

local action plan



homewards  
aberdeen

  
ROYAL  
FOUNDATION  
OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS  
OF WALES

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# Executive summary



## Homewards is...

A five-year, locally led programme, launched by Prince William and The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales in June 2023.

## The aim of Homewards is...

To demonstrate that together, it is possible to end homelessness – making it rare, brief, and unrepeatable.

## Homewards will do this by...

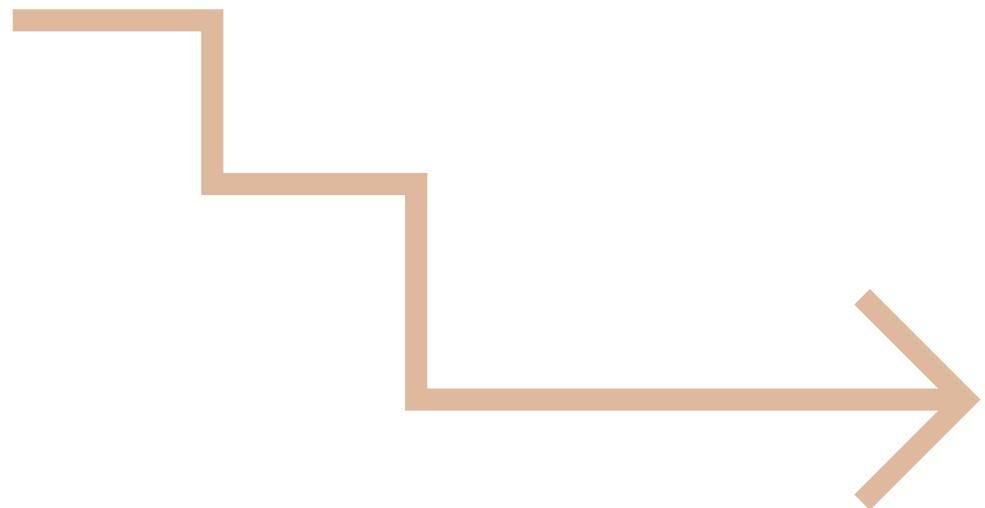
Preventing homelessness for at risk groups, whilst challenging stigma, inspiring optimism and ensuring this work is sustainable and replicable.

The six Homewards flagship locations are:



Success looks like...

- Each flagship location will be on a trajectory to end homelessness for target groups – making it rare, brief and unrepeated,
- The flagship locations will have an increased focus on sustainable prevention and collaboration,
- Communities will feel optimistic that it is possible to end homelessness and will recognise that it is beneficial to do so,
- The impact of Homewards will reach beyond the six flagship locations, with learnings being used to adopt tried and tested models in other areas.



Coalitions of organisations and people, from the public, private and voluntary sectors – have come together across the six flagship locations, committed to demonstrating that it's possible to end homelessness.

Each local Coalition has created its own Local Action Plan. They're delivering initiatives to support at-risk groups, identified by each location, where Homewards can help most.

Each Local Action Plan encompasses solutions. From housing to data to employment – and aims to make the prevention of homelessness 'business as usual'.

The Homewards Partnership, brought together by The Royal Foundation, creates an unprecedented network of individuals and organisations – including top experts and leading homelessness organisations. It continues to support the Coalitions to deliver their Local Action Plans, and to galvanise national and international momentum.

**‘By demonstrating what is working to prevent homelessness with these groups and across these key areas, Homewards will demonstrate it is possible to end homelessness, together.’**

Homewards  
National Expert Panel

All the Local Action Plans will be reviewed every year...

To reflect on progress and capture new opportunities. Activities in the Local Action Plans vary, from testing a new scalable pilot, to fundamentally changing how people in the location work together.

These are ambitious plans. As delivery progresses, some elements may need to be adjusted or updated, so the Local Action Plans are agile documents, growing alongside our Coalitions.

This ensures that the Local Action Plans remain focused on delivering tangible change, with maximum impact.



The Royal Foundation is supporting each of our six flagship locations to achieve this with...

**Additional capacity**

A Local Delivery Lead and project management support in each location.

**Homewards fund**

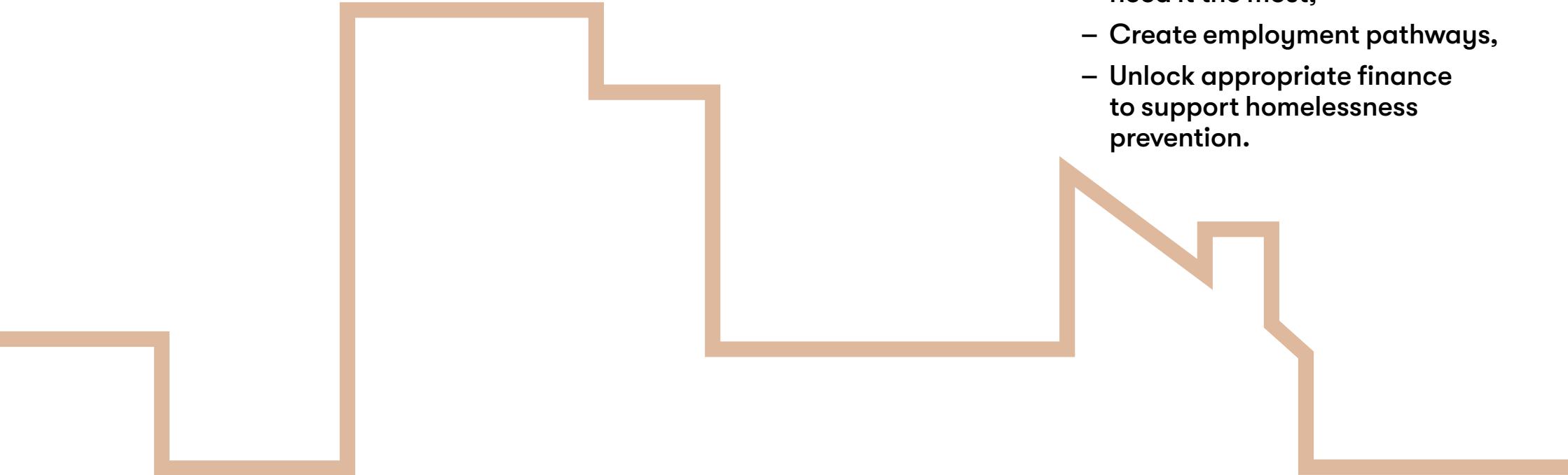
£500,000 in seed funding to back each Action Plan.

