs to develop new and increase the supply of new affordable homes through the city’s Affordable Housing Supply Programme” (AHSP). It forecast that approximately 900 new build properties would be completed during 2024/25.²⁷
- Over the longer term, the council has a target that 80% of new housebuilding approved through its AHSP will be homes for social rent.⁸¹
- The SHIP set out a delivery programme with 165 potential projects that could deliver approximately 6,361 new homes, including 5,471 completions between 2026/27 to 2030/31 and 890 post-2030/31. Within this, it set out an aim to approve at least 40 larger family-sized affordable homes (4+ bedrooms and 6+ persons) per year.⁸¹

Glasgow’s AHSP delivered 1,011 completed new build affordable homes in 2024/25,²⁸ exceeding the HEAP’s forecast, but this fell to 448 in 2025/26.²⁹ Data is not readily available on the proportion of these homes that are for social rent, or the number of larger family-sized affordable homes that have been approved or delivered. However, it is clear that affordable housebuilding is not currently happening at the scale or pace needed in Glasgow.

4.1.2. Homelessness prevention activity

- Glasgow’s HEAP committed to continuing to fund the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Hub to support private tenants at risk of homelessness, stating that “The PRS Hub will continue its work to support families in the PRS, particularly families with children who are living in poverty due to the impact of welfare reform.”²⁷
- There were no other commitments to preventing child homelessness specifically, but general commitments on prevention included: increasing focus on upstream prevention; reviewing current information about available housing options on the HSCP and Glasgow City Council websites; continuing to provide housing support and Money and Debt Advice services through Health and Social Care Connect; and redesigning the Tenant Hardship Fund.²⁷

The number of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in Glasgow decreased by 5% from 6,833 in the year to end September 2024 to 6,501 in the year to end September 2025.² The 2025/26 annual review of Glasgow’s Local Housing Strategy stated that the council’s PRS Housing and Welfare Hub “continues to prevent families from becoming homeless”.²⁹

A significant proportion of people presenting as homeless in Glasgow are refugees who have recently been granted leave to remain and evicted from their asylum accommodation, and this

form of homelessness is not preventable by Glasgow City Council while the UK Government's current system of 'homelessness by design' for refugees remains in place. Glasgow's HEAP stated that as of December 2024, 41% of homeless applications were from refugee households, and 60% of children in TA were from refugee households.²⁷ This underscores the importance of the council's other commitments around securing more permanent housing stock, alongside lobbying for a more humane and effective asylum system that does not make homelessness inevitable for people seeking safety in the UK.

4.1.3. Acquisitions

- The HEAP committed to "Fund RSLs to acquire private sector properties to increase the supply of social rented housing and let to homeless households through Section 5 process", setting out £11.544m for RSLs in 2024/25.²⁷
- The SHIP included proposals for £60m towards supporting Registered Social Landlords to acquire 550 private sector properties during the next five years.⁸¹

National data shows that Glasgow City Council spent £14m on acquisitions in 2024-25, exceeding the HEAP commitment, although this still represented a decrease in both spending and homes delivered from the previous year.³² In 2025-26 spending increased considerably to £20m but a similar number of homes were delivered.³³ Perhaps counterintuitively, this may be positive for this analysis as it suggests the properties acquired were larger and potentially more suitable for families with children trapped in TA. However, no data is available to confirm this.

Table 1: Acquisitions spending and number of homes delivered by Glasgow City Council

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total spend (£m)	17.068	14.032	20.462
Total homes delivered	176	131	129
Total social rent	167	131	Not stated

Glasgow's 2024/25 AHSP performance review also stated that "180 properties were acquired or are being brought back into use" through the £11.544m funding referenced in the HEAP, which it described as grant funding specifically for strategic acquisitions, with a particular focus on family homes.²⁸ Again, however, there is no data on the size of these 180 homes.

