



# Ayr Housing Aid Centre

## ANNUAL REPORT

1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020



SCOTTISH CHARITY NO: SC018186

## **CONTENTS:-**

	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND STAFF</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
	<b>LIST OF CHARTS IN CEO AND STATISTICAL REPORT</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
	<b>SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL REPORT</b>	<b>Pages 5 - 6</b>
<b>SECTION 1</b>	<b>CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>SECTION 2</b>	<b>TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT /STATEMENT</b>	<b>Pages 8 - 9</b>
<b>SECTION 3</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT</b>	<b>Pages 10 - 27</b>
3.1	Opening	
3.2	Links and Partnership	
3.3	Community Benefits	
3.4	Welfare Reform/Digital Inclusion	
3.5	Health	
3.6	"Get Started" Packs	
3.7	Our Services	
3.8	Housing Information, Advice and Advocacy Service	
3.9	Engagement Services	
3.10	Administration Service	
3.11	Impact of Services	
3.12	Homeless Prevention	
3.13	Value of Services	
3.14	Service User Feedback	
3.15	Centre Development	
3.16	Conclusion	
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>STATISTICAL REPORT AND CHARTS</b>	<b>Pages 28 - 43</b>
	<b>PRISON HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE STATS</b>	<b>Pages 44 - 47</b>

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

1. Alex Anderson, Chairperson
2. Ethel Riach, Treasurer
3. Allan Shaw, Vice Chairperson
4. Alan Berry
5. Bob Baillie
6. Pat Lappin
7. Bill Gilmour

## **STAFF**

John Mulholland, Chief Executive Officer

Suzanne Slavin, Services Manager

Jill McNaught, Housing Information and Advice Team Leader (employment ended 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020)

Leica Malkin, Welfare Reform Officer

Emma Gaughan, Prison Housing Adviser

Suzie Mcilloney, Engagement Manager

Neil Gray, Housing Information and Advice Officer

Elsbeth Lloyd, Tenure Sustainment Officer (employment ended 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020)

Gavin Kennedy, First Home and HEY Officer

Fallon Heggie, First Home Officer (employment ended 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019)

Amy Wallace, First Home Officer

Janet MacAlister, First Home Officer

Karen Miller, Office and Finance Manager

Joseph Sproat, Administrative and Statistical Assistant

Joanna Wilson, Receptionist (employment ended 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019)

Natalie McLean, Prison Housing Adviser (employment ended 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019)

Shirleyann Reid, Prison Housing Adviser (started 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019)

Margaret Davies, Receptionist (started 26<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and employment ended 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020)

Alison Hood, Admin Support (started 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020)

Mandy Burrell, First Home Officer (started 9<sup>th</sup> March and employment ended 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020)

## **CEO REPORT CHARTS:**

1. TENURE SUSTAINMENT OUTCOMES – CLOSED CASES 2019/20
2. TYPE OF INITIAL CONTACT COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEAR

## **STATISTICAL REPORT CHARTS:**

1. COMPARISON OF CASES OPENED OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS
2. MONTHLY CASES OPENED
3. TYPES OF SERVICES
4. LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA BY CASES
5. LOCAL AREAS
6. GENDER OF SERVICE USERS
7. DISABILITIES
8. AGE RANGE
9. 16 - 24 YEAR OLD CASES
10. REFERRAL SOURCE
11. EMPLOYMENT TYPES
12. HOUSEHOLD TYPE
13. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY
14. AGES OF CHILDREN
15. TENURE TYPE AT REFERRAL
16. HOUSING REGISTER
17. INTERNAL ACTION PLAN
18. TYPE OF INITIAL CONTACT
19. HOMELESS FIGURES OVER PAST 5 YEARS
20. HOMELESS AGE RANGES
21. AVERAGE AGE RANGE OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS
22. REASON FOR BECOMING HOMELESS
23. LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTITUDE
24. OUTCOME OF CLOSED CASES
25. ADVOCACY/ADVICE ANALYSIS - CLOSED CASES
26. ADVOCACY/ADVICE OUTCOMES OF CLOSED CASES
27. BREAKDOWN OF HOMELESS PREVENTION BY TENURE
28. CASE ASSESSMENT
29. PRISON SERVICE LOCAL AREAS
30. PRISON SERVICE REFERRAL AGENCY
31. PRISON SERVICE INTERNAL ACTION PLAN
32. PRISON SERVICE OUTCOME OF CLOSED CASES

## **ANNUAL REPORT SYNOPSIS 2019/20**

This summary highlights key data from this Report. The Centre's primary concern is the impact on our Service Users and benefits to other parties are secondary to this clear objective.

### **Service Users**

- Centre opened a total of 1,099 cases including 124 in rural areas
- Centre opened 699 cases for Services Users with disabilities
- Centre opened 142 cases for Service Users between the ages of 16-24 (Prison not included)
- Centre opened 92 cases for Service Users over pension age (Prison not included)
- 51 First Home Cases opened
- 17 Care Experienced Cases opened
- 36 Tenure Sustainment cases opened
- 362 children in Service Users' households
- 286 of our cases involved homelessness (Prison not included)
- 163 private rented sector cases opened
- 24 homeowner cases opened
- 439 new Prison Housing Advice Service cases opened with 1,695 issues

### **Service User Outcomes**

- 94% of cases closed
- 355 Homelessness prevented cases
- 86 Services Users permanently re-housed (Prison not included)
- 238 Service Users acted on advice from the Centre (Prison not included)
- 846 cases had a positive outcome achieved or likely
- Arrears reduced and income maximised across all sectors £219,073
- 4 Homeowners remained in their homes through homeless prevention work

## Tenant and Third-Party Beneficiaries

- £141,035 recovered to Council rent accounts and tenants
- £7,385 recovered to Housing Association rent accounts and tenants
- £51,036 recovered to Private sector rent accounts and tenants
- £28,699 Council Tax Reductions, discounts and exemptions awarded
- 61 Get Started Packs issued to a value of £9,700
- £1,711,060 future rental income to all sectors (Service Users x rental weekly income x 52 weeks)
- Value of homeless prevention £2,236,500 (relates to temp accommodation costs)
- Estimated value to secured lenders £31,200
- Less demand on social, family, education, health and housing services estimated value £7,810,000
- Increased awareness on housing and homeless issues for Secondary School Pupils and Teachers

Economic value is an important indicator in Service provision and value for money. For every £1 of Council funding the Centre generates a value of £26.19 (£26.81 last year). Estimated total economic value of £12,015,632 for £458,663 relevant contribution from the Councils.

## Services Value

The Centre over many years has strived to develop Services to meet the challenges and demands relevant to our community. There are considerable returns in investing in the Services we provide. The value to Service Users and other parties are underpinned by ensuring our staff are properly trained and supported. We consider the development of our Services and staff to be of utmost importance to ensure high quality Services and professional standards. This is clearly evidenced by our Service User feedback, Care Inspectorate Report and National Standards Accreditation. **It is a fair estimation that at least 5,000 individuals and organisations have directly or indirectly benefited from our Services this year.**

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

### **Introduction**

This has been a year of two halves. The year started with a successful staff/Management Committee joint meeting at the River Garden Project in August 2019. In the following months we saw staff developing and implementing work plans and the Committee taking steps to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). In the last quarter of this reporting year, we had to take steps to deal with COVID19 lockdown and how this impacted both our service users and staff.

### **Service Development**

The broad thrust of the Ayr Housing Aid Centre (HAC) in Preventing Homelessness through a variety of preventative and responsive approaches however continued. We contributed to the Review of Housing Support commissioned by South Ayrshire Council in April 2020 in preparation for a new round of procurement of services. In order to plan for and implement strategies to deal with COVID we formed a Response Team of Senior Staff and Board Members.

The HAC formally became a SCIO on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019 – with Charity no. SC049609. However, COVID forced delays in other agencies required us to run in our previous status (approved by OSCR). Staff largely continued to work from home and established ways to maintain services and contacts. Much of the work has focused on emerging poverty consequences, getting grants and financial support and practical responses such as 'Getting Started Packs' for service users in need.

### **Looking Ahead**

We will continue with our strategies to sustain contacts with service users until COVID restrictions are reduced when we will have a phased return to the Centre for those staff that are Centre based. Work will start to review practice in preparation for a new procurement round. Recovery from COVID will set new tasks for the Centre in the years ahead.

### **Thanks**

The Board of the Centre are particularly grateful to the Staff and Management Team in this difficult year, for their resilience and imaginative responses to people's needs.

In turn I know that they appreciate the response and support provided by partner agencies in assisting people in need. I am also grateful to the Management Committee for the work they have done in the course of the last year.

## **TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT**

Within this Report I have used the Statement of Financial Activities from our overall Financial Report which is submitted to Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR).

### **Income**

The Centre's income for this financial year was £466,111 which included £416,390 received from South and East Ayrshire Councils for the Contract, fundraising, donations and other income.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure for the year was £499,692. The primary expenditure heading was salaries including pensions which accounted for £436,146. Running costs of our premises and upgrading systems are included in the overall expenditure.

### **Outcome**

This year the financial statements show a deficit of receipts of £33,581. Some income and expenditure has been deferred into 2020/21 mainly due to Covid related delay in payments.

### **Projections 2020/2021**

I estimate that our expenditure for next year will be £523,255 which is inclusive of the deferred expenditure for 2019/20 of which £459,655 will be salaries including pensions, with a projected income of £584,889 which is inclusive of the deferred income from 2019/20.

It is expected the Centre will show a surplus of £61,634 for the year 2020/21. This surplus includes the deferred payments of income and expenditure within our 2019/20 Accounts.

### **Thanks**

I very much appreciate the staffs' efficient record keeping which makes my job very easy. Special thanks to John, Suzanne and Karen for work on the day-to-day accounts, projections and long-term planning work. Finally, a big thank you to Andrew Howat, our Accountant.



**AYR HOUSING AID CENTRE**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020**

	2020			2019		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
<b>Incoming Resources</b>						
Funding – public authorities	-	416,390	416,390	-	455,470	455,470
Fund raising/donations	1,500	33,238	34,738	1,240	16,555	17,795
Other income	-	14,031	14,031	-	3,575	3,575
Interest received	952	-	952	869	-	869
	<u>2,452</u>	<u>463,659</u>	<u>466,111</u>	<u>2,109</u>	<u>475,600</u>	<u>477,709</u>
<b>Resources Expended</b>						
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Salaries inc pension costs	-	436,146	436,146	-	420,487	420,487
Members and staff expenses	-	4,961	4,961	-	4,695	4,695
Rent and rates	-	15,811	15,811	-	15,630	15,630
Heat light and telephone	500	5,039	5,539	450	4,706	5,156
Insurance	-	2,256	2,256	-	2,263	2,263
Repairs and maintenance	500	3,384	3,884	600	5,400	6,000
Stationery/computer consumables	450	7,954	8,404	375	5,542	5,917
Conferences and training	100	421	521	150	1,247	1,397
Subscriptions	100	912	1,012	100	668	768
	<u>1,650</u>	<u>476,884</u>	<u>478,534</u>	<u>1,675</u>	<u>460,638</u>	<u>462,313</u>
<b>Cost of generating funds</b>						
Miscellaneous expenses	500	16,668	17,168	500	16,893	17,393
<b>Governance costs</b>						
Accountancy	-	1,940	1,940	-	690	690
Regulatory costs	-	2,050	2,050	-	1,476	1,476
Total resources expended	<u>2,150</u>	<u>497,542</u>	<u>499,692</u>	<u>2,175</u>	<u>479,697</u>	<u>481,872</u>
Net movement in funds	302	(33,883)	(33,581)	(66)	(4,097)	(4,163)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward	32,775	151,893	184,668	32,841	155,990	188,831
Total funds carried forward	33,077	118,010	151,087	32,775	151,893	184,668

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

### **3.1 Opening**

This has once again been a busy year for the Centre. We have had some staff turnover and welcomed new members of staff. We have continued to deliver our contract with South Ayrshire Council which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017. This contract is on a 3-year rolling basis and renews every November until 2020, (this was later extended to 30.6.21). During this period there has been a number of variations which enhanced the services including a continuation of the First Home Care Experience Pilot until the end of June 2020. The continuing development of our Prison Housing Advice Service has progressed over the report period, which is jointly funded by East and South Ayrshire Councils.

As the pandemic developed in early 2020 the Centre established a working group from Senior Management and Management Committee. Our initial work was to consider the developing issues in relation to staff and service user safety. In February we moved forward with contingency planning on how to deliver our services in the event the Centre had to close and staff working from home. Around the second week of March 2020 we instructed our most at risk staff to commence working from home, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March all staff commenced working from home. We switched our systems to support working from home and this would not have been possible without the support of our IT contractors, Innovec. We fully briefed staff on the decision which had to be made and provided full guidance to staff throughout the pandemic, which will be covered in more detail in Annual Report 2020/2021. We have continued to reach out to current and new service users and engaged with a range of partners.

Over the report period the Management Committee has been very busy with work towards conversion to a SCIO. With the formal establishment of Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019, this did not become operational in this report period. I have had the pleasure of working with many people over my years at the Centre and I would thank all past and present members of the Management Committee for their support over the years. We have developed Services to meet the needs of the people in South Ayrshire and influenced other Services beyond. I am very proud of this, and we could not have achieved this without partnership with other Agencies and the commitment of Staff and the Management Committee. I further look forward to developing links and partnership with East Ayrshire Council through our Prisons Housing Advice Service.

We have developed first class statistical systems, and I can with confidence state that we have provided Housing Information and Advice Services in over 25,000 cases across South Ayrshire. These systems have been further developed to accommodate the new Contract reporting and enhanced quality measures over the years.

The Centre, Management Committee and staff have commenced preparation for the next round of procurement due to commence in 2021.

### **3.2 Links and Partnership**

Our relationship with the Council has changed over the years and remains very strong. We continue to value our links with both Statutory and Voluntary Agencies. These partnerships are in the interests of all concerned, particularly our Service Users. I would take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to South Ayrshire Council for their continued financial support and encouragement. This support ranges from Elected Members, Senior Officials and Staff and is very much appreciated. We have daily contact with our colleagues in various departments of South Ayrshire Council, including Housing, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Housing Options and Education. We have continued to develop links with the Health and Social Care Partnership. The Centre has strengthened links with East Ayrshire Council through the Prison Housing Advice Service.

We have a common aim to provide quality Services to those in housing need and in doing so seek to safeguard Service Users from homelessness wherever possible. The Centre enjoys good professional relationships with Registered Social Landlords, in particular our colleagues at Ayrshire Housing and West of Scotland.

Over the period the Centre has built links with South Ayrshire Food Bank and issued 50 vouchers to Service Users. We continue to have strong links with SeAscape. Additionally, we have built strong links with Newton Primary School after we were approached to help them source funding to enable essential cooking equipment to be supplied to families receiving COVID food boxes, this was possible through our strong links with Frontline Network.



### **3.3 Community Benefits**

Over the past year we have been involved in a range of activities which promote Community Benefits. Many of our staff are involved in activities within their own communities and beyond.

The Centre was involved in various community events and undertook street work to identify those on in need of clothing and other essential items which prompted our Winter Clothing appeal. The Centre has an established Foodbank collection point. We are committed to wider social benefits and work with communities and partners.

### **3.4 Welfare Reform/Digital Inclusion**

Welfare Reform continues to impact our Service Users across all services. As the Council continues to develop their response to the roll out of Universal Credit the Centre remains committed to actively participating with the Council to support South Ayrshire residents to claim and maintain their Universal Credit DWP Accounts.