**Expertise**

Access to a cutting-edge network of global experts, business and more.

The Royal Foundation is also supporting our flagship locations, in the areas that we know are the most crucial to preventing homelessness, so that they can:

- **Unlock impactful projects,**
- **Build strategic partnerships,**
- **Establish sustainable connections,**
- **Harness data to prevent homelessness,**
- **Test new ways of improving access to homes, for those who need it the most,**
- **Create employment pathways,**
- **Unlock appropriate finance to support homelessness prevention.**





## A note from Homewards Aberdeen Chair and Vice Chair:

Over the past six months, the Homewards Aberdeen Coalition has made significant strides forward. Our shared ambition is to end homelessness for young people, and for single adults with multiple needs. Our achievements reflect the power of collaboration and innovation:

### Data insight project

In partnership with Bloomberg Associates and the Centre for Social Data Analytics, we have launched a project to harness existing data, from the council and other partners. This initiative is already shaping data-driven solutions to homelessness in our target groups.

### ‘Ask and Act’ prevention-focused software solution

We have developed an initial prototype of a digital toolkit that equips professionals with quick, accurate homelessness prevention advice. This ensures that individuals can receive timely support.

### Innovative Housing Project

March 2025 marked the first residents to move in to Aberdeen’s Innovative Housing Project. The project brings social housing voids back onto the market faster and provides essential furnishings from retail partners on day one, which improves tenancy sustainment and supports successful transitions.

### Expanding employment opportunities

We enabled Invisible Cities to expand its walking tours to Aberdeen, training and employing people with lived experience as tour guides. Project Flourish, a collaboration between Hays and EveryYouth, has engaged employers such as Specsavers and Altrad Integrity Services to support young people into meaningful employment. The Pret Foundation’s Rising Stars Programme now offers full-time training and employment at Pret A Manger shops in Aberdeen.

### Aberdeen Task and Activation

#### Partnership (ATAP) Project

This multi-agency partnership, including Aberdeen Cyrenians, Aberdeen Foyer, Turning Point Scotland and RSLs, has launched with support from the Scottish Government’s Upstream Homeless Prevention Fund. ATAP is enabling new and existing partnerships to deliver community-based activities, focusing on housing provision and tenancy sustainment.

## Looking Ahead: Our hopes and goals

**While we celebrate these achievements, our journey continues. By 2028, Homewards Aberdeen aims to demonstrate that it is possible to end homelessness for young people and single adults with multiple needs. Our focus remains on prevention and collaboration, and on delivering and testing innovative approaches that prevent homelessness and foster optimism within our communities.**

### Our goals for the next 12 months include:

- Engaging more social and private landlords, to increase housing availability,
- Designing and delivering bold, innovative housing models,
- Expanding early identification screening tools and pathways for young people,
- Building a comprehensive employment offer for young people,
- Continuing to work with schools to inform young people of their housing rights and choices,
- Establishing a Lived Experience Panel and enabling participatory storytelling, so that people can shape their own narratives and contribute to tackling homelessness.

We aim to reduce the number of single adults with multiple needs who present as homeless, following the example of places like Finland.

Whilst this reduction is critical, it is not the only way we will measure success. Our work with young people will embed prevention and strengthen existing support pathways. This will enable long term, sustainable change – which means we are unlikely to be able to quantify the total impact by 2028.

Thank you for your ongoing belief in this work, and in the power of local partnership to drive lasting change. Together, we are building momentum and making a real difference.



# 1. Empowering communities and reframing perceptions

## Local context

‘Decisions about services are often made without sufficient lived experience of people who need and use them. We have a great opportunity, here in Aberdeen during the Homewards project, to adopt good practice around meaningful collaboration with lived experience voices, as equals. So, we can all contribute our lived and learned skills and ideas, to arrive at better decisions and services – and to move towards ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief and unrepeated...’

Grampian Regional  
Equalities Council

# The Homewards Aberdeen Coalition aims to create lasting change, by challenging misconceptions and fostering empathy around homelessness.

Its mission is to help communities understand, engage with and address both the causes and solutions of homelessness. Through better collaboration, and by listening to people with lived experience, we can lay the foundations for systems change and homelessness prevention.

Homewards Aberdeen's vision is to transform how housing is perceived. This will ensure that local perspectives shape decision-making, with solutions that are tailored to the city's unique challenges. By reframing narratives, the initiative seeks to shift away from deficit-based thinking. Instead, we recognise the strengths, aspirations and potential within each community.