4.1.4. Making better use of existing stock

- Glasgow's HEAP committed to reducing the under-occupation of family homes in the social rented sector through the Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme, which was relaunched in January 2024.²⁷
- The HEAP also committed to "Work with RSLs to bring empty homes back into use more quickly and let to homeless households."²⁷

- Glasgow's 10-year TA strategy set a target for an average of 61% of all available social tenancies to be allocated to homeless households across the 10-year period, ranging from 67% in year one to 57% in year 10.⁸²

The 2025/26 annual review of Glasgow's Local Housing Strategy stated that 35 family homes were allocated to families experiencing homelessness, including 87 children, via the Citywide Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme in 2025/26.²⁹ This appears successful although it is unclear whether there is an opportunity to scale this up.

The HEAP reported that as of December 2024, RSLs in Glasgow made approximately 52% of lets to homeless households.²⁷ Meeting the 67% target will be challenging and require strong buy-in from RSLs.

4.1.5. Securing temporary accommodation for larger families

- The HEAP committed to securing larger, nontraditional properties such as care homes and residential units for use as temporary accommodation. It stated that "Council-owned sites are being identified and business cases being prepared for capital funding from GCC with the intention to repurpose the sites in two phases to accommodate larger families."²⁷

Glasgow's 2024/25 AHSP performance review stated that the council transferred two sites to housing associations, which will contribute 24 units to the AHSP, in 2024/25.²⁸

4.1.6. Suitability of temporary accommodation

- The HEAP stated that Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership is committed to reducing the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation in Glasgow.²⁷

While data is not published for children, there were 3,315 breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order in Glasgow in the year to end 2025, up 3% from 3,210 the previous year.² On 31 March 2025 – the last data available – although the vast majority of children in TA in Glasgow were in a local authority or housing association dwelling (2,620 or 82%), there were 195 children (6%) accommodated in a B&B.⁴

4.1.7. Summary

There are 3,225 children in TA in Glasgow, a record high, and couples with children spend an average of 425 days in TA.

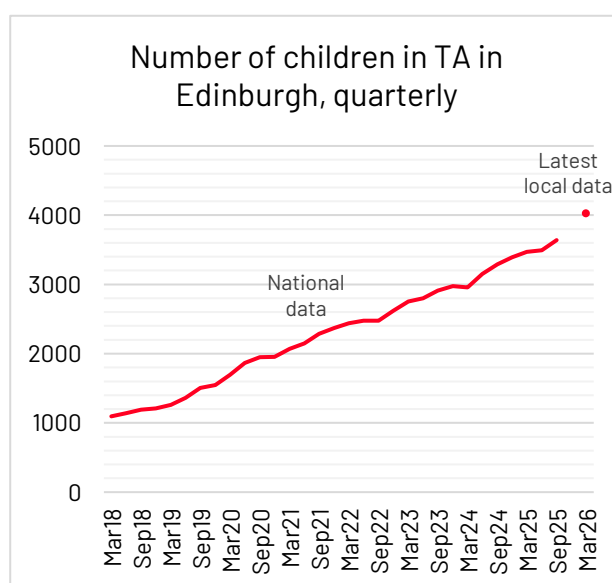
Affordable housebuilding completions have slowed, and without data on the size of the homes that have been built and acquired, it is very difficult to evaluate progress to increase the supply of affordable family-sized homes in the city.

The number of households assessed as homeless has decreased slightly, but a significant proportion of people presenting as homeless are refugees and this form of homelessness is not preventable by Glasgow City Council while the UK Government maintains its policy of 'homelessness by design' for newly recognised refugees. Fairer funding for frontline services from Scottish Government to reflect changes in how homeless applications are now distributed between local authorities is essential to ensure Glasgow receives the support it needs, in addition to action by the UK Government to adopt a more humane and effective asylum system that does not make homelessness inevitable for people seeking safety in the UK.

The council has had some success with the Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme and efforts to repurpose council-owned sites to accommodate larger families, and the target set for the proportion of social lets to homeless households is rightly ambitious. However, more detail is needed to understand how this will be achieved and whether the impact is likely to be sufficient to begin reducing the number of children in TA in Glasgow.