A key factor relates to digital inclusion and the ability to access resources to make claims and update them with appropriate support. The Centre asked Service Users about digital access. A total of 660 service users responded to the question with 89 stating they had no internet access: 14% in this reporting year. This percentage has improved since the previous year when 20% of service users had no internet access. A total of 225 (34%) stated that they only had phone access and 346: 52% stated that they had broadband internet access. This percentage has also improved since the previous year when the percentage with internet access was 47%. These results show a positive increase in internet access amongst service users.

It is very positive to note in this reporting year that 99% of service users stated that they had either a Bank or Building Society account. Only 5 service users chose not to disclose this information and only 2 service users had no account. We continue to work closely with SAC to identify those at highest risk who will require additional assistance as they start to claim or migrate to Universal Credit.

The role of our Welfare Reform Officer has been developed as part of the Centre's response to Welfare Reform and includes group sessions with the general public as part of our Home+ Initiative, linked to Engagement Services. This Officer also maintains up to date information across all relevant benefits, a resource which is beneficial to all the Services at the Centre and beyond. In addition, this Officer seeks grants from a range of resources for individuals which is used to reduce arrears, debt and prevent homelessness.

### **3.5 Health**

Across all our Services we have seen a year-on-year growth in recent years in the number of Service Users stating they have mental or physical health problems: some state they have both. It underpins the impact that preventing homelessness can have on health. We have included our Prison Housing Advice Service.

A total of 670 (61%) new Service Users stated they have mental disabilities, physical disabilities or both. This is the same percentage as the previous year. Over the past 7 years this has grown from 32% in 2010/11 to 61% currently so it is a slightly positive result to note that the percentage has not grown in this reporting year. A total of 10% stated that they had physical disabilities and 32% stated they had mental disabilities. A total of 19% have both physical and mental disabilities. This percentage is also similar to the previous year when 21% had both types of disability.

### **3.6 “Get Started” Packs**

We successfully applied for grant assistance for our ever popular “Get Started Packs”. The purpose was to provide 3 packs for tenants moving into their new home. The packs included useful items to get them started with Cleaning, Cooking and Decorating. 61 Get Started Packs were issued at an approx.. value of £9,700. Due to COVID and home working we had to change how we issued these packs and our Service Users collected them outside the office front door.

#### **Quote from external Support Worker:-**

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ayr Housing Aid Centre for the Starter Packs that they have been providing. The packs have been an amazing support to the vulnerable people that I support. Many of the individuals that I support are on a very low income and would find it difficult to purchase these essential items that is provided in the packs.

It is a very daunting experience for many of the people I provide support to, who have been through the homeless system and having this help definitely takes some pressure off moving into a new home and allows the individual to begin the process of turning their house into a home.”

#### **Recipient’s feedback:-**

“ I benefitted from this pack financially as I would of had to borrow money or got a loan to pay for these items as I could not afford them on my own due to being on a low income.”

### **3.7 Our Services**

The Services we provide are innovative, preventative, proactive, participatory and inclusive. These directly link to the overall ethos of the Centre to provide high quality Services.

Each of these Services contribute to the Centre meeting its aims and objectives, contractual obligations and the needs of our Service Users and communities. All Services produce Internal Annual Reports and statistics which feed into our Annual Report cycle including the Annual Service User Feedback Report. Our services consist of the following:

1. Housing Information, Advice and Advocacy (one-to-one service)
2. Prison Housing Advice (one-to-one service in Prison Link Centres, main base HMP Kilmarnock)
3. HEY (Housing Education 4 Youths) (Engagement Services Secondary School group work)
4. First Home, (one-to-one Engagement Services)
5. First Home Care Experienced (one-to-one Engagement Services)
6. Home+ (Engagement Services group work)
7. Tenure Sustainment (one-to-one service)
8. Promotion and Development with partners and the general public
9. Administrative Support (supporting the full Centre and Services)

1,099 cases related to individual Services Users/families, (1,300 last year). When each case is opened a standard case sheet is completed with information concerning the service user and their specific requests for help. The data on these case sheets is then entered onto our main database in Excel. This allows us to analyse and collate a wide variety of data and statistics to produce a wide range of reports.

The structure of our Services encourages External and Internal Referrals. For example a Sustainment Officer can refer a case internally to the Advice Service if necessary. In this individual Internal Referrals have come through to Advice from our Engagement Services. We also actively encourage external referrals such as SeAscape once a case is closed so that the service user can receive ongoing support if necessary externally. The effectiveness and quality of our Services would not exist without the vital contribution from Admin staff which supports all our Services.

#### **Reasons for Cases across Services (Excluding Prison Cases)**

There are a wide range of reasons why we open cases across Services. A sample of reasons are shown below:-

- Homelessness or threatened with Homelessness – 286 cases
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax – 231 cases
- Universal Credit – 138 cases
- Rent arrears – 111 cases
- Dampness/disrepair – 87 cases

### **3.8 Housing Information, Advice and Advocacy Service**

The Team comprises of Suzanne Slavin (Services Manager), Jill McNaught (Housing Advice & Advocacy Team Leader: employment ended 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020), Neil Gray (Housing Advice & Advocacy Officer), Natalie McLean (Prison Housing Adviser employment ended 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019), Shirleyann Reid, Prison Housing Adviser (Started 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019), Emma Gaughan (Prison Housing Adviser), Leica Malkin (Welfare Reform Officer) and supported by Joseph Sproat (Administration and Statistical Assistant), Alison Hood (administrative support started 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020) and John Mulholland (Chief Executive Officer). Demand for this Service is very high, and 995 cases were opened, (1,147 last year), including our Prison Housing Advice Service.

#### **Advice Homeless Cases Detail**

In total, we prevented homelessness in 99 cases not including the Prison Housing Advice Service. The prevention of homelessness does not just impact the 99 Service Users as each case often involves families. From the 99 homelessness prevention cases, this accounted for 160 people :102 adults and 58 children. This year those who were already in the Homeless system were 42 (20%) of total closed homeless advice cases compared to 95 (33%) last year. This is good news that for the first time we are seeing more people before they enter the homeless system, and this is to be welcomed.

#### **Homeless Reviews**

There were a total of 18 Homeless Reviews submitted during 2019-20, (37 last year). It should be noted that we see many Service Users who we deem to not have legal grounds for review however we will only request a review where there is a sound case or legal basis for a review. There has been a decrease in discharge of duty and offer reviews this year. This again could be linked to lack of offers due to Lockdown. 13 of the cases had positive outcomes after review: 23 last year. 2 of the 4 reviews which were dismissed by the Council at informal stage went on to be successful at formal review. 2 offers were withdrawn and 1 was swapped out of the 3 submitted, which is to be welcomed but it poses the question as to why the Council do not proactively ask about areas prior to offers being made, as this could streamline the process and prevent the need for reviews at this late stage. It is however good news that we did not have to do as many offer reviews this year.

#### **Private Rented Sector (not including Prisons)**

The private sector in Scotland continues to grow with the private rented sector accounting for 14% of tenures in Scotland. In the reporting year 163 (29%) of our cases were in the private rented sector compared with 214, (31%) the previous year.

From the 163 private rented sector cases (214 last year) there were 446 internal action plans (484 last year). As expected, we saw a continued reduction in private rented cases involving Housing Benefit problems, 27 (55 last year) and an increase in those requiring help with Universal Credit, 28 to 34 this year.

There were 56 cases concerning Homelessness (34%) compared to 85 (39% last year). Dampness/disrepair cases have increased to 51 compared with 17 in the previous year. 30 private sector tenants were seeking accommodation compared to 46 last year. It is not surprising to note the lack of those wanting to move to new accommodation and these figures could have been reduced as no-one was allowed to move during Lockdown.

There were 64 Private Sector cases with children (81 last year) and a total of 144 children, (157 last year).

Out of a total of 159 private rented cases closed, there were a total of 252 outcomes. Many cases had multiple outcomes to reflect multiple action plans. As stated previously, we prevented homelessness in 35 of the cases: 43 last year. Affordability was improved in 57 cases and 19 were permanently housed. 64 cases showed service users acting which means they can go on and act on the information or advice we have given them.

### **Prison Housing Advice Service**

Between 1.7.19 – 30.6.20 we opened 439 new cases in the current reporting year: Kilmarnock 396 and Barlinnie 43. In the previous year we opened 463 cases. Please note the figures only account for cases opened within the year and does not include ongoing cases which overlap the reporting year. Of the 439 new cases opened, we have broken down their status when they first came to us for advice.

In this reporting year a total of 935 appointments were completed with prison service users which represented 82% of appointments organised. Since COVID-19, 249 of these appointments were successfully carried out remotely. A further analysis of appointments shows that just under half of the prisoners (47%) had two or more appointment and that 232 (53%) of prisoners had only one appointment. It should also be noted that 124 (28%) of prisoners had more than 2 appointments: Indeed, 21 prisoners had 155 appointments between them which highlights the fact that they required a lot of ongoing support.

An analysis of the local authority areas in which the service user was living prior to coming into prison shows that, similarly to the previous year, the majority of our service users are from East Ayrshire, mainly due to the location of the Prisons. From a total of 439 prisoners, 206 (47%) came from East Ayrshire and 131(30%) from South Ayrshire. The remaining 102 prisoners (23%) came from other areas: last year the percentages were 57%, 27% and 16% respectively.

From the 383 cases which were closed in this reporting year (Kilmarnock 350 and Barlinnie 33), we successfully prevented homelessness in 221 cases (202 Kilmarnock, 19 Barlinnie). This was mainly by ensuring rent entitlement was in place or providing housing information and advice on tenancy sustainment.

### **Development**

The Advice Team deals with a wide range of challenges and issues which are becoming more complex partly due to increased cases concerning mental health and constant changes to benefit rules. Those seeking help with Universal Credit has increased and will continue to grow. These cases require more time spent on them and it is important that Advice adapts to meet these challenges.

There are major challenges within Advice over the next year which require proactive and preventative responses, particularly relating to changes to Housing Law in Public and Private Sectors and Welfare Reform. There is considerable potential to develop the Prison Housing Advice Service further.



## COVID-19

From March 2020 the Centre adapted how we delivered services and staff switched to a working from home model. This brought different challenges, but everyone still felt part of a team and were able to pull together. It also brought challenges for our service users and we were able to respond to this by ensuring that anyone who was excluded or isolated had the means to stay connected to us, their family and friends and the wider community by accessing digital devices, data, food and fuel assistance.

### **3.9 Engagement Services**

This Service incorporates HEY, First Home, Home+, Tenure Sustainment and community Engagement. The Team includes Suzanne Mcilloney (Engagement Manager), Fallon Heggie (First Home Officer – until 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019), Gavin Kennedy (First Home Officer), Janet MacAlister (First Home Officer), Mandy Burrell (First Home Officer), Elspeth Lloyd (Tenure Sustainment Officer – until 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020) and is supported by John Mulholland (Chief Executive Officer), Karen Miller (Office and Finance Manager) and Joseph Sproat (Administrative and Statistical Assistant).

Engagement Services have been developing and increasing contacts with partners, communities and the general public.

In November 2018 the Centre commenced a Care Experienced Young People Pilot Service, and since then we have developed and adapted the First Home model to provide a pro-active and inclusive Service which supports Care Experienced Service Users.

Engagement Services covers: -

- HEY (Housing Education for Youths)
- First Home
- First Home Care Experienced Young People
- Home+
- Tenure Sustainment
- Engagement and Promotion of the Centre with Partners and Communities
- Links with Ayr College and West of Scotland University
- Developing Services to Older People

We have attended and participated in a wide range of awareness raising events which has had a positive impact. It has raised awareness of our services with students, patients, education and health staff and older Service Users.

### HEY (Housing Education for Youths)

In this reporting year 750 pupils took part in the Housing Education for Youths program (HEY). Since 2012 this program has been delivered to 6,450 pupils: an average of 806 pupils per year.

Throughout this period, we have gathered statistics and feedback which has allowed us to evaluate the lessons and develop them with feedback from pupils and teachers. All pupils are given the opportunity to feedback on the lessons provided. In addition to feedback on the lessons we sought further information which could provide valuable service planning and development data. This year we delivered to 6 of the 8 Secondary Schools. The numbers of pupils receiving the lessons this year increased to 750 from 268 in the previous year.

### FIRST HOME

The Service opened 51 new cases, (77 last year) with 222 action plans and brought forward 76 cases from the previous year. A total of 71 cases have been closed and 56 cases have been carried forward to the next reporting year.

Out of the 71 cases closed there were 134 outcomes. The most common outcomes were:

- 31 Permanently housed
- 51 Affordability improved
- 7 Applications suspended
- 7 returned home to family
- 10 stage 2 & 3 long waiting period
- 76 Service Users acting

A total of 77% of closed cases had a positive outcome or positive outcome likely.

### First Home Care Experienced Young People

The pilot project commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 with a primary aim to improve housing outcomes for Care Experienced Young People. Phases 1 and 2 of the Service has been directly impacted by the fact that many of the Young People are already in or about to be in the Homeless system. This is due to the nature of current referral route through Youth Housing Support Group (YHSG). The continuation of this through to June 2021 has been welcomed and shows commitment from the Council and their satisfaction with the service we have provided.

A total of 17 cases were opened in this reporting year. A further 17 cases were still open from the previous year and during the year 10 cases were closed. These 10 cases will form the basis for the closing statistics. This left a total of 24 cases still open at the end of the reporting year.

Out of the 17 cases opened during this reporting period there were 77 Internal Action Plans identified: an average of 4-5 for each case. Again, this year the most common Internal Action Plan is 'Seek Accommodation' which involved 16 (94%) of cases in comparison to 14 (93%) last year. Budgeting involved 14 (82%) of cases in

comparison to 13 (87%) last year. Universal Credit accounted for 12 (71%) of cases: 9 (60%) last year. Homelessness was an action plan in 6 (35%) of cases in comparison to 8 (53%) last year.

A total of 10 cases were closed during the reporting year resulting in a total of 21 outcomes. Each case had 2 outcomes on average. The main outcome was 'Affordability Improved' in 7(70%) of cases. Another two service users were permanently housed, one was temporary housed, and homelessness was prevented in another case

### Home+

As part of the contract awarded from South Ayrshire Council, we were asked to facilitate capacity building sessions to all age groups. The sessions are designed to improve tenancy skills to reduce tenancy failure. These are important to break the cycle of repeat homelessness, build / enhance existing knowledge and skills and encourage tenants to become part of the community.

The Centre seeks to minimise tenancy failure across all services and improve rates of sustainment through interaction and positive intervention. These sessions have been well received and participants have found them fulfilling, interactive and informative.

Research was carried out by compiling a Questionnaire consisting of 7 questions. From the 103 responses received we used this information to create our sessions, which have been tailored to meet the need and service user expectations.

From the 103 completed questionnaires, the top 5 preferred options were:

- Budgeting / Money saving (48)
- Cooking on a budget (47)
- Education / Training / Employment (46)
- Universal Credit / Benefits (45)
- Painting and Decorating (44)

To reflect on the initial illustration and how all the services are connected it is important to understand that if over the age of 25, you will not have the opportunity to participate in any practical capacity building sessions due to the First Home age limit.

Home + was created to enable us to deliver similar sessions to the over 25 age group. We developed a cooking session in partnership with Unity Grill and those attending gave feedback that they enjoyed the small group sessions. Universal Credit Sessions were also delivered to those who expressed an interest.

### Tenure Sustainment Service

This part of Engagement Services had one Tenure Sustainment Officer - Elspeth Lloyd whose employment ended on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This is a crisis intervention Service where there is an imminent risk of homelessness. There is often an intensive response required at the point of referral.