Ongoing efforts in Aberdeen will continue to empower communities to reimagine their housing futures. Together, we'll develop innovative, context-driven solutions. By reframing narratives and by fostering collaborative partnerships, Homewards Aberdeen aspires to create more inclusive, resilient and vibrant neighbourhoods, which can meet both current and emerging needs.

Our work links to Aberdeen's Community Planning priority areas: improving use of data and technology and creating solutions based on the voice of lived experience.

# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 1.1 Establish a living and lived experience panel

**Rationale:** We have engaged with residents in Aberdeen, both city-wide and in individual neighbourhoods. They have often told us that community involvement is ineffective. Many of them, especially young people, feel overlooked and unsure how to contribute.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will address this by establishing a diverse panel of people with living and lived experience of homelessness. We will provide them with training, support and fair remuneration. This ensures that their voices shape decisions and drive service improvements. Their involvement will also help challenge and reframe perceptions around the issue as well as build stronger, more trusting relationships between communities and services.

### Measure:

- Number of participants with lived experience of homelessness recruited, trained and supported to engage with projects,
- Documented examples of service or policy changes that have been influenced by panel input.

**Who is leading this work?** Grampian Regional Equality Council

## 1.2 Create and distribute proactive communication tools

**Rationale:** Public perceptions of homelessness are often shaped by limited or stereotypical narratives. These can reinforce stigma, reduce empathy, and undermine efforts to create lasting change. To effectively engage communities, and to build support for prevention-focused approaches, it is vital to shift how homelessness is spoken about and represented.

**Action:** In partnership with CHI, The Royal Foundation is creating bespoke language guides and image banks for each location, expanding CHI's existing assets. The intention is to broaden understanding of homelessness, to encourage empathy and to inspire optimism that homelessness can be ended.

### Measure: we will track

- The increase in use of language guides and image banks,
- Positive changes in language and imagery ,
- Stronger media engagement.

**Who is leading this work?**  
The Royal Foundation

## 1.3 Develop a new shared communications briefing

**Rationale:** Strong and consistent communications across the sector can tackle misinformation, stigma and harmful perceptions.

**Action:** The Aberdeen Reframing the Narrative group will develop a shared communications briefing for all local partners, which will enable all organisations to deliver consistent, factual and positive communications. This work will be informed by best practice in the sector, including work led by Frameworks.

### Measure:

- Homewards Aberdeen will list the organisations that have received the briefing and ask them for feedback on using it.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen Reframing the Narrative group

## 1.4 Promote positive, hopeful narratives that strengthen community cohesion and build empathy

**Rationale:** Media stories about homelessness often focus on crisis, which can reinforce stigma. Sharing positive, hopeful narratives helps not only to build empathy but to create a sense of shared responsibility for ending homelessness in Aberdeen.

**Action:** Aberdeen Reframing the Narrative group will develop a shared annual communications grid, which sets out a schedule of good news content, positive stories and success cases. These can be shared through collective channels. The grid will include a shared calendar, allowing organisations to coordinate messaging, content and campaigns.

### Measure:

- Aberdeen Reframing the Narrative Group will track partner engagement with the communications grid, the volume and reach of shared content and evidence of increased positive media coverage.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen Reframing the Narrative group

# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 1.5 'Ask and Act' – prevention-focused software

**Rationale:** Aberdeen's 2025 Population Needs Assessment highlights that, for many people who are at risk of homelessness, their first contact with professionals is outside the housing sector. Yet these professionals often lack the tools to respond effectively. Following on from work carried out by the Homelessness Rough Sleeping Action Group, beginning in late 2019 the Prevention Review Group formed a set of recommendations to place new legal duties on local authorities and other relevant bodies to prevent homelessness. The underpinning principle was to have a shared and collective responsibility across relevant bodies to prevent homelessness, through the actions of asking about a person's housing situation and acting where problems are identified. These principles have formed the basis of Part 5 of the Housing Scotland Act (2025).

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will support the development of a digital 'Ask and Act' prevention-focused software solution, aligned with incoming Scottish Government legislation. It will help non-housing professionals to identify signs of homelessness and to confidently guide people to the right support. We aim to strengthen early intervention, to reduce missed opportunities and to ensure more people get help before reaching crisis point.

**Measure:**

- Pilot software usage across at least [three] relevant bodies to support the development,
- Track number of professionals trained and active on the system,
- Monitor number and outcomes of action plans generated through the tool,
- Gather feedback from professional users,
- Evaluate data gathered on the touch points and outcomes of the interactions to help inform future planning.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen City Council



## 2.

# Targeted prevention and addressing root causes for young people (under the age of 25)

### Local context

In Aberdeen, the number of young people presenting as homeless continues to rise, up 6.6% on the same period the previous year. However, there has been a sharp decline in the number of 16- and 17- year olds applying. The number fell 38% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2025/26, from 24 in 2024/25 to 15 in 2025/26.

6.6%

Aberdeen  
increase in young people  
becoming homeless

**‘Young people should never have to experience the trauma of not having a safe place to call home. More than 50% of adults who experience homelessness first did so before the age of 21. By tackling youth homelessness, we will reduce trauma in the longer term.’**

CEO, Aberdeen Foyer

The Homewards Aberdeen Coalition believes that we can make a real impact by focusing support on young people. This includes opportunities for further education, employment and training. We will also teach life skills, such as managing household bills. This support will not only set up young people to thrive, but it could also have a wider impact in the city – supporting the local economy and community and preventing homelessness for this generation.