4.2. City of Edinburgh Council

National data shows there were 3,640 children living in temporary accommodation in Edinburgh in September 2025² – up from 1,190 in September 2018, the year quarterly data recording began.⁷⁹ This is a rate of 439 children in TA per 10,000 children, compared to the national rate of 105 per 10,000, in 2025.² ⁸⁰ Local data shows the number had increased further to 4,024 in March 2026.³⁴ Households in Edinburgh spend an average of 538 days in TA; couples with children spend an average of 778 days there; and single parents spend an average of 793 days there. Each of these is the longest of any local authority area in Scotland.⁴



Edinburgh and South East Scotland's Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2021-2040 was approved in July 2022.⁸⁴ City of Edinburgh Council declared a housing emergency in November 2023 and published its first draft Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) in December 2023,³⁰ followed by an updated HEAP in February 2024⁸⁵ and another in June 2025.⁸⁶ The council's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for 2025-30 was published in June 2025,⁸⁷ and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for 2026-31 was published in November 2025.⁸⁸

4.2.1. Affordable housebuilding

- The HNDA estimated that Edinburgh needs between 1,575 and 2,431 affordable homes (including 1,126 to 1,920 social homes) each year from 2021-25, and between 1,146 and 2,041 affordable homes (including 711 to 1,517 social homes) each year from 2026-30.⁸⁴
- The SHIP for 2026-31 identified a pipeline of 6,248 affordable homes that could be approved for site start that require AHSP funding, including a projected 1,281 three-bedroom homes and 26 four-bedroom homes. However, it stated that if AHSP funding remains at current levels for the duration of the SHIP, there will be a shortfall of £265m, limiting new grant funded approvals to a maximum of 2,300 (with an estimated ratio of 70% social rent to 30% mid-market rent).⁸⁸

The difference between the number of potential approvals identified and the number of approvals feasible with current AHSP funding shows how national funding levels are constraining delivery. Positively, the Biannual Update on the HEAP published in August 2026 stated that 1,473 new build affordable homes were completed in 2025/26, up from 1,135 the previous year³⁴ and 934 the previous year.⁸⁹ National housebuilding data shows that this included 831 social homes – considerably higher than any of the previous five years (in which completions ranged from 240 to 427).³¹ While this is progress, previous years of under-delivery mean further acceleration is required to meet demand. Publicly available detail on the size of the homes delivered is also lacking, making it difficult to assess their impact on families with children trapped in temporary accommodation.

4.2.2. Homelessness prevention activity

- The 2023 HEAP proposed to “Target interventions to prevent homeless presentations, using data to support those with protected characteristics, and families supported by protective services.”³⁰
- It also proposed to “Put in place dedicated resource to work across housing and children and justice services to prevent homelessness and ensure the principles of The Promise are incorporated into the approach, recognising the discreet needs of families, individual adults and young people, including access to the exceptional housing award for Care Leavers.”

The 2026 cyclical assurance report stated that 1,410 households were prevented from becoming homeless by the Private Rented Sector Team in the financial year to December 2025, 14% above the previous year.³⁵ The number of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in Edinburgh increased very slightly (by less than 1%) from 3,582 in the year to end September 2024 to 3,597 in the year to end September 2025.²

Edinburgh also sees a significant number of refugees presenting as homeless due to the UK Government’s policy of ‘homelessness by design’ for newly recognised refugees. While the

council does not publish the numbers of children in TA who are refugees, over 16% of all households in TA in Edinburgh are refugees with a positive asylum decision.⁹⁰ As in Glasgow, this underscores the importance of the council's other commitments around securing more permanent housing stock, alongside the need for increased support from the Scottish Government and a more humane and effective asylum system that does not make homelessness inevitable for people seeking safety in the UK.