During this reporting year 36 Tenure Sustainment cases were opened in comparison to 61 in the previous year: staffing has reduced within Tenure Sustainment and as a result the capacity for referrals has reduced. A total of 17 cases were brought forward from the previous year and 35 cases were closed in the current year which leaves a total of 18 cases still open at the reporting year end.

### Casework

From the 36 new cases opened there were 120 different action plans identified: an average of 3 per case. Homelessness and rent arrears made up more than half of these action plans.

A total of 35 cases were closed during the reporting year resulting in 97 outcomes. The graph below shows an analysis of these outcomes. We can see that 'Homelessness Prevented' and 'Tenure Stabilised' were the most common outcomes in 27 of the cases followed by 'Affordability Improved' and 'Arrears Reduced'.

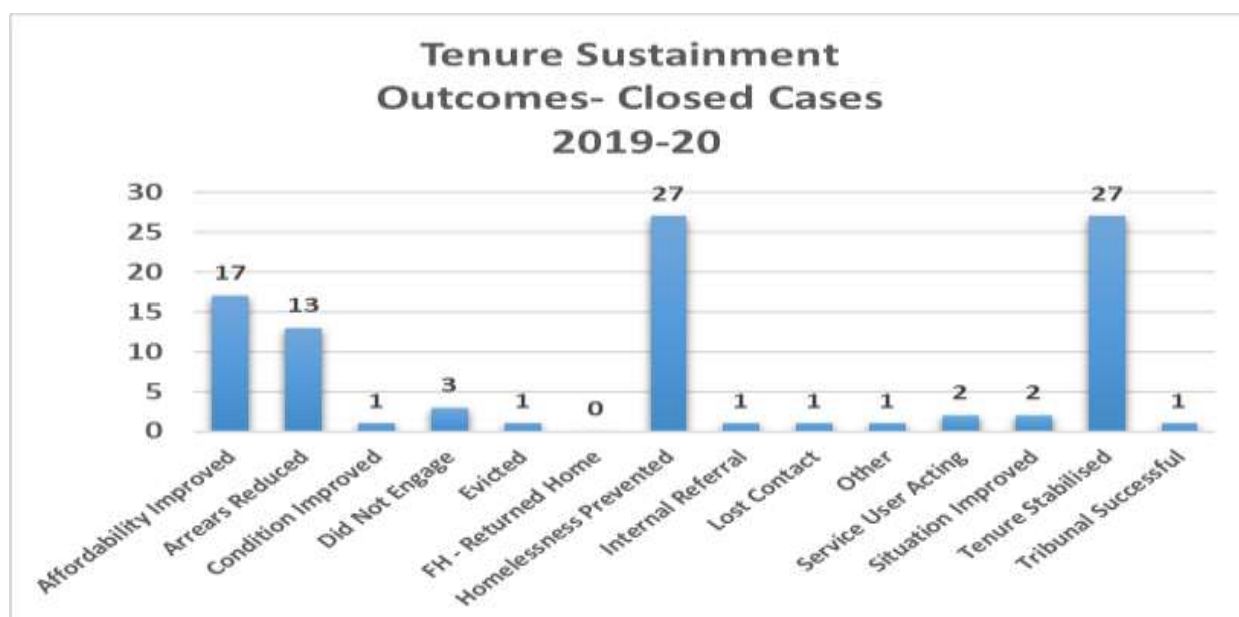


Chart 1

The 35 cases closed during this reporting year were open for an average of 20 weeks and around 22 hours was spent, on average, on each case. The average rent arrears reduction per case at closure in this reporting year was 24.4%. Rent arrear reduction is an important part of the work on these cases.

### Engagement/ Promotion of Ayr Housing Aid Centre

Raising the profile of the Centre is an important element involving both Engagement Services and the Advice Team and we look to involve innovative thinking to ensure we are reaching the community and those in housing need.

Participating in engagement events came to an end in March 2020 due to COVID restrictions. The Centre had already attended 67 events which included updates on the Centre to partners, conferences, community events and weekly drop ins. We participated in Secondary School Events and wider area events like Homeless Network Scotland in Edinburgh/Glasgow and Community Justice Projects in Alloa. Our engagement activity has reduced

with planning underway to increase our reach within the community when this is safe to do so. Virtual meetings and events have been introduced so we can still interact and communicate with partner agencies.

### 3.10 Administrative Support

The Admin Team is Karen Miller (Office and Finance Manager), Joseph Sproat (Administration and Statistical Assistant) and Joanna Wilson (Receptionist – employment ended 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019) and Margaret Davies (Temp Receptionist – employment ended 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020). Alison Hood (Admin Support) started with the Centre on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Admin Service plays an important role in the Centre as it underpins all our operations ranging from Regulatory requirements, compliance, HR and personnel issues, finance, projections, statistics, Service Users and quality control.

#### Databases

The databases and statistics are integral to the Centre’s reporting and evaluation cycle. The Centre’s databases provide all the data and statistics which underpins the Services we provide. This enables us to produce accurate Reports, monitor trends and respond to specific requests from Managers and Funders on selected areas. The databases are a major contributor to maintaining high quality control systems for compliance.

We continue to regularly review and update our Case Sheets with new and/or additional headings which in turn transfers onto our databases to produce more in-depth statistics. The Case Sheets have been amended to include a tear-off slip to reflect the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), implemented on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Our GDPR Audit Report has been delayed due to COVID.

For these databases to be effective the Services must comply with the input requirements. Admin can only populate the databases with the information provided by each Service.

#### Type of Initial Contact – Demand Analysis

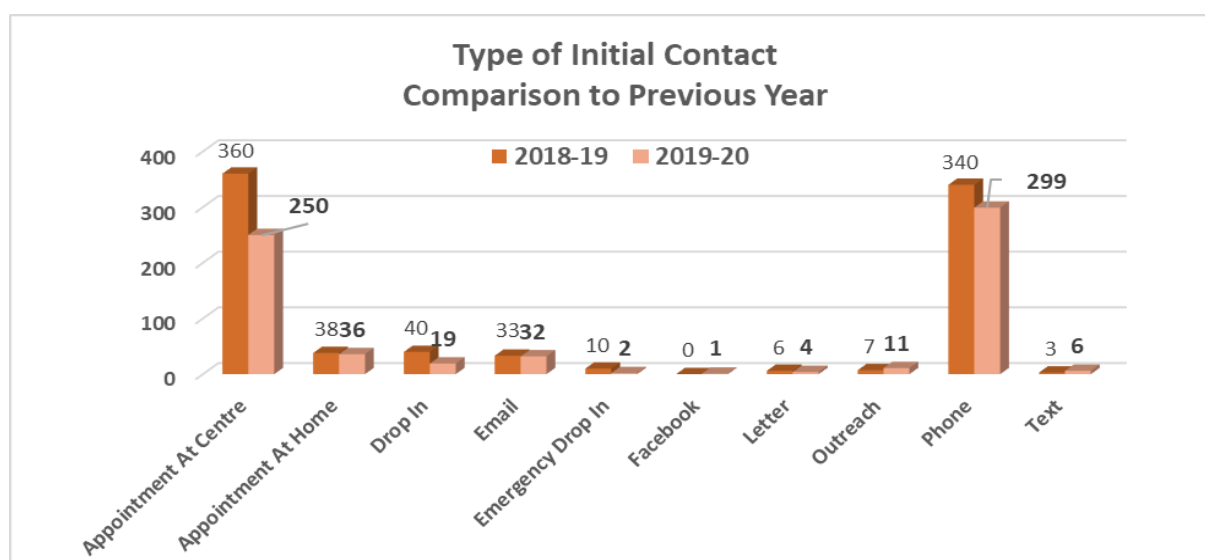


Chart 2

In this year’s Report we considered types of initial Services User contact. The number of Service Users who visited the Centre for appointments accounted for 250 of our cases opened, (360 last year).

There were 36 cases opened by home appointments (38 last year). We opened 299 cases over the telephone this year, (340 last year). A number of Service Users had to call into the Centre for an appointment following the telephone call if there were complex issues. Centre drop-ins accounted for 21 cases (40 last year). Another 32 cases had initial contact through email: 33 in the previous year. The remaining 22 cases were opened either by letter, text, Outreach or Facebook. Covid 19 had a large impact towards the end of this reporting year in the way initial contact was made: the majority of initial contact is currently by telephone and email.

### Development

The Centre is committed to further development which impacts our Admin Service.

Over the next year we will:

- Review and develop services
- Prepare for procurement in early 2021
- Convert to SCIO
- Continue to increase Staff Training and development opportunities (internally and externally)
- Include Training Records on our new Breathe HR System
- Regularly review Case Sheets
- Link with the Fundraising Sub-Committee
- Continue to research and apply for Grants and other income for the Centre
- Review and develop our financial and payroll systems
- Further develop Service User Feedback Forms – Online/Text/Phone
- Continue to develop Databases across all Services
- Continue to move to a paperless office
- Continue to upgrade IT Hardware/Software
- Further develop our Website
- Data Protection Officer will carry out an annual case and data GDPR Audit

### **3.11 Impact of Services**

Due to our individual bespoke Services the measured impact can be short, medium, or long term. Services which are geared to individuals/families are measured on social and economic benefits. Our group work, in particular, in the schools is more long term. The information given may be retained and allow an informed choice for young people later when they have to make housing choices. This, of course, may be carried over into our First Home Services in the future.

Internal action plans are the reason a case is opened, some cases have a number of action plans. Out of the 1,099 cases across all Services there were 3,634 action plans, (3,456 last year). The largest primary problem raised with the Centre continues to be homelessness or threatened with homelessness, 526 cases (574 last year). This accounts for around 48% (44% last year) of our caseload.

A total of 142 cases involved 16–24 year-olds, (164 last year). From this age group 80 were involved in the homeless system (62 last year). There were 362 children involved in all our cases, (434 last year). A total of 85 families with children were involved in homelessness, (111 last year).

## Employment Status

An analysis of the employment status of our new service users in this reporting year revealed that only 217 (21%) of service users were either employed, self-employed or working part time: a decrease from the previous year when the percentage was 26%.

Under other employment options, a majority of 395: (36%) of our service users indicated they were sick or ill at the time of contact (38% last year) followed by those not in employment 333: 30% (27% last year). There were 45 cases from the retired age group, 42 students and 35 cases were Carers.

An analysis of First Home statistics show that 12 service users had improved their employment status by the time their case had closed: 8 became employed and 4 became students. This is a very positive result and highlights the importance of encouraging further education and help with obtaining employment.

It is also worth noting that 4<sup>th</sup> year pupils from our HEY Service indicated that University is the preferred route after School; 47% hope to attend university compared to 48% last year. The results also show that 20% of pupils hope to attend College compared to 24% last year. Only 12% of pupils hope to get a job compared to 15% last year and only 11% of pupils hope to get an apprenticeship which has increased slightly from 9% last year. The conclusion is that pupils place a considerable importance on higher education.

## Rent Arrears Recovery/ Income Maximisation/Future Rent Projection

Over the past 18 years we have been monitoring monies recovered to Rent, Council Tax accounts, income increased to tenants and owner occupiers. The table below highlights overall monies recovered which in many cases prevented eviction and homelessness across all sectors. Homelessness prevention in all sectors reduces demands on Public Sector resources, in particular homeless temporary accommodation. Many Service Users have in addition benefited from our Advice, Tenure Sustainment and First Home Services which often includes budgeting skills to prevent future homelessness.

LANDLORD / LENDER	MONIES RECOVERED				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total over last 4 years
	£	£	£	£	£
SAC	269,832.68	159,977.28	128,225.27	141,035.19	699,070.42
RSL	21,130.91	17,158.66	18,892.89	7,384.74	64,567.20
Private	50,369.57	37,507.34	43,696.84	51,036.31	182,610.06
Owner Occupied	720.45	1,177.98	5,668.00	5,530.34	13,096.77
Family	3,983.00	3,419.42	14,993.93	14,086.20	36,482.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>346,036.61</b>	<b>219,240.68</b>	<b>211,476.93</b>	<b>219,072.78</b>	<b>995,827.00</b>

The table above, in particular South Ayrshire Council tenants, highlights increased co-operation in terms of rent arrear cases and income maximisation. This has become more relevant as backdating periods reduced in 2017. The reduction in numbers relate to a reduction in rent arrears referrals from South Ayrshire Council for Sustainment and new processes introduced at the tenancy sign-up stage. Despite this, our recovery amounts and income maximisation remains high across all sectors. However, we have noticed a reduction of around 33%

in the number of cases referred to us from RSL which is reflected in our figures. It is clear that an increased number of Service Users are having real and sustained financial problems and this is partly reflected in the increase of arrears in the rented sector. We have seen a reduction in those with arrears coming to us due to Covid and the suspension of evictions. We know that we will see an increase in repossession actions once these bans are lifted from Spring 2021.

The Centre has developed a Grants Database to log the number of Grants applied for and whether they were successful or not. The majority of the Grants applied for are to reduce Service User rent arrears, begin a new tenancy or sustain tenancies. Of the charitable grants applied for in the financial year, 52 applications were successful totalling £41,928.24. These were from a variety of different grant providers with the most awards coming from Keep Well Fund (12), the Champions Board (32) and the Vicar's Relief Fund (15).

#### **Estimated value of projected future rent for tenancies:**

<b>Public Sector 273 tenancies x £85 (average rent) x 52 weeks =</b>	<b>£ 1,206,660</b>
<b>RSL 12 tenancies x £100 (average rent) x 52 weeks =</b>	<b>£ 62,400</b>
<b>Private Sector 68 tenancies x £125 (average rent) x 52 weeks =</b>	<b><u>£ 442,000</u></b>
	<b><u>£ 1,711,060</u></b>

#### **Estimated value of projected future mortgage payment for owners:**

**Owner Occupiers 5 x £650 (average monthly mortgage payment) x 12 months = £39,000**

### **3.12 Homeless Prevention**

The Centre firmly believes early intervention and access to free, independent advice prevents homelessness. The continued development of a Homeless Intervention and Prevention Service within South Ayrshire is a major contributor to meet strategic objectives and this has been incorporated into our Services. This is clearly part of the overall Housing Options agenda.

**The Centre directly prevented homelessness in 355 cases this year. The estimated saving to the public purse of £2,236,500.**

A: - Average weekly rent for temporary accommodation (£315)

B: - Number of cases (355)

C: - Average time in temporary accommodation (20 weeks)

As illustrated above there are considerable cost savings in preventative measures including temporary accommodation, case administration, investigation and other ancillary costs. Another important factor is the personal, health, education, criminal justice and social benefit to those who are prevented from coming into the homeless system through positive intervention. Research has highlighted the costs of homelessness per household ranges between £15,000 and £83,000. For the purposes of this calculation, we use the figure of



£22,000 which is on the low range. In a period of 16 years the Centre has directly prevented homelessness in over 3,655 cases which has had considerable economic benefit to South Ayrshire Council, Central Government and social benefit to potentially homeless households. There is clear evidence of Social Return on Investment (SROI) in terms of funding homeless prevention Services with the, **spend to save agenda**. On the lower end of the scale, **I would estimate a further saving for homelessness prevention of £7,810,000 for these 355 cases.**

### **3.13 Value of Services**

Our Services provide a range of values including health and wellbeing, educational and economic. The measure for some of these services are more medium to long term such as HEY and First Home. Therefore they do not form part of our economic measures. Nevertheless, they are vital elements and are of considerable value to school pupils and young people to equip them with the information and skills for the future.