Family relationship breakdown – including being asked to leave – is the main reason for homelessness among young people in our area. The Coalition recognises that there is a need to improve data, so that we can better understand why young people are being asked to leave their family homes. We can then give them the right support at the right time, to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place.

Across Aberdeen and Scotland there is a wealth of data, held across statutory and non-statutory organisations, which could help to identify those who are on the brink of homelessness. This data is not brought together. Although there are some good services across Aberdeen, there is not a clear picture of who needs help and why, until they are in crisis.

Analysis shows that many young people with low support needs are turning to the Council for homelessness assistance, simply because they have no other realistic path to leave the parental home.

Existing support options, such as the Foyer and Nightstop, were primarily designed for young people experiencing homelessness. They are not accessible until a crisis point is reached, often when homelessness is already imminent. This gap leaves many young people without appropriate support at a crucial transition in their lives.



# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 2.1 Data insight project

**Rationale:** Aberdeen faces a critical need to identify people and families who are at risk of homelessness before they reach crisis point. Local data shows that many at-risk individuals engage with council and other support services prior to homelessness, but opportunities for timely intervention are often missed.

**Action:** Working with partners convened by The Royal Foundation, Homewards Aberdeen will leverage this data to design a targeted intervention programme. In the first phase, the focus will be on understanding patterns in people's service interactions before they become homeless. This will enable us to design interventions for others with similar profiles.

### Measure:

- Data partnership established,
- Targeted intervention programme designed and piloted,
- Results analysed to assess impact on homelessness prevention among target cohorts.

**Who is leading this work?** Bloomberg Associates, Social Data Analytics, Aberdeen City Council

## 2.2 Build on Upstream pilot

**Rationale:** Northfield Academy has piloted Upstream, a preventative approach that spots young people who are at greater risk of homelessness. Homelessness prevention still depends, however, upon getting the right support to these young people at the right time.

**Action:** Building on the pilot, Homewards Aberdeen will increase the wellbeing support that is available for young people who are identified through the survey.

### Measure:

- Track improvements in wellbeing outcomes for young people identified through the survey,
- Monitor how many participants avoid homelessness following early intervention,
- Assess feedback from young people and schools on the support received,
- Use learning to inform and encourage wider rollout of the Upstream model across Aberdeen.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen Foyer

## 2.3 Train young people in housing skills

**Rationale:** Housing instability is greater for young people who lack the skills to get and keep a home. Survey information shows that many young people in Aberdeen don't currently have these skills or this knowledge.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will deliver educational materials and content for lesson plans to local schools. It will focus on housing options, tenancy rights and essential life skills for maintaining a home.

### Measure:

- Material and lesson plans designed and piloted,
- At least 90% of young people in Aberdeen know where to seek guidance on housing.

**Who is leading this work?** Shelter Scotland

## 2.4 Youth-led housing pathway

**Rationale:** When young people are asked to leave the parental home, applying to the council for homelessness assistance is often the only viable route they have. Evidence suggests that a large number of young people, even those with low support needs, are doing this.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will design a dedicated youth housing pathway, developed with and for young people. It will improve access to really affordable housing options immediately and in a trauma-informed way. The aims are to:

- Reduce youth homelessness,
- Minimise reliance on temporary accommodation,
- Provide smoother transitions for those leaving home with lower support needs.

Ultimately, this approach seeks to improve long-term stability and independence for young people in Aberdeen. It will also help to address this age group's low rates of economic activity.

### Measure:

- Youth housing pathway designed and implemented,
- Track number of young people using the pathway,
- Assess impact on youth homelessness.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen Foyer

# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 2.5 Unlock job opportunities for young people in Aberdeen

**Rationale:** Securing and maintaining employment is crucial to avoiding homelessness

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will work with private-sector partners to create inclusive, sustainable jobs for young people who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. Target sectors will be guided by local labour market analysis, including insights from Hays, and will recognise the changing economy of Aberdeen.

We will also encourage employers across Aberdeen to sign up to the Crisis Homelessness Alliance's framework. Our particular focus will be on helping employers to meet the pledge of 'supporting employees who may beat risk of homelessness'. This includes supporting employers to:

- Identify staff who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness,
- Provide information and guidance,
- Signpost, and give access to, timely support.

### Measure:

- At least four Aberdeen-based employers supported to begin hiring 18- to 25-year-olds who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness,
- Number of employers signed up to the Crisis Homeless Alliance,
- Number of employers signed up that receive support to implement the CHA pledge.

## Who is leading this work? The Royal Foundation, Burgesses of Guild and The Seven Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen

### 2.6 Strengthen local employability pathways

**Rationale:** Aberdeen already has strong and well-established employability structures and partnerships, but greater collaboration can help maximise their impact.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will partner with existing employability structures, to build on the most effective routes into work and to sustain work for our cohorts. We will offer support such as funding, strong communications and shared best practice. This will include both individuals and employers.

Supported by Hays Project Flourish, Homewards Aberdeen will leverage existing LEP infrastructure and membership organisations, and in doing so will bring additional resource to the LEP. They will broker sustainable job opportunities and integrate housing support into employability services.

### Measure:

- Number of partnerships established,
- Number of people supported into employment or training.