4.2.3. Acquisitions

- The 2023 HEAP proposed securing additional 'off the shelf' homes through the council's acquisition policy, as well as purchasing additional properties for use as TA.³⁰
- The SHIP identified acquisitions as the quickest route to delivering more family-sized homes, stating that the second tranche of 2025/26 National Acquisitions Plan (NAP) funding would "seek to deliver as many larger, family sized homes as possible to support households to move on from temporary accommodation into permanent, settled homes". It projected that the funding could deliver around 160 approvals including 60 'off the shelf' purchases and 100 through the Acquisitions and Disposals programme for use as temporary accommodation.⁸⁸

There are various updates on acquisition figures for Edinburgh with different levels of detail. National data shows that the amount spent on acquisitions and the number of homes delivered increased considerably in Edinburgh from 2024-25 to 2025-26.^{32 33}

Table 2: Acquisitions spending and number of homes delivered by City of Edinburgh Council

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total spend (£m)	9.027	11.582	28.816
Total homes delivered	138	221	374
Total social rent	138	221	Not stated

The February 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP stated that 565 homes were approved for purchase for use as TA in Edinburgh in 2025/26.⁹¹ Edinburgh's Housing Delivery Strategy Update published in June 2026 stated that in the 12 months prior, 385 units were acquired for use as TA, as well as 106 homes 'off the shelf' for settled accommodation and 13 'off the shelf' for mid-market rent.⁹² The August 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP referenced a target of 300 acquisitions (which does not appear in any iterations of the HEAP itself) and stated that 159 properties had been purchased in 2025/26. It also stated that "Funding has been agreed to purchase up to 300 second hand homes during 2026/27", with 141 homes purchased to date.³⁴

National acquisitions data does not include information on the sizes of the homes delivered. The February 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP said NAP funding had allowed the approval of six one-bedroom, 28 three-bedroom and one four-bedroom purchases for settled accommodation, and that around 80 three-bedroom and larger properties were expected to be purchased using NAP funding by the end of the financial year.⁹¹ The August 2026 Biannual

Update did not provide any update on this but stated that 13 three-bed and three four-bed homes have been purchased since April 2026.³⁴

These figures demonstrate the emphasis City of Edinburgh Council is placing on acquisitions in response to the housing emergency, with a significant number of homes, including larger family homes, being purchased. However, inconsistent methods of reporting and levels of detail make it difficult to assess progress towards targets and understand the impact for children, and again, delivery appears constrained by national government funding.

4.2.4. Making better use of existing stock

Allocations

- The 2023 HEAP proposed making at least 70% of council housing allocations to homeless applicants and maximising RSL lets to homeless households.³⁰ The LHS included a target to let at least 80% of council and 65% of RSL social homes to households experiencing homelessness.⁸⁷
- The 2024 HEAP committed to reviewing the allocation policy for council homes.⁸⁵

Scottish Housing Regulator data shows that 65.9% of lets (excluding exchanges) made by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) were to homeless households in 2024/25,⁹³ above the national average but short of the original 70% target. However, in April 2025 CEC suspended its Letting Policy to allow council homes to be used for TA and to direct let some properties to priority groups.⁹⁴ The SHIP published in November 2025 reported that the proportion of social lets made to homeless households had increased from 71% to 80% for council homes and from 55% to 65% for RSL homes, although it did not state the time periods these figures related to.⁸⁸

The August 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP stated that a total of 197 direct lets have been made to families with children who were in unsuitable TA since the suspension of the Letting Policy began.³⁴ An update on the suspension, also published in August 2026, noted that it has helped CEC reduce its use of unsuitable accommodation and instances of failures to accommodate, and recommended that the suspension should cease from October as it is no longer required to achieve CEC's March 2027 objectives. This would mean resuming Choice Based Lettings and reinstating the council's previous target to allocate 80% of their available homes to households experiencing homelessness.⁹⁰

The February 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP also stated that the council is working with RSL partners to maximise lets to homeless households, and that these are tracked and monitored and actions discussed at the EdIndex (Edinburgh's common housing register) Board.⁹¹ The August 2026 Biannual Update identified this as a business-as-usual activity.³⁴