**South and East Ayrshire Councils contributed £458,663 for the Services delivered by the Centre. We estimate the value of our Service directly and indirectly benefits the Council, Central Government, Landlords and Service Users to be £12,015,632. Economic value is an important indicator and for every £1 put in by the Councils the Centre generates a value of £26.19 (last year was £26.81). Please note this has been impacted on the deferral of income into 2020/21.**

Many people benefit directly and indirectly e.g., teacher's knowledge of housing and homelessness is expanded by the provision of the HEY Service.

**It is a fair estimate that every year at least 5,000 Individuals/Organisations directly or indirectly benefit from our Services.**

### **3.14 Service User Feedback**

The Centre has developed Service User Feedback systems across our Services and prepare a Service User Feedback Annual Report. In this Report we include feedback from group work delivered.

We sent out 203 questionnaires (339 last year) for our Housing Information and Advice Service: 65 (32%) of these questionnaires were returned compared to 30% last year. A total of 47 questionnaires were sent out to our First Home Service Users: 33 (70%) of these were returned, (95% last year). The First Home Service received 4 Parent Feedback Forms, 16 Interim Feedback Forms issued and 14 returned, (88%). A total of 38 tracking feedback forms were issued 6 months after closing: 28 (74%) were returned.

I would take this opportunity to thank and congratulate staff for the positive feedback across all Services and reiterate the Centre's commitment to listening and taking into account feedback to maintain and improve quality.

<b>Issued</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Returned</b>	<b>%</b>
203	Advice	65	32%
88	Prison	88	100%
8	Tenure Sustainment	8	100%
47	First Home	33	70%
16	Interim Feedback (First Home)	14	88%
38	Tracking Feedback (First Home)	28	74%
4	Parent (First Home)	4	100%
<b>404</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>60%</b>

### **3.15 Centre Development**

Services interlink within the Centre and beyond and have the flexibility to meet changing demands. This requires robust internal systems and strong lines of communications with the Council and our many Partner Agencies. All our Services directly and positively impact on the lives of Service Users, Communities and Third Parties.

There are many significant changes and challenges for the Centre and our Services within the next year and beyond. Universal Credit and further welfare reform significantly impact our Service Users. The Centre is committed to working with Councils and partners to minimise the impact of Universal Credit and positively promote the continued roll out of the Scottish Welfare System with the transfer of some powers from Westminster.

The Centre has always developed and adapted our Services to meet the changing demands of Service Users and to meet the changing specifications within the Contracts. As we prepare for procurement in 2021, we will of course again critically evaluate the work we currently do and adapt and evolve to meet any changing requirements of our funders.

The Centre's primary strength is our staff and management commitment to delivering an efficient, quality service which the Service User is at the centre. Their commitment and dedication underpin the Services we provide and is reflected in our high levels of engagement across all services and the feedback we receive. The Committee has a long proud history of supporting staff training and development which of course will continue into the future. This is essential element in providing high quality services to meet all the regulatory and quality

assurance requirements and enhances or preparation for the next round of procurement expected in March 2021.

### **3.16 Conclusion**

This has been a busy and challenging year for staff and the Committee with the added pressure of Covid 19. We have more than met these challenges and I am very proud all our services have performed to the highest standards providing quality services to all who access them. The year ahead will see significant changes for the Centre with the completion of our conversion to a Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation and our preparation for procurement due in March 2021.

I would extend my thanks to all my colleagues who are central to the Services we provide. I firmly believe one of our main strengths is our teamwork and commitment to the overall aims and objectives of the Organisation. I would finally thank the members of the Management Committee for their continued commitment and support.

## **STATISTICAL REPORT 2019-20**

Our statistics are generated from our Microsoft Excel Database and cover the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Please note the Prison Housing Advice Service covers both East and South Ayrshire areas. We have included this Service in the relevant statistics wherever possible. We have included an Addendum to the Statistical Report which provides additional statistics from the Prison Housing Advice Service. Our statistics change and are accurate as at the time of writing this Report.

### **COMPARISON OF CASES OPENED OVER PAST 3 YEARS**

The Centre opened 1,099 cases between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020: a slight reduction from 1,300 last year, mainly due to COVID lockdown impact in the last quarter of the reporting year. This includes 124 rural cases, (175 last year). Our Prison Housing Advice Service opened 439 cases: 396 in HMP Kilmarnock and 43 in HMP Barlinnie.



Chart 1

## **MONTHLY CASES OPENED**

The chart below analyses the number of cases opened per month and compares it to the previous year. We can see here how the COVID lockdown affected the number of service users contacting us, in particular in April and May 2020. The average cases opened each month was 92 in comparison to 108 in the previous year. In this reporting year the busiest months for opening cases were July, October and November which are always busy months for us.

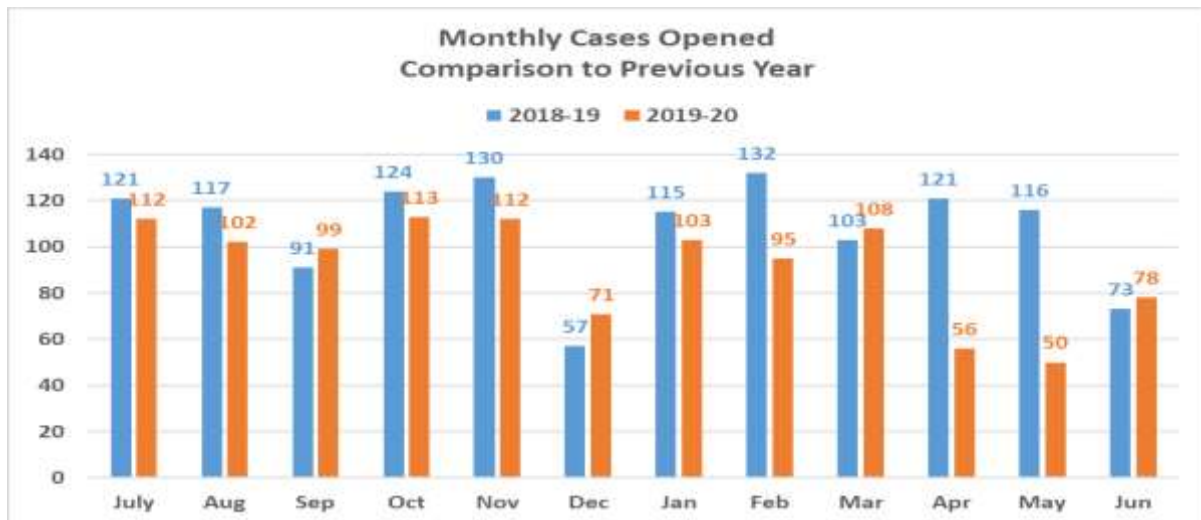


Chart 2

## **TYPES OF SERVICES**

We provide a range of different services to individuals and families. The graph below provides an analysis of how the 1099 cases opened in this reporting year are split between these different services. The majority of cases are opened through our Advice Service: 556 (684 cases last year). Prison Housing Advice Service opened 439 cases (463 last year). The First Home Service opened 51 (77 cases last year). Tenure Sustainment opened 36 (61 cases last year). Care Experienced Young People Project has opened 17 cases within this reporting year (15 last year).

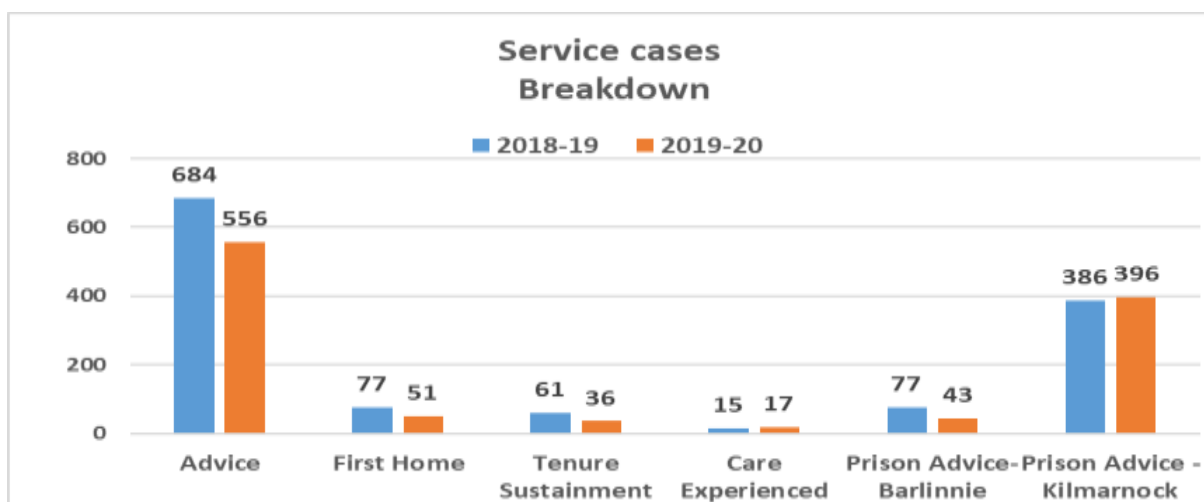


Chart 3

## LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

As you can be seen from the chart below, similar to last year, the vast majority of cases opened were from Service Users currently residing within South Ayrshire, (766 compared to 951 in the previous year). There were 217 from East Ayrshire, (246 last year). These cases are mainly linked to the Prison Housing Advice project. A total of 8 cases came from North Ayrshire and 108 came from other areas: again, mainly linked to the Prison Housing Advice Project.

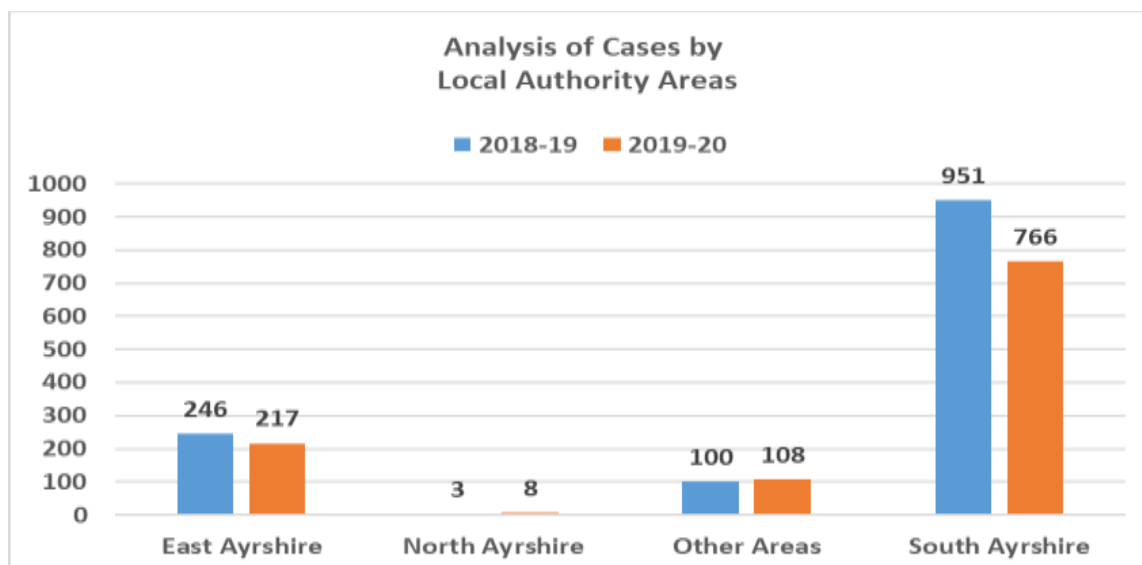


Chart 4

## LOCAL AREAS (Prison Service not included)

The chart below analyses the local areas in which the Service Users resided at the time they contacted us. It can be seen that the trend is very similar to last year. The largest group were from Ayr North: 319 (385 last year). Ayr South provided 85 cases: 118 last year. Another 107 cases were from Troon and Prestwick areas: 129 last year. The total number of cases opened in Maybole, Girvan and the Villages 124: 175 last year.

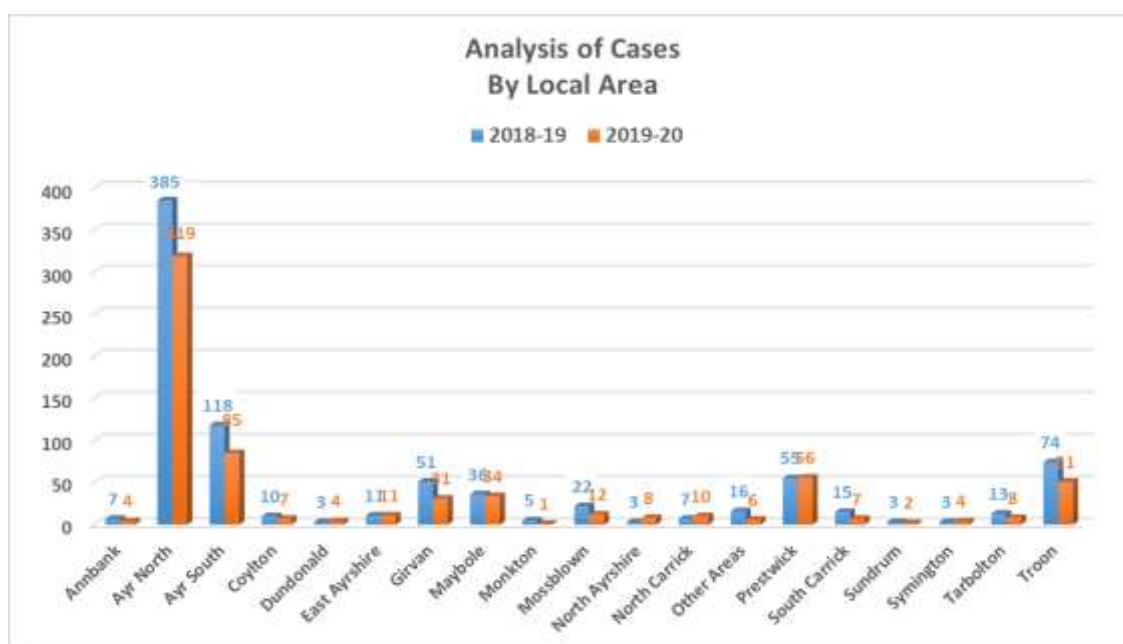


Chart 5

**GENDER OF SERVICE USERS (Prison Service not included)**

The gender analysis of cases opened remains consistent with last year: 39% men (40% last year) and 61% women (60% last year).

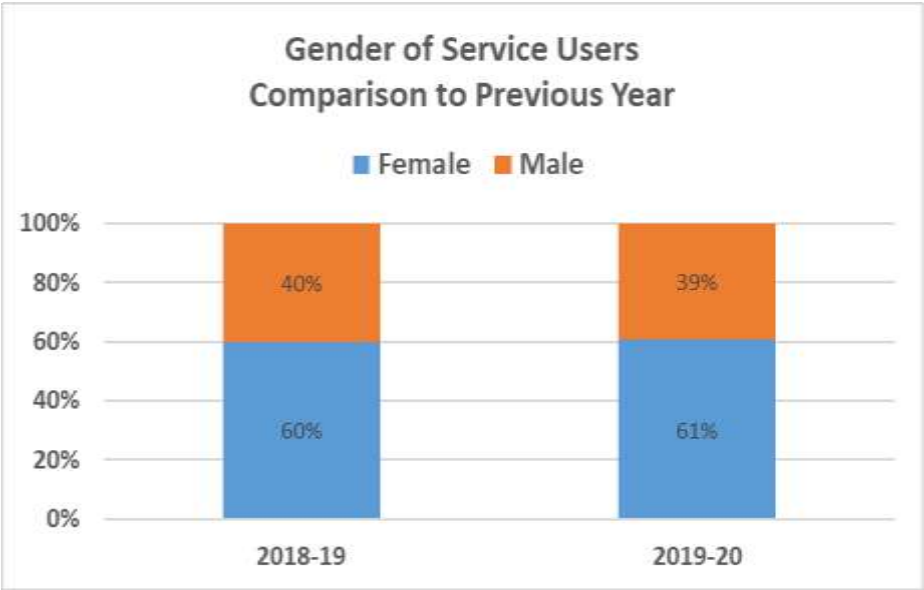


Chart 6

**DISABILITIES**

From the chart below we can see that in both the current reporting year and the previous year only 36% of Service Users indicated they had no disabilities. In both years 61% of service users had some sort of disability whether mental, physical or both. Indeed 19% of service users had both mental and physical disabilities. This is similar to last year, 21%. Only 3% of service users did not disclose this information to us when requested.