## Who is leading this work? The Royal Foundation, Aberdeen Local Employability Partnership and the Burgesses of Guild and The Seven Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen



### 3. Targeted prevention and support for single adults with multiple needs

#### Local context

‘A single adult experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness faces distinct challenges in comparison to families. By addressing the specific needs of single adults, we can create more effective interventions and support systems that not only improve their lives but also benefit society.’

CEO, Aberdeen Cyrenians

Aberdeen is experiencing significant demographic and economic challenges. The city's population is both declining and ageing, which is contributing to economic contraction and increased pressure on local services.

Aberdeen is marked by stark inequality: one third of Scotland's least deprived areas and one third of its most deprived areas are found here, highlighting a pronounced wealth gap.

Unemployment in Aberdeen City stood at 4.4% in June 2024, which is higher than the Scottish average of 3.5%. Nearly one in four companies reduced their headcount in the first quarter of 2025, a figure well above the UK average of 17%.

Homelessness applications have surged, with single household applicants making up 78% of them. That's a 4.8% increase from last year. Total applications have risen by 21%, the highest since 2010/11.

By 2023, Aberdeen was one of only two UK cities with fewer jobs than in 2010. In 2024, nearly one in five of working-age residents were living in relative poverty. 57% of those were in working households – equivalent to roughly 16,673 people.

2024  
16,673

Aberdeen  
working residents  
living in poverty

The drivers of homelessness here are complex. They range from poverty and job loss to health issues and relationship breakdowns. Supporting this group therefore requires a multi-layered approach, to address these overlapping and multiple needs.

These trends also underline the need for a coordinated, multi-dimensional approach that goes beyond housing. We need to address the underlying causes of homelessness and to support people's wellbeing and recovery.

The Homewards Aberdeen Coalition recognizes the city's strengths and existing prevention services. But we see clear potential to bring these resources together, to ensure timely, holistic support for those at risk.

These goals also link to one of Aberdeen's Community Planning ambitions on homelessness: To embed prevention across services and support.

# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 3.1 Wrap-around support to reduce evictions from social housing

**Rationale:** Many people who become homeless in Aberdeen face overlapping issues, from poor health and family breakdown to poverty, addiction or domestic abuse. A significant number already live in social housing but lose their homes because these problems aren't addressed early enough.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen is piloting a rapid, multi-agency support service with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and third-sector partners, funded by the Scottish Government's Upstream Prevention Fund.

This rapid, multi-agency approach is designed to identify risks early. It will then deliver flexible and coordinated support that is tailored to the person's individual needs, to sustain their tenancy and get the best long-term outcome.

The intervention also includes a cash-first element, providing direct payments to households in urgent financial need. This aligns with forthcoming 'Ask and Act' prevention duties in the Housing Bill.

### Measure:

- Reduction in evictions among participating RSLs,
- Number of households receiving early multi-agency support,
- Tenancy sustainment rate among those households.

### Who is leading this work? Aberdeen Cyrenians with the Aberdeen Tasking and Activation Partnership

#### 3.2 Safe, secure and welcoming homes

**Rationale:** People at risk of homelessness in Aberdeen often struggle to access safe, secure and welcoming homes. Limited coordination between housing providers and support services can exacerbate the problem.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will pilot a new partnership between Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and third-sector support organisations, funded by the Scottish Government's Upstream Homeless Prevention Fund. Together they will:

- Widen access to safe, secure and welcoming RSL homes,
- Strengthen tenancy sustainment,
- Provide dignified, effective support for those in need.

### Measure:

- Number of RSLs and support organisations participating,
- Increase in tenancies offered to people at risk of homelessness,
- Reduction in tenancy failures or evictions among people supported.

### Who is leading this work? Aberdeen Cyrenians with the Aberdeen Tasking and Activation Partnership

## 3.3 Bridging the skills gap through a Jobs First pilot

**Rationale:** Data from Skills Development Scotland highlights that Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are experiencing significant skills and labour shortages across key sectors. At the same time, many people face substantial barriers to securing and sustaining employment, which puts them at increased risk of homelessness.

**Action:** The Social Bite's Jobs First pilot in Aberdeen creates real job opportunities. It's a targeted intervention, designed to provide immediate employment without requiring significant prior qualification prior to start of employment. Crucially, it offers wrap-around, trauma-informed support to both the employee and the employer in sectors where skills gaps exist.

Ultimately, the programme seeks not just to fill jobs, but to foster a cultural shift among employers, to build more inclusive workplaces. It also demonstrates the transformative potential of tailored, wrap-around support in securing and sustaining employment for those most at risk. Any employer who joins the programme must sign agreement with Social Bite to fulfil requirements of the programme and undertake relevant training in order for the programme to succeed.

### Measure:

- The Social Bite's Jobs First pilot phase in Aberdeen has already engaged four employees, with three currently in work

and one having completed the full 15-month programme,

- Relationships have been established with 15 referral partners and four employer partners, laying a strong foundation for further expansion, that depends on funding availability.

### Who is leading this work? Social Bite and Burgesses of Guild and Seven Incorporated Trades

## 3.4 Multi-purpose support hub

**Rationale:** This project is inspired by Hub models across the country, which offers a community space that feels safe for families..

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen is aiming to replicate this model. The hub will be a place where everyone is welcome: a place for connection, creativity, wellbeing and community empowerment. It will offer practical and flexible spaces for our cohorts, local groups and support services. The hub will transform an underused city space, allowing people to come together and shape a healthier, more connected Aberdeen.

### Measure:

- Multi-purpose hub established,
- Usage statistics,
- Qualitative feedback from users.