Additionally, the August 2026 Biannual Update stated that the Letting Policy has been reviewed and research carried out into other local authorities' policies. The first phase of engagement

and consultation activity is complete and the second phase will be carried out later this year to inform the final policy.³⁴

Incentivising downsizing

- The 2024 HEAP committed to investigating how many households are living in under-occupied tenancies to explore potential for freeing up larger homes.⁸⁵
- The SHIP outlined that delivery partners are exploring a similar approach to that taken in 2024/25, whereby they identified tenants seeking to downsize, freeing up family-sized homes.⁸⁸

The February 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP stated that research on under- and overoccupancy had been completed and would inform interim allocations policy options presented to Committee in February 2026. The update also said a review of the council's pilot tenant incentive scheme is underway;⁹¹ the August 2026 Biannual Update said the scheme will be reviewed as part of the Allocation Policy review but officers have been given authority to show flexibility within the existing scheme in the meantime.³⁴

The August update also outlined that all underoccupied tenants in 4-bed homes have been contacted to discuss options and incentives available, but only small numbers have expressed interest in moving or have very specific requirements that cannot currently be fulfilled.³⁴

Void management

- The 2023 HEAP proposed to "Increase the return rate of void Council property to lettable standard and allocate them, bringing a significant number of Council homes back in to use."³⁰

Scottish Housing Regulator data shows that council housing in Edinburgh took an average of 173.5 days to be re-let in 2024-25 (compared to the national average of 60.6 days), up from 134.7 days in 2023-24 (compared to 56.7 days).⁹⁵

However, the number of long-term voids decreased – the 2026 cyclical assurance report showed that 179 properties had been void for more than 12 months in December 2025, down from 277 the previous year.³⁵ The August 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP showed that this continued to decrease slightly to March 2026, although the exact numbers are not published.³⁴

Flipping

- The 2025 HEAP committed to exploring the possibility of 'flipping' building use, such as TA to settled accommodation.⁸⁶

A flipping strategy has been developed⁹⁶ and is due to be presented to committee for approval in August 2026. The August 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP said the strategy will be implemented as per the budget investment strategy from 2028 onwards.³⁴

4.2.5. Suitability of temporary accommodation

- The 2023 HEAP proposed developing “targeted approaches to prioritise permanent housing for those in unsuitable accommodation, recognising the correlation between unsuitable accommodation and children placed on the child protection register and becoming Looked After.”³⁰
- The 2024 HEAP committed to implementing a plan to reduce the number of families with children living in TA and taking action to prioritise permanent housing for those in unsuitable TA.⁸⁵

The August 2026 Biannual Update on the HEAP stated that in July 2026 there were 12 families with children in unsuitable TA, down from 26 in March 2025. Six of the 12 families need a property with four or more bedrooms,³⁴ again highlighting the importance of acquisitions of larger family-sized homes.

4.2.6. Summary

There were 3,640 children in TA in Edinburgh in September 2025 – as in Glasgow, a record high for the council. Couples with children spend an average of 778 days stuck in TA, the longest in Scotland.

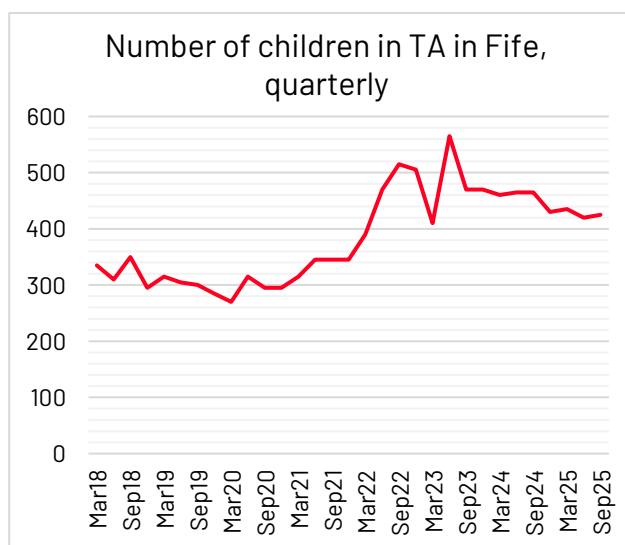
Social housebuilding completions and acquisitions in Edinburgh increased considerably between 2024-25 and 2025-26, but again, lack of data on the size of these homes makes analysis of full impact difficult and delivery hasn’t yet increased to the scale required. Increased AHSP funding is clearly needed, alongside a sharp focus from CEC and delivery partners on building affordable family-sized homes, if the council is to meet its population’s affordable housing need and reduce the number of children in TA.