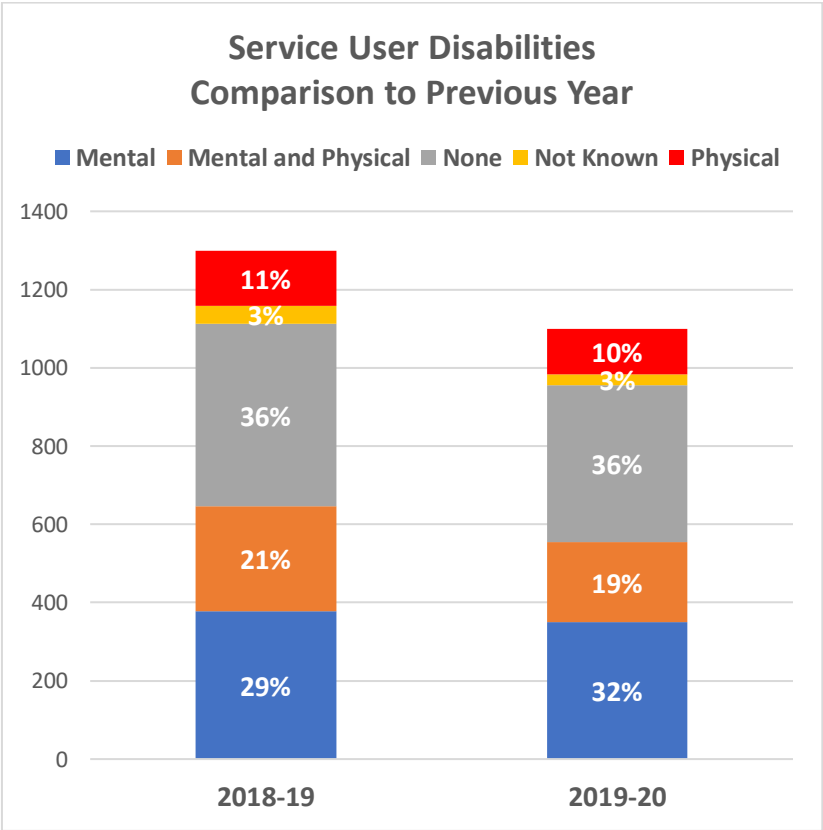


Chart 7

### **AGE RANGE (Prison Service not included)**

From the chart below we can see that the age range of service users in the current reporting year shows a similar trend to the previous year. The majority of service users were in the 25-59 age group: 411 in comparison to 568 in the previous year. 25 Service Users were aged 16 – 17: the same number as the previous year. In the 18-24 age bracket we had 140 service users:117 in the previous year. Finally, we had 92 from the 60 plus age group: 103 in the previous year.

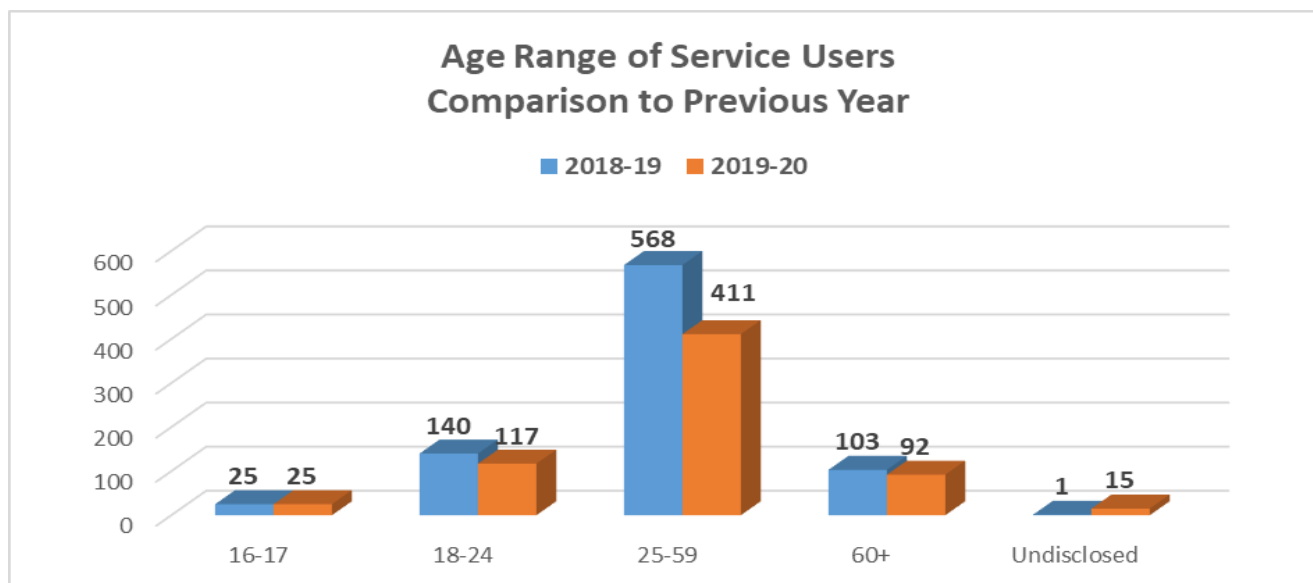


Chart 8

### **16 – 24 YEAR OLD CASES (Prison Service not included)**

The number of cases opened in the 16-24 age group has been falling steadily since 2016-17. However, this category still accounted for 21.5% of cases opened in this reporting year: 20% last year. This year 69 cases were involved in homelessness at the time of calling at the Centre, (62 last year).

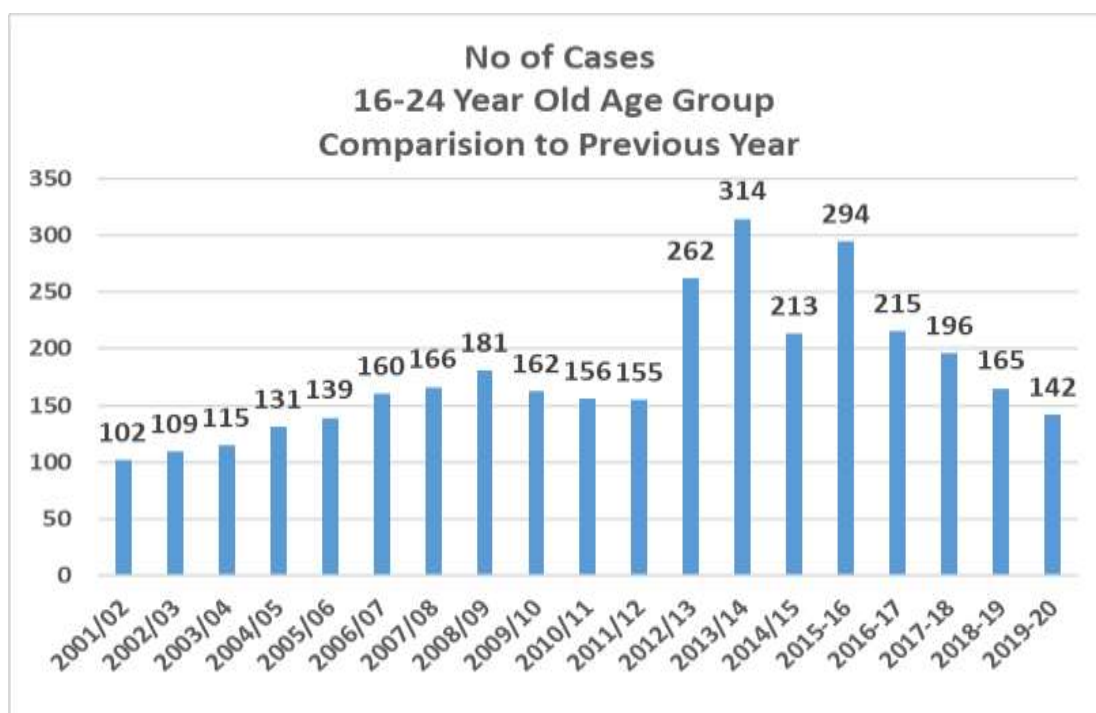


Chart 9



## **REFERRAL SOURCE (Prison Service not included – see addendum)**

The chart below illustrates the range of agencies who refer to us. The self-referral category continues to be the primary method of referral: 290 service users contracted us direct, (44% of all referrals). Service Users who are aware of our Service often recommend it to others and 41 referrals were from family or friends. South Ayrshire Council Housing Offices referred 82 service users to us, with Housing Options and Homeless referring 23 service users. SeAscape referred 24 cases to us, and we are keen to see these numbers increase.

The Centre continues to actively participate in the development of South Ayrshire Council's Signpost system. The aim of the system is to ensure Service Users are linked to the relevant Service at the time of need and that referrals are picked up quickly from agencies and responded to speedily. The number of referrals from signpost has been disappointing over the past year.

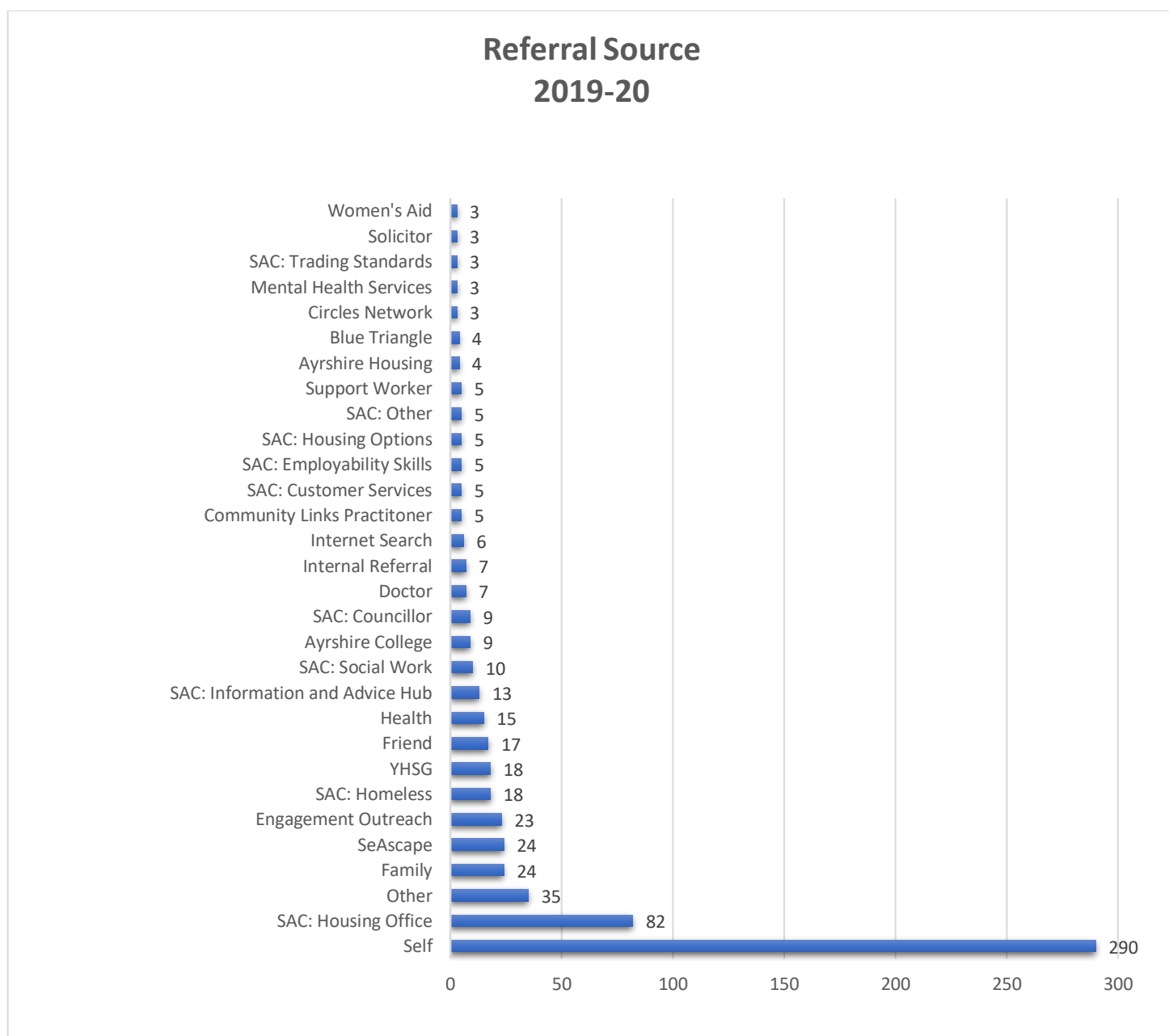


Chart 10

## **EMPLOYMENT TYPES**

The graph below indicates that the trend in employment types amongst new service users is very similar to the previous year. Once again, the majority of our cases were from service users who are sick/ill: there were 395 (36%) of cases in this category in comparison to 498 (38%) in the previous year. Unemployment made up 333 (30%) of cases: 357 (27%) in the previous year. Those who were employed, self-employed or working part time made up 217 (20%) of cases in this reporting year: 255 (26%) in 2018-19. There were 45 cases from the retired age group, 42 students and 35 were carers. Ten of the cases involved service users who were either new parents or pregnant.

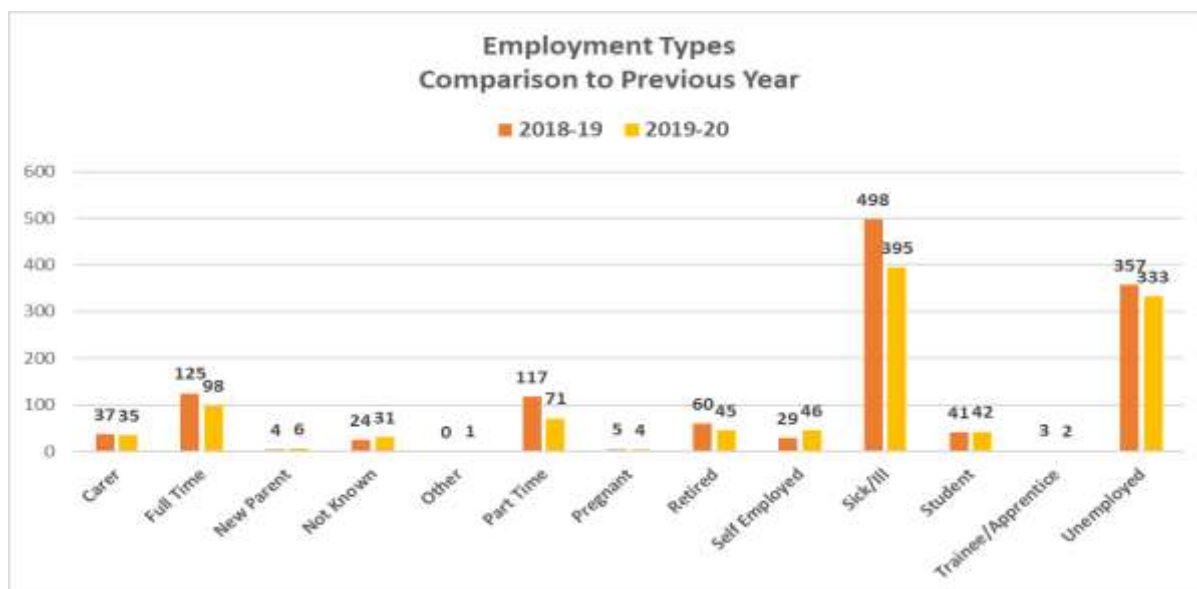


Chart 11

## **HOUSEHOLD TYPE (Prison Service not included)**

The graph below shows that, like the previous year, the majority of cases opened were from single men (209) and single women (189). Altogether single people made up 60% of cases opened in this reporting year. Many of the single's group are involved in homelessness. This highlights the plight of this group in gaining access to reasonable accommodation often linked to affordability, in particular under 35's. It is not surprising that these households provide a high number of cases as they are often at a disadvantage in terms of available accommodation and benefits. Families accounted for 26% of cases in this reporting year: 173 of cases opened were from either single parent families or couples with children.