### Who is leading this work? Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Cyrenians supported by The Royal Foundation

## What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

### 3.5 Reduce evictions in the private rented sector

**Rationale:** Stable tenancies in the private rented sector (PRS) are essential for reducing homelessness, and to improve housing outcomes for vulnerable households.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen will deliver a project to embed best practice with letting agents and landlords. The aim is to prevent evictions in the PRS for those at risk of homelessness.

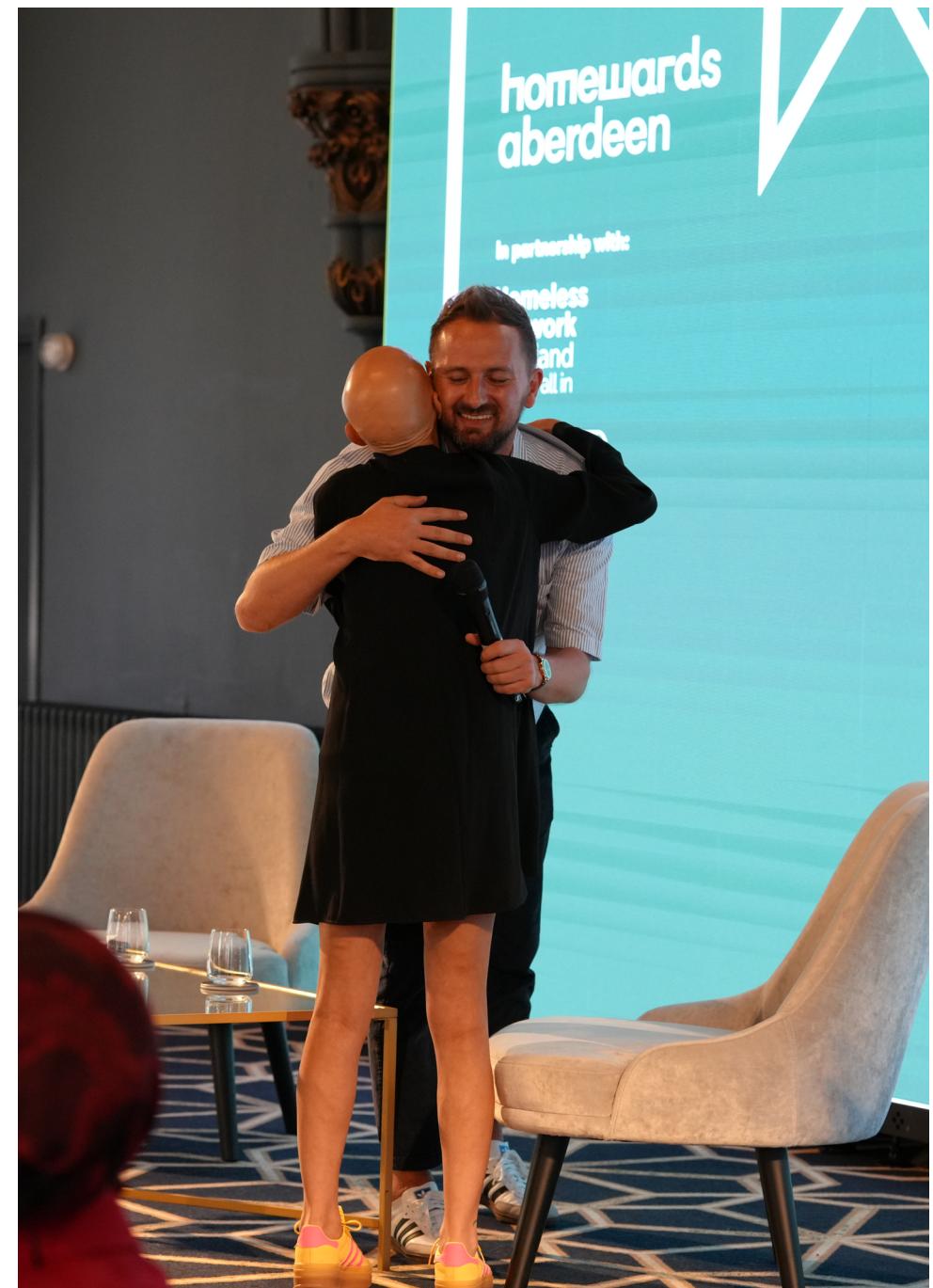
The project will target information, advice and guidance to existing landlords. It will help them to support tenants who may have experienced homelessness, or are at risk, to sustain their tenancies. It will also improve connections between services.

We will ask letting agents and landlords to identify when their tenants first fall into arrears. When that happens, we will encourage them to connect their tenants with support services as soon as possible.