The number of households assessed as homeless has also increased slightly despite more private renters being supported to keep their homes. The UK Government’s policy of ‘homelessness by design’ for newly recognised refugees continues to create homelessness that City of Edinburgh Council cannot prevent.

The council’s suspension of its Letting Policy appears to have made a positive impact on responses to homelessness, with a related 197 direct lets reportedly being made to families with children in unsuitable TA since the suspension began. Good progress has been made in halving the number of families with children in unsuitable TA, though 12 families are still stuck there. Work to reduce the turnover time for void council properties also has potential to free up more stock for families.

4.3. Fife Council

The number of children in temporary accommodation in Fife decreased from 350 in September 2018 to 270 in March 2020,⁷⁹ before increasing, with some fluctuation, to a peak of 565 in June 2023. It then decreased again to 425 in September 2025.² This is a rate of 63 children in TA per 10,000 children, compared to the national rate of 104.6 per 10,000.^{2 80} The average length of time households in Fife spend in TA is 249 days for all households (10th longest in Scotland), 201 days for couples with children (20th longest) and 225 days for single parents (14th longest).⁴



The council published its Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for 2022–2027 in November 2023.⁹⁷ The council declared a housing emergency in March 2024 and published its Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) for 2024–27 in June 2025³⁶ and its Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for 2026–2031 in October 2025.⁹⁸ Summarising its approach, the HEAP stated that “increased supply of affordable housing through both the new build programme and acquisition programme” will help end the need for TA for children and promote rapid rehousing.

4.3.1. Affordable housebuilding

- The LHS stated that Fife’s Housing Supply Target is 900 units per annum with a 43% target for affordable housing (387 units) and a 5% target for new affordable 5+ bedroom homes.⁹⁷

The 2026 annual update on the LHS stated that 211 new build affordable homes were completed in 2025/26, falling short of the LHS’s annual target, but over 10% of these were larger family homes. It set out an aim to deliver over 500 new build affordable homes in 2026/27.³⁸

A report to Fife Council’s cabinet committee on proposed affordable housebuilding for 2026–29 said officers in Planning and Housing have increased the annual housing supply target of 900 to 982, including 513 affordable homes.³⁷

4.3.2. Homelessness prevention activity

- The HEAP committed to enhancing homelessness prevention measures in preparation for wider public sector duties.³⁶

An update to the cabinet committee in April 2026 showed that the percentage of homeless cases prevented through housing option advice increased from 68% in 2023/24 to 75% in 2024/25 and 2025/26.³⁷ The number of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in Fife decreased by 6% from 2,202 in the year to end September 2024 to 2,073 in the year to end September 2025.²

4.3.3. Acquisitions

- The HEAP pledged to “Increase property acquisitions to reduce children in TA”, and specifically to “Increase acquisitions of larger family housing to reduce time families spend in temporary accommodation during 2025/26.” It set out £2.6m for 20 properties.³⁶
- The SHIP stated that “Fife Council has identified a budget of £10.788m within the capital plan during 2025/26 to support the purchase of open market housing that will be transferred into social housing”, and that “As part of the approach an additional £2.6m resettlement funding has been redirected to build capacity and meet the needs of specific households.”⁹⁸

Acquisitions spending and homes delivered through the National Acquisitions Plan increased substantially in Fife from 2024-25 to 2025-26, although spending increased to a greater degree than the number of homes delivered, suggesting increased acquisitions of larger properties.^{32 33} As in other areas, however, no data is available to confirm this.