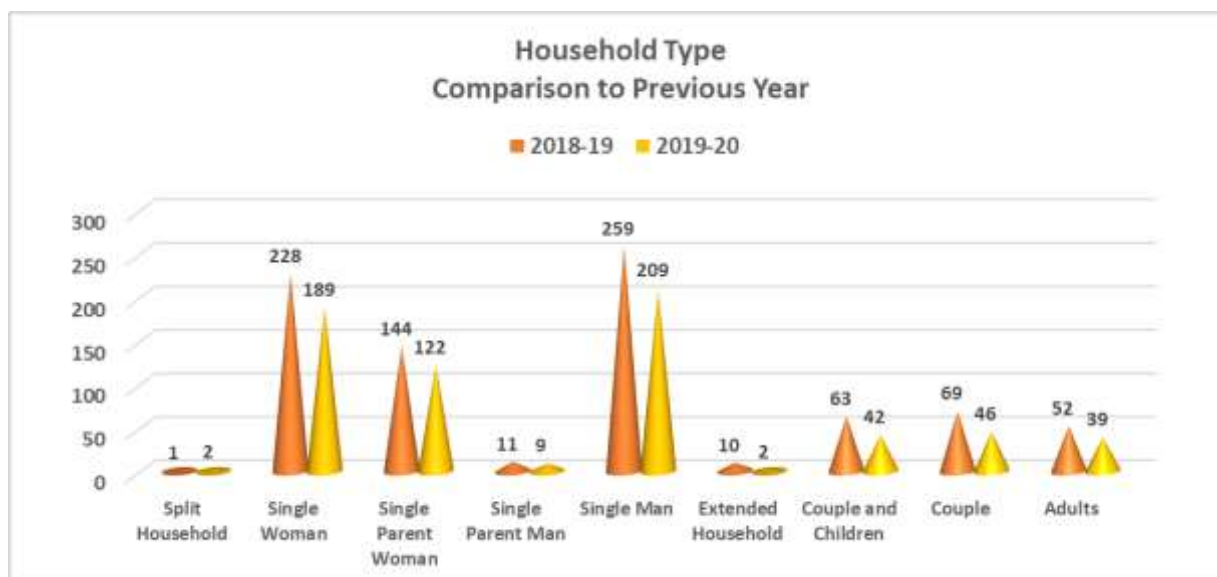


Chart 12

### **NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY (Prison Service not included)**

The chart below is designed to identify how many children are involved in the cases opened within the current reporting year in comparison to the previous year. It is useful to consider how many children face housing related problems which could impact on their development, health, education, and many other aspects of their lives. The total number of children involved in our cases is split into family sizes. The chart indicates that there is a wide spread of family sizes and that the trend is very similar to the previous year. Altogether we dealt with cases involving 362 children: 75% of children came from families with 1 to 3 children.

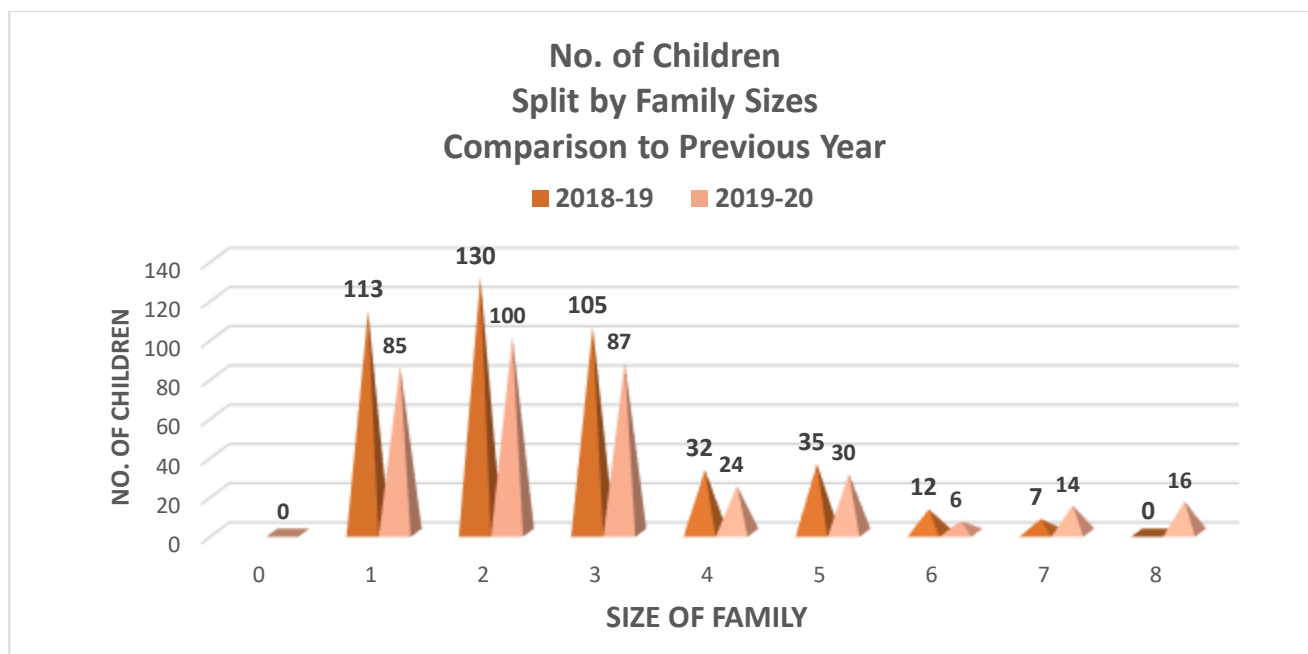


Chart 13

### **AGES OF CHILDREN (Prison Service not included)**

The graph below compares the ages of children in each family. Once again, we can see that the trend is very similar to the previous year. In total 49% of families who requested help in the year had children at primary school age: 51% in the previous year. 27% of families had children at secondary school: this is up slightly from the previous year when the percentage was 22%. Families with preschool children accounted for 19%: 26% in the previous year.

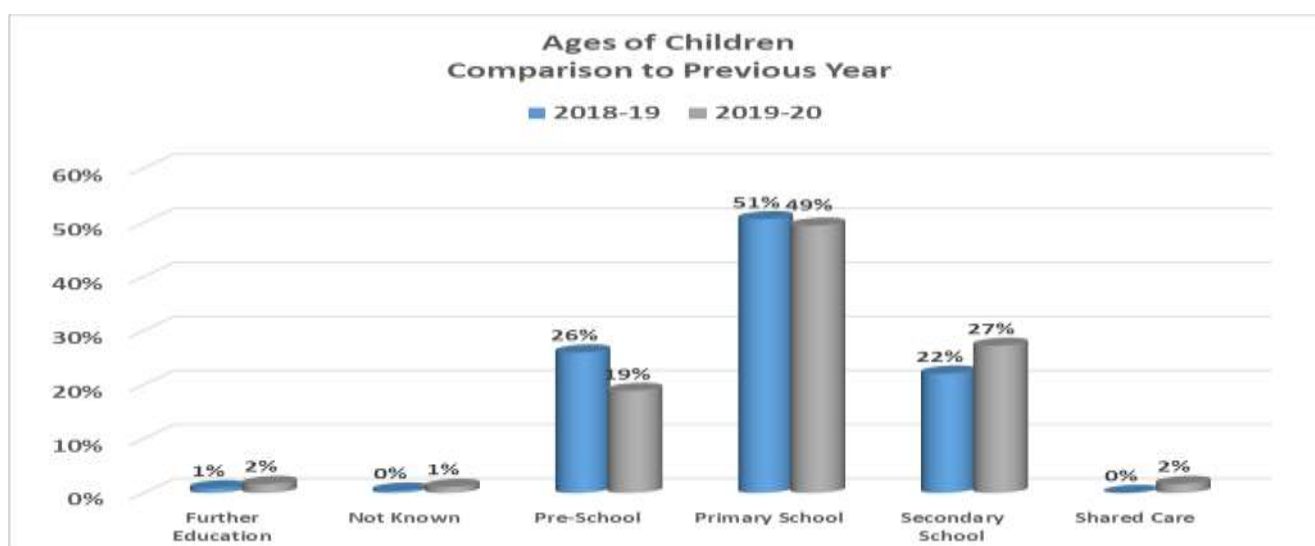


Chart 14

## TENURE TYPE AT REFERRAL

The chart below analyses the many different types of tenure that service users had at the point of referral. In total 35 Service Users were roofless at the time of initial contact with the Centre and 142 were in temporary furnished accommodation, a hostel or a refuge. More than 50% of Private Sector Tenancies are now under the Private Residential tenancy: 104 in this reporting year in comparison to 98 in the previous year. Short Assured Tenancy cases have now reduced to 95 from 158 in the previous year. In total 392 of our Service Users were Scottish Secure Tenants with the Council (429 last year) and 57 were Housing Association tenants (87 last year). A total of 33 Service Users owned their homes including shared ownership, (39 last year).

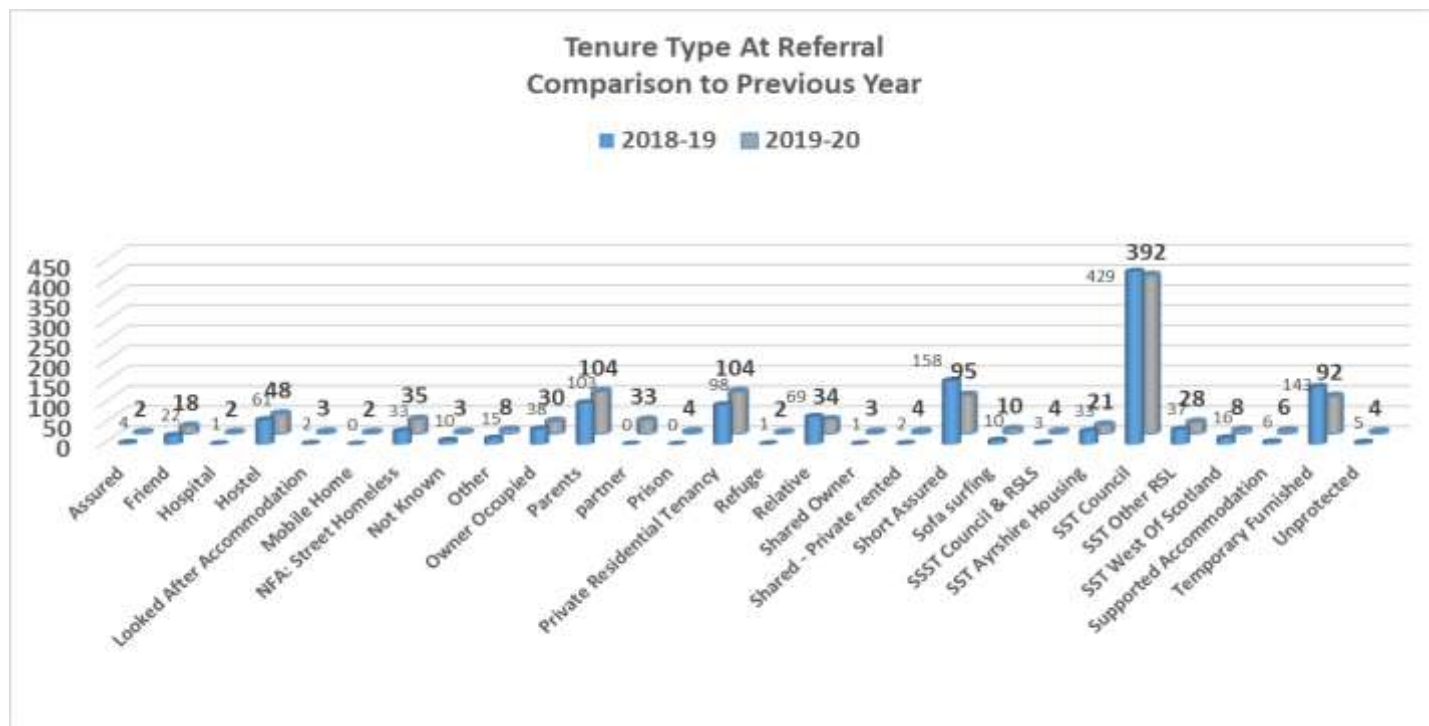


Chart 15

## HOUSING REGISTER (Prison Service not included)

The chart below analyses the number of new services users on housing register waiting lists. There were 85 (55 last year) on South Ayrshire Council Waiting List and 80 (44 last year) on Ayrshire Housing's List with no one on West of Scotland's List (10 last year). 1 Service User was on Hanover's Housing List which is the same as last year.

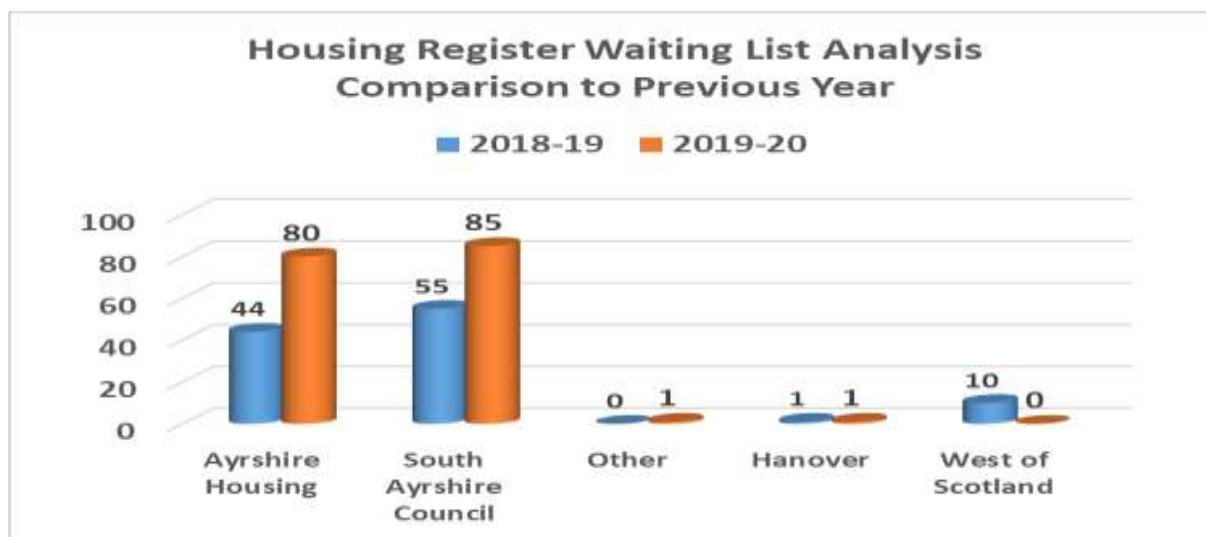


Chart 16

### **INTERNAL ACTION PLAN (Prison Service not included see addendum)**

Out of the 660 cases opened during this reporting year a total of 1939 action plans were identified: an average of 3 action plans per case. We can see from the graph below that Homelessness continues to be the primary reason that service users contact us. This is followed by housing options and service users seeking accommodation. Rent arrears, budgeting and help with universal credit, council tax and housing benefit are the other main action plans that service users come to us to seek advice and help with.