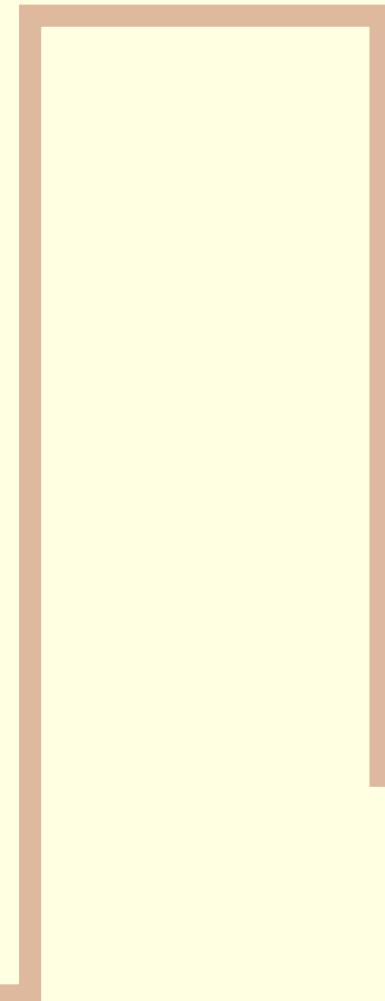
#### Measure:

- Number of letting agents and landlords signed up to the scheme,
- Number of tenants referred to support services by these landlords and letting agents.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Citizens Advice Bureau, Burgesses of Guild and Seven Incorporated Trades, Aberdeen, supported by The Royal Foundation



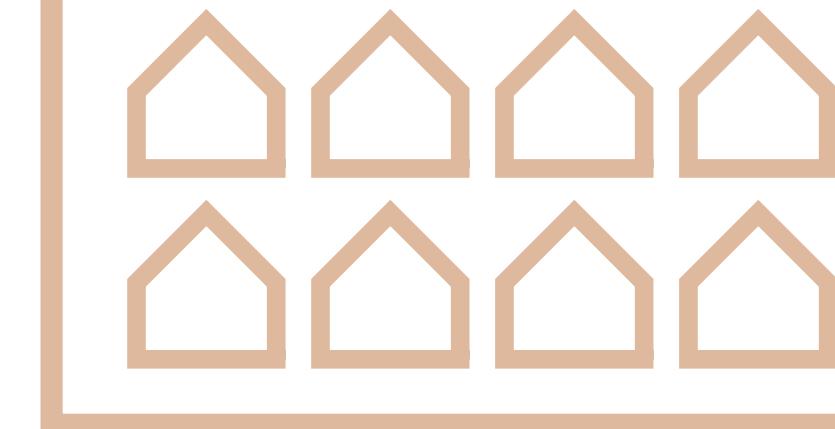
## 4. Homes



### Local context

Aberdeen has long taken a leading role in finding new ways to tackle homelessness, particularly through its Housing First pathfinder and rapid rehousing approaches.

Despite these substantial efforts, the city continues to see a rise in homelessness, which highlights that current methods are not reaching everyone in need.



Analysis shows that many young people with low support needs are turning to the Council for homelessness assistance, simply because they have no other realistic path to leave the parental home.



Data also reveals a persistent group of individuals who repeatedly apply for homelessness assistance. There is also a notable number who abandon their applications. This pattern suggests that traditional services are not effectively addressing the needs of people who struggle to sustain mainstream accommodation. This population includes those who might benefit from high levels of support, specifically around domestic abuse.

This all leads to a cycle of recurring demand, as well as missed opportunities for lasting solutions.

There is an urgent need for innovative housing solutions in Aberdeen. By rethinking how support is delivered – particularly for groups not well served by current models – the city can better prevent homelessness in the first place. It can also offer more sustainable, effective pathways and enough stock to secure housing for everyone.

# What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

## 4.1 Improve access to funding

**Rationale:** There is a shortage of affordable housing. We need to consider options for accessible funding to deliver impactful housing initiatives.

**Action:** We will launch a Connecting Capital with Community workstream. It will find strategic housing projects that work to end homelessness, then connect them with relevant investors and funding opportunities. Alongside this we will deploy £50million of new lending, committed to by Lloyds Banking Group, across the country. It will help to increase local funding streams in Aberdeen, allowing small and medium-sized housing providers and charities to deliver homes.

**Measure:** New sources of funding deployed in Aberdeen and housing providers connected to new funding options.

**Who is leading this work?** The Royal Foundation, Lloyds Banking Group

## 4.2 Bring vacant spaces back into use

**Rationale:** Currently empty residential units could provide much-needed housing for our cohorts.

**Action:** The Centre for Homelessness Impact delivered a workshop in Aberdeen, 'Designing a blueprint for innovative housing solutions'. It identified options for innovative housing models that support single homeless people. Homewards Aberdeen is developing these options.

**Local partners are keen to use vacant spaces within the city to build out these options.**

**Measure:**

- Number of vacant spaces brought back into use.

**Who is leading this work?** Aberdeen City Council and The Royal Foundation.

## 4.3 Aberdeen Innovative Housing Project (IHP) – bring vacant RSL homes back into use

**Rationale:** People experiencing homelessness often lack furnishings and other essential household goods. This can extend void turnaround times for homes owned by RSL, as well as increasing tenancy abandonments.

**Action:** Homewards Aberdeen's IHP involves working with Langstane Housing Association and other Homewards partners, to furnish previously vacant social homes and make them ready for occupation. The partners involved include The Multibank, IKEA and other local retailers.

The project brings homes back into use for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Langstane also offers tenancy sustainment support.

**Measure:**

- 12 previously vacant social homes already brought back into use,

- A further 8 homes committed,
- In total, 31 homes will be brought back into use over the next 12 months,
- Reduction in void turnaround times at Langstane,
- Improved access to RSL homes for people experiencing homelessness,
- Reduction in tenancy abandonments,
- Improved tenancy sustainment.

**Who is leading this work?** The Royal Foundation, Langstane Housing Association, The Multibank, Ikea and a range of local retailers

## 4.4 Increase access to the private rented sector

**Rationale:** Accessing affordable and secure housing is a significant challenge for those at risk of homelessness, particularly in the private rented sector. Homewards Aberdeen recognises the need to improve pathways into private rented housing, as a sustainable solution for those facing, or at risk of, homelessness.