Table 3: Acquisitions spending and number of homes delivered by Fife Council

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total spend (£m)	2.97	1.898	5.761
Total homes delivered	57	38	76
Total social rent	57	38	Not stated

4.3.4. Making better use of existing stock

Allocations

- The HEAP recommended simplifying housing allocations policy and practice and working towards a transfer-led allocations approach among Fife Housing Register partners to boost turnover.³⁶

Fife Council's cabinet committee agreed to a simplified allocations policy, subject to further modelling and impact assessment, in December 2025.³⁹ The policy sets out a transfer-led approach to increase turnover and housing opportunities for those in greatest housing need, including people experiencing homelessness.

Scottish Housing Regulator data shows that 55.7% of lets (excluding exchanges) by Fife Council were to homeless households in 2024/25.⁹³ An update to Fife Council's cabinet committee in April 2026 reported that over 1,400 housing allocations were made to statutory homeless households within a year. It proposed to "maintain allocations to statutory homeless at 55-60% of annual council let and 40%+ of annual RSL lets in Fife".³⁷

Void management

- The HEAP set an aim to reduce operational voids at any one time to 350 and to reduce turnover time to less than 25 days by 2025/26.³⁶

The April 2026 update to the cabinet showed that after reducing from 43.5 days to 37 days between 2023/24 and 2024/25, average turnover time increased slightly to 39 days in 2025/26.³⁷

Flipping

- The HEAP committed to increasing the annual flipping of temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation from 100 to 200 per year, with a specific focus on families with children in TA.³⁶

The April 2026 update to the cabinet committee reported that over 220 properties had been flipped within a year. It set a new target to increase annual flipping from 200 to 300 properties and replace the properties as part of a wider TA strategy.³⁷

4.3.5. Suitability of temporary accommodation

- The Local Housing Strategy set an aim to reduce the number of households placed in B&B type accommodation by 2027 and ensure there are no breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO).⁹⁷

The HEAP reported that from 2023/24 to 2024/25, the percentage of households placed in B&B type accommodation in Fife reduced from 23.1% to 15%, with a corresponding reduction in UAO breaches from 87 to 32.³⁶ The April 2026 cabinet update showed a further reduction to 10.22% of households placed in B&B type accommodation in 2025/26 and set a new target to reduce this to 1% in 2026/27.³⁷

Fife Council are key partners in a test and demonstration project, Team Around the Home, run by Fife Gingerbread – now making up part of the *Building Hope* project.⁹⁹ This aligns with the council's broader commitments to reducing the number of children in TA, making any experience of homelessness as brief as possible and non-recurring, and upholding children's rights.^{36 100}

4.3.6. Summary

There are 425 children in TA in Fife and couples with children spend 201 days in TA on average.

However, Fife has begun to see the numbers of children in TA falling, likely driven in large part by the council's focus on flipping temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation. While affordable homes are not being built to the scale required, the council considerably increased its acquisitions spending and number of homes delivered from 2024-25 to 2025-26, and its transfer-led approach to allocations means newly available properties can benefit more tenants. The number of households assessed as homeless has decreased slightly and the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order has decreased more considerably. Fife is still in a housing emergency and 'at heightened risk' of systemic failure, but the council's focused efforts are beginning to show positive results.

5. CONCLUSION: WHAT NEXT?

This report has demonstrated the scale of the distance between national and local government commitments and the reality for children in temporary accommodation. We cannot allow this situation to continue.

The harm temporary accommodation inflicts on children is clear. The symptoms of Scotland's housing emergency – childhoods spent in TA, overcrowding, damp and mould, rights routinely breached – cannot be accepted as the new normal.

Progress in Fife and other parts of the country has shown that change is possible, but this needs to be replicated at a far wider scale and faster pace than we have seen to date. Meaningful change has not been felt across Scotland, despite the number of commitments that have been made. We need a new approach, a renewed focus on tackling the issue – celebrating progress and highlighting areas where more support and action is required, where there are signals the change we seek is not forthcoming.