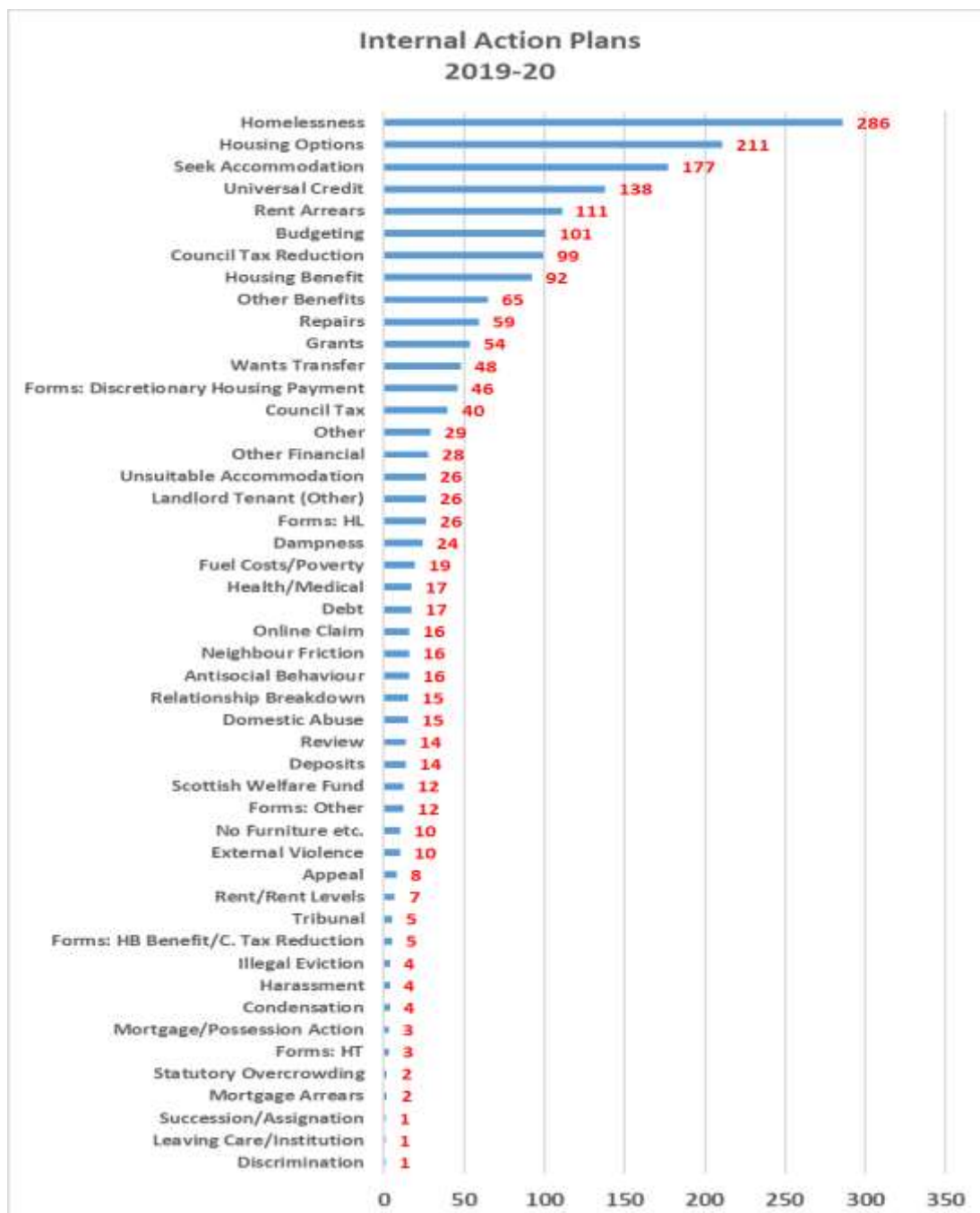


Chart 17

### **TYPE OF INITIAL CONTACT (Prison Service not included)**

The graph below indicates that in this reporting year, contact by telephone was the most common means of initial contact, and has overtaken appointments at the office, which was the most common method of contact in the previous year. The impact of COVID 19 in the latter part of this reporting year has meant that the majority of new service users are now no longer able to have one to one personal contact. New service users visiting the Centre for appointments accounted for 250 of our cases opened, (360 last year). A further 36 cases were opened by home visit appointment (38 last year). Altogether we opened 299 cases over the telephone this year, (340 last year). There were only 19 drop-ins within this reporting year, (40 last year). Another 32 people contacted us by email which is very similar to last year.

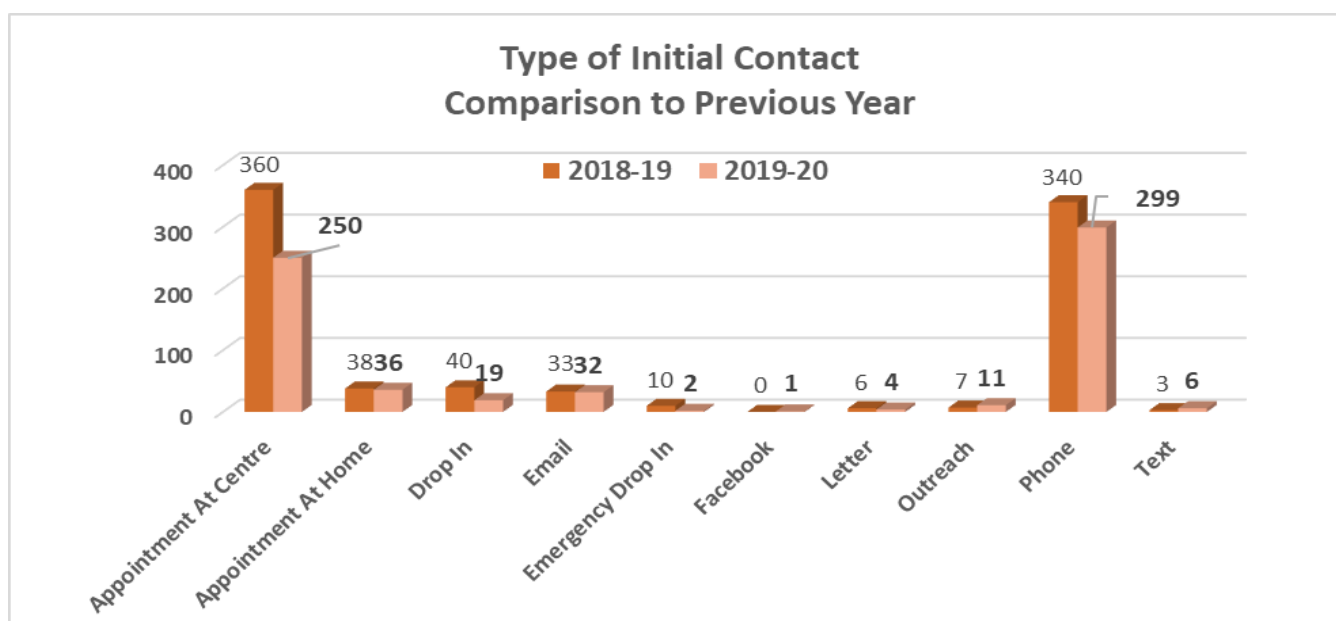


Chart 18

### **NUMBER OF HOMELESS CASES OVER PAST 5 YEARS (INCLUDING PRISONS)**

Homeless cases include those who were roofless, statutory homeless and those threatened with homelessness within 4 – 6 months. Cases concerning homelessness have increased from 224 in 1998/99 to 526 this year (including prisons). In percentage terms this equates to 48% of all cases opened. Last year the percentage was 40%. The percentage of cases involving homelessness is therefore increasing.

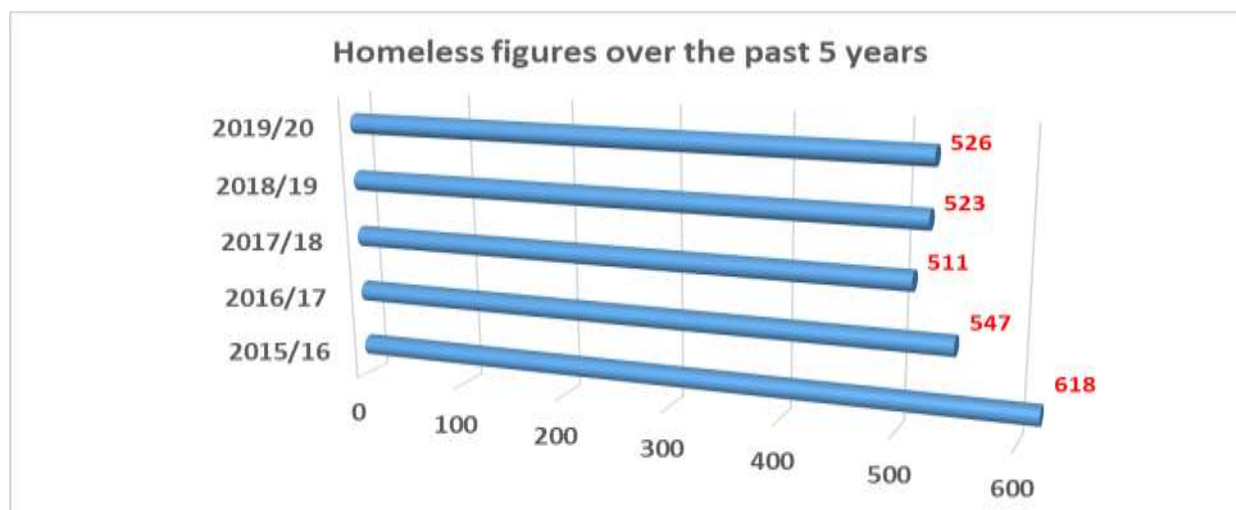


Chart 19



### **HOMELESS AGE RANGES (Prison Service not included)**

Similar to previous years the majority of service users threatened with homelessness were in the 25-59 age bracket: 66% of cases in comparison to 76% in the previous year. Homeless cases amongst 18-24 year olds made up 24% of these cases: this percentage has doubled since the previous year.

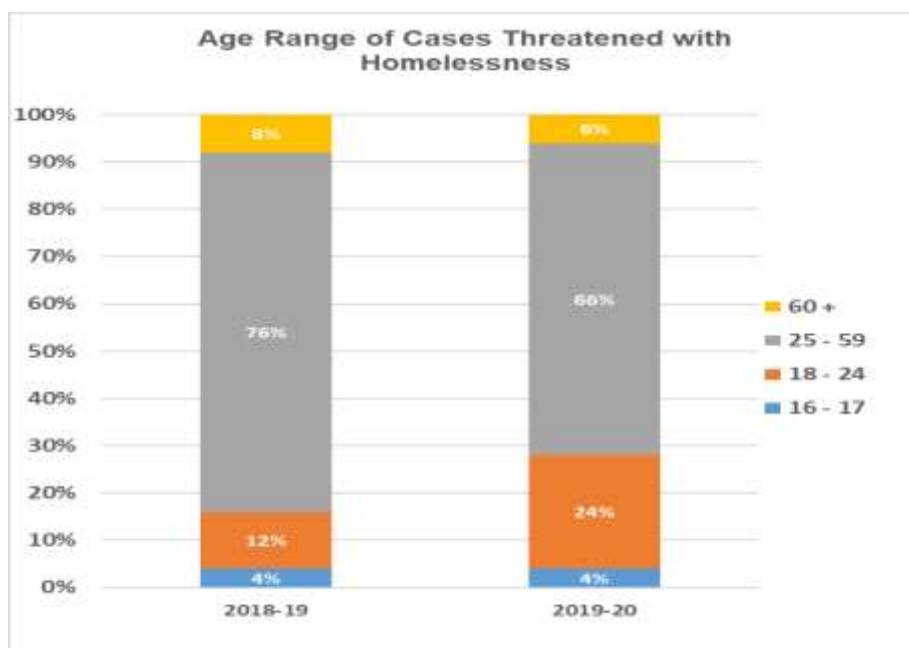


Chart 20

### **AVERAGE AGE RANGE OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS (Prison Service not included)**

The graph below indicates that the average age range of children in each family threatened with homelessness shows a slightly different pattern to the previous year. Most families had children in the age range 5-11: this was similar to the previous year's results and accounted for 52% of families. However, there were slightly more families with children in the 12-17 year old range within this reporting year than families with children in the age range 0 to 4 years. This is slightly different from the previous year and indicates that more families with older children are facing difficulties.

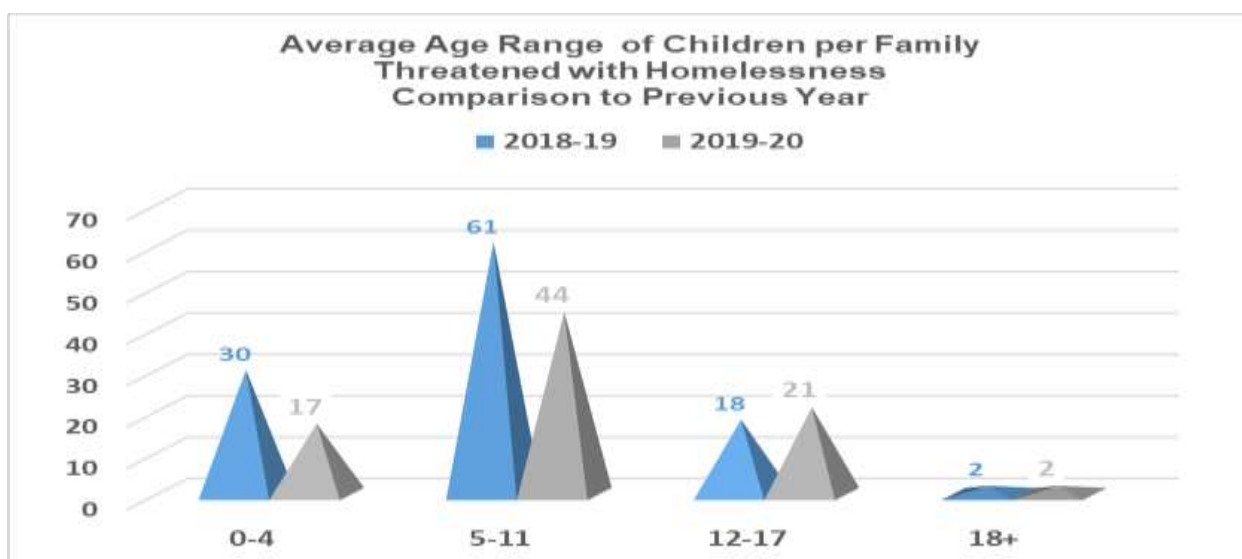


Chart 21

## **REASON FOR BECOMING HOMELESS (Prison Service not included)**

The graph below indicates that similar to last year rent arrears in the public sector was the main reason that service users required help and advice on homelessness in this reporting year. Many of these 55 cases will be in the statutory homeless group. Relationship breakdown was the second biggest reason involving 29 cases and rent arrears in the private sector involved 23 cases. Evictions across Sectors accounted for 6 cases and includes Service Users threatened with eviction where an order has been granted.