**Action:** By working with private landlords, we will explore and develop opportunities for access.

**Measure:**

- Increase in the number of affordable, sustainable housing options available in the private rented sector to people who are at risk of homelessness.

**Who is leading this work?** Burgesses of Guild and Seven Incorporated Trades, Aberdeen city council supported by The Royal Foundation

## Get in touch

If you are a business or organisation that wants to find out more about working with Homewards, please contact [homewards@royalfoundation.com](mailto:homewards@royalfoundation.com) and one of the team will be in touch.

If you are worried about someone experiencing or at risk of homelessness, you can support them by:

- connecting them with local support services.
- donating food, clothing, and other supplies.
- giving your time volunteering in your local community.

For more information on homelessness across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, please visit the following link: [homewards.org.uk/help-resources/](https://homewards.org.uk/help-resources/)

If you would like to donate, please consider supporting one of Homewards Sector Partners, who can be found listed here: <https://homewards.org.uk/partners/>

## Source list

Information in this Action Plan is based on data collected by Aberdeen City Council about people who are experiencing or on the brink of homelessness, as well as the following sources:

Aberdeen City Council, Local Authority Level Youth Data Aberdeen, September 2024

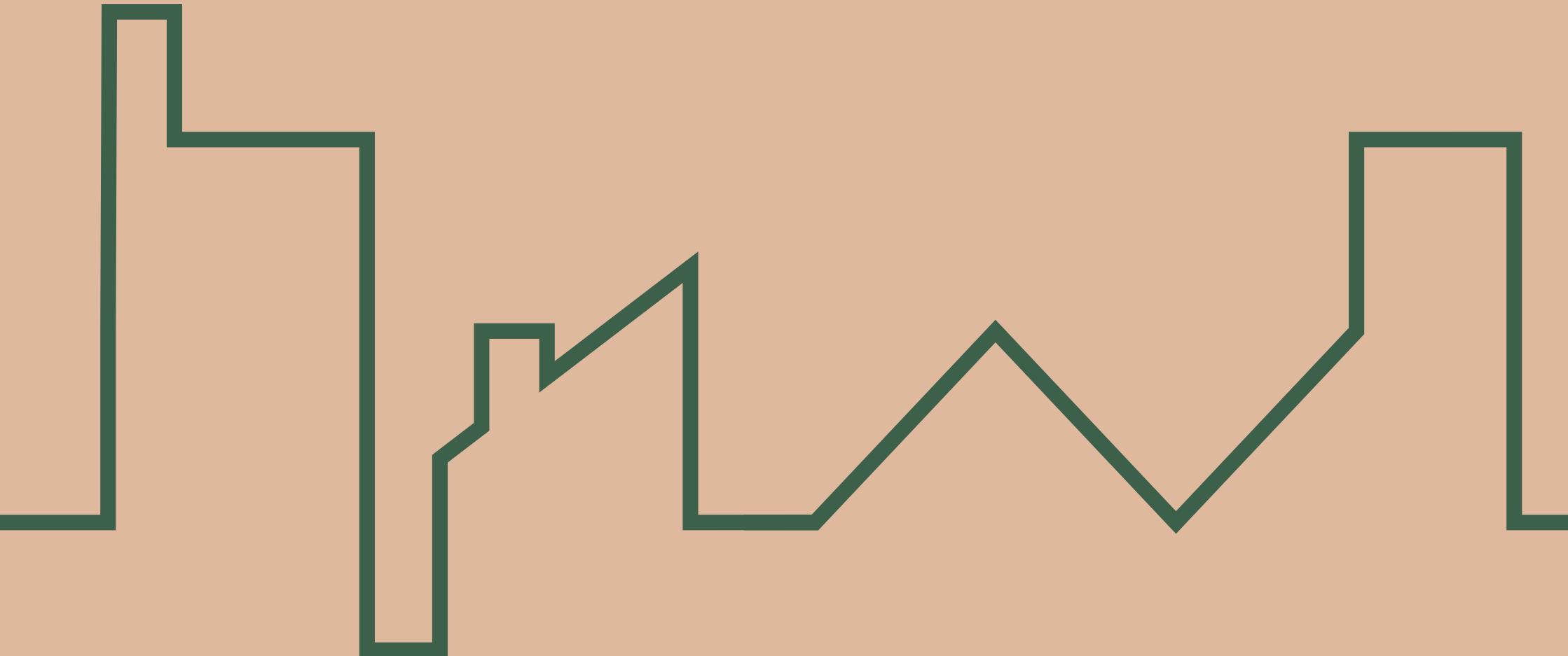
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<https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-in-scotland-full-statistical-time-series/>

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<https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Community-Planning-Board-Agenda-291123.pdf>

Strategic Development Planning Authority, Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan, August 2020  
<https://aberdeenshirestorage.blob.core.windows.net/acblobstorage/aace3f3f-ca28-4c63-b01b-778786771c7/abdnandshirestrategicdevplanfinal2020.pdf>

Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Need & Demand Assessment 3: 2023 - 2028, January 2024  
<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/HNDA%20Final%20-%20Jan%2024.pdf>

Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, Aberdeen City Local Authority, September 2024  
[https://emptyhomespartnership.scot/local\\_authorities/aberdeen-city-local-authority/](https://emptyhomespartnership.scot/local_authorities/aberdeen-city-local-authority/)



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