We ask our partners, allies and the wider sector to stand with children in temporary accommodation and their families, to help show that real change is possible, galvanise our communities, and build the pressure needed to turn commitments into action – until every child in Scotland has a place to call home.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Background on the Building Hope project

Building Hope is a partnership between Shelter Scotland and Fife Gingerbread, running from January 2026 to December 2027 with funding from the Robertson Trust's Beyond Pledges Fund.

Shelter Scotland exists to defend the right to a safe home and fight the devastating impact the housing emergency has on people and society. We work in communities to understand the problem and change the system. We run national campaigns to fight for home.

Fife Gingerbread is a voluntary sector organisation that provides information, advice and support services to lone parents and families in need all over Fife.

The project involves both local practice change and national policy advocacy. At a local level, Fife Gingerbread will deliver a test and demonstration project on what a person-centred approach to TA for children looks like, working with 12 families currently in the homelessness system. Shelter Scotland's East and West Communities Teams will undertake action research with families in TA in Glasgow and Edinburgh, gaining direct insight and working to make practice change locally.

At a national level, we will build a coalition of change through the project's Advisory Group and by hosting a national rally in August 2026. The rally will bring together key stakeholders across the housing, homelessness and wider children's sectors. As well as this report, we will publish a route map setting out the targeted actions needed to reduce the number of children in temporary accommodation in Scotland. A further paper will be launched at a second event in autumn 2027 pulling together the project's work and providing a crucial feedback loop and accountability mechanism for decision-makers. This will ensure that plans are amended as required, and that the work moves beyond pledges into action and outcomes.



Fife
Gingerbread

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Appendix 2: Fife Gingerbread: test and demonstration activity

Team Around the Home is Fife Gingerbread's test and demonstration contribution to *Building Hope: A Home for Every Child*, led in partnership with Shelter Scotland. The shared ambition is clear – to reduce the number of children growing up in temporary accommodation and where temporary accommodation cannot be avoided, to ensure children and families experience safety, stability, dignity and hope.

In Fife, this means moving beyond short-term crisis response and testing what it takes to wrap a coordinated, trauma-informed, whole-family approach around the home. Since 2024 Fife Gingerbread has been walking alongside families to understand the reality of the homelessness journey and opportunities for improvement and to identify policy implementation gaps. As part of the *Building Hope* partnership the Project Coordinator will engage with 12 new families in the Cowdenbeath and Glenrothes areas to learn from their experiences of homelessness and temporary accommodation while reducing practical and emotional barriers at a deeply challenging point in family life.

This work starts from the reality that for many families, temporary accommodation is not a brief pause, but a significant chapter that can affect children's education, family relationships, wellbeing, mental health and parents' ability to work or plan for the future. By combining trusted key-worker support with learning from families, practitioners and local authority partners, Team Around the Home will identify the core components of a scalable model that can improve lived experience now and influence the systems that shape children's futures.

The strategic opportunity is to translate lived experience into practical service design to support public sector reform. Developing clearer pathways, stronger information-sharing, earlier coordination and a shared commitment to children's rights across housing, education, health, employment and family support. With support from Poverty Alliance, the learning from Fife will be shaped into a Team Around the Home framework that can help turn the vision of *a home for every child* into action that is practical, relational and scalable.

Appendix 3: Abbreviations used in this document

- AHSP – Affordable Housing Supply Programme
- ALACHO – Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers
- CEC – City of Edinburgh Council
- DHP – Discretionary Housing Payment
- EHT – Ending Homelessness Together
- H2040 – Housing to 2040
- HEAP – Housing Emergency Action Plan
- HNDA – Housing Need and Demand Assessment
- LA – local authority
- LHS – Local Housing Strategy
- NAP – National Acquisitions Programme/ Plan
- PHS – Public Health Scotland
- RSL – Registered Social Landlord
- SHIP – Strategic Housing Investment Plan
- TA – temporary accommodation
- TAFG – Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group
- UAO – Unsuitable Accommodation Order
- UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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