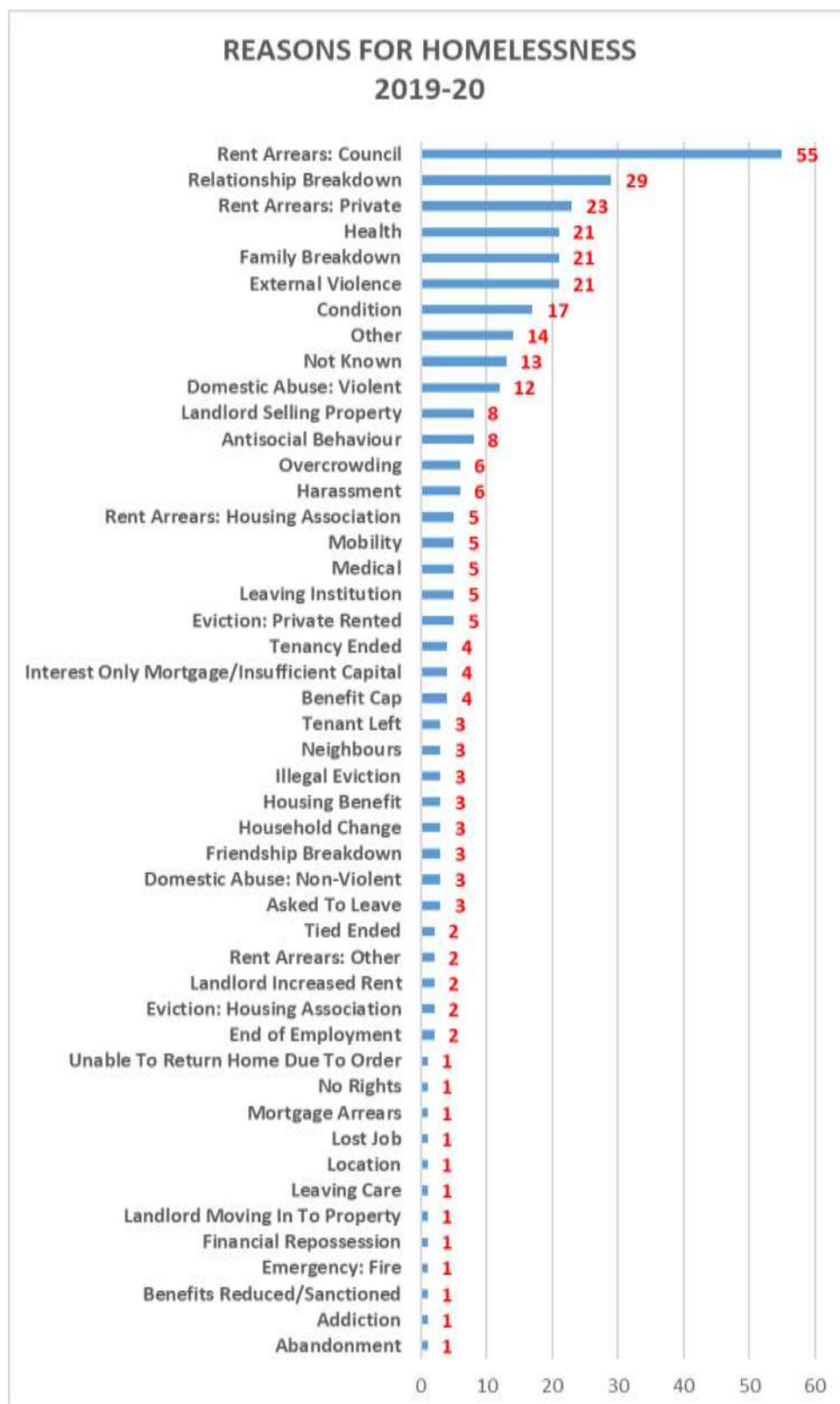


Chart 22



### **LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTITUDE (Prison Service not included)**

This chart represents the Council's attitude of the Homeless status at the time the Service User came us. The Council were making enquiries into 18 cases, (25 last year) and were not involved yet in 183 cases, (222 last year). It appears from these results that many Service Users are seeking advice on their rights prior to contacting the Local Authority. This is positive for homeless prevention.

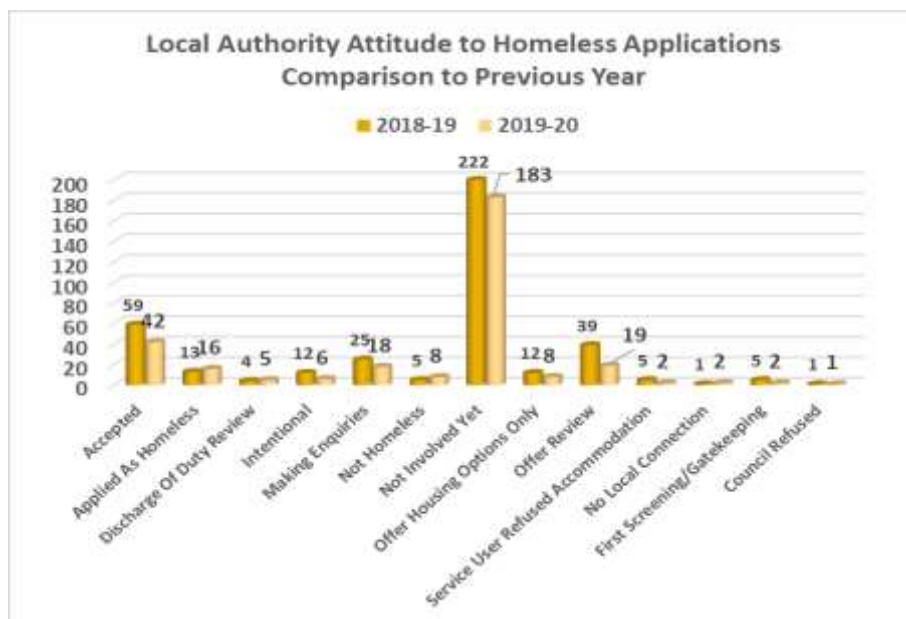


Chart 23

### **OUTCOME OF CLOSED CASES (Prison Service not included)**

The Centre closed 94% of cases opened in this reporting year: 88% last year. Out of a total of 627 cases that were opened and closed within this reporting year there were 1053 outcomes. The chart below analyses these outcomes and compares them to the outcomes from the previous year. Increased emphasis on homeless prevention by working closely with Landlords and Housing Options has been positive. The Centre prevented homelessness in 134 cases which was the same as the previous year. We also helped to improve affordability in 203 cases and helped service users to become permanently housed in 86 cases. It should also be noted that the reduction in hours of our Tenure Sustainment Service has impacted the number of cases we can open as there is only one member of staff delivering this service.

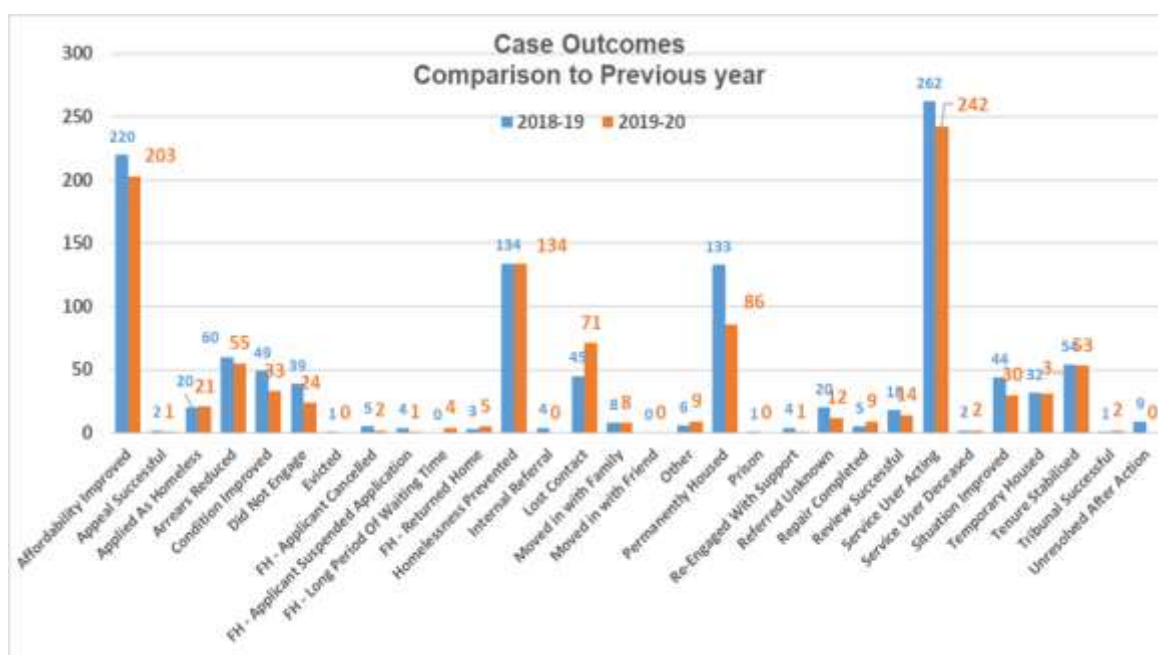


Chart 24

### **ADVOCACY/ADVICE ANALYSIS – CLOSED CASES (Prison Service not included)**

Here we analyse the percentage split between advice and advocacy cases closed within the reporting year. Advice can cover a wide range of factors and cover many internal action plans. In terms of advocacy, we have regular contact with many Local and Central Government Departments, landlords, Lenders, partner agencies and individuals. Positively advocating for Service User at an early stage is often successful in preventing homelessness. In this reporting year we can see that, once again, there have been more cases involving advocacy than advice: 74% and 26% respectively. There have been 14% more advocacy cases than the previous year and the same reduction in advice cases. Our Service Users seem to be expecting more of us in recent years: the level of work we do in each case is becoming increasingly more detailed and time consuming. This may be impacted by COVID and will be monitoring this in the coming year.

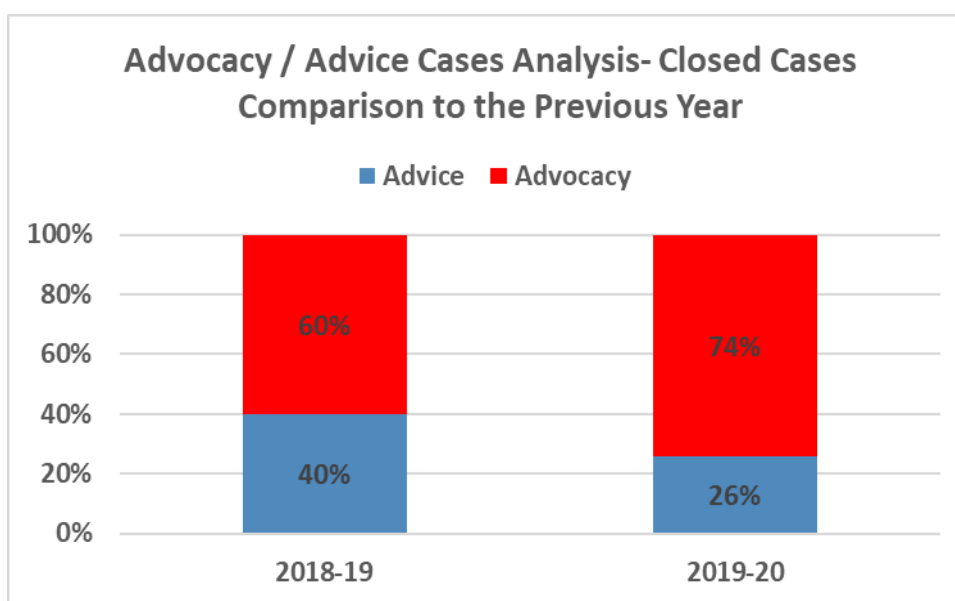


Chart 25

### **ADVOCACY/ADVICE ANALYSIS – OUTCOMES OF CLOSED CASES (Prison Service not included)**

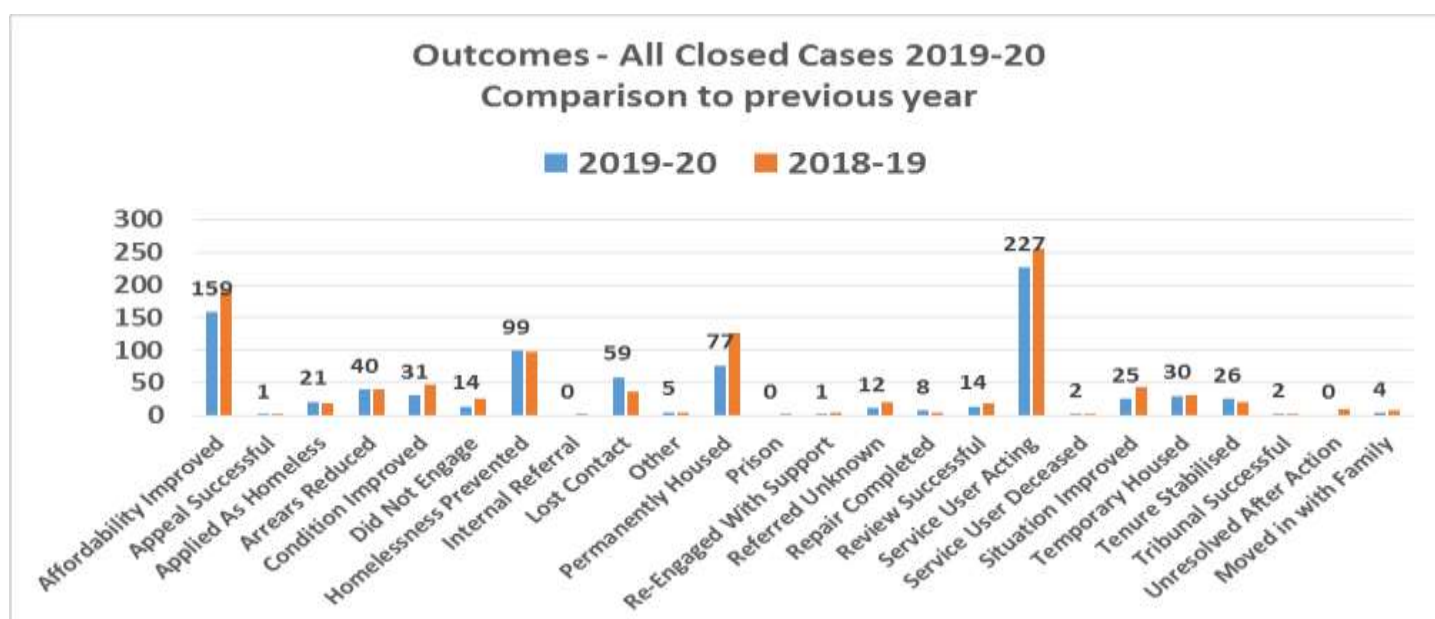


Chart 26

## **BREAKDOWN OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTED BY TENURE TYPES**

The graph below shows a breakdown of the tenure types of the cases where we managed to prevent homelessness. As you can see the majority of our homeless prevention outcomes were Council tenants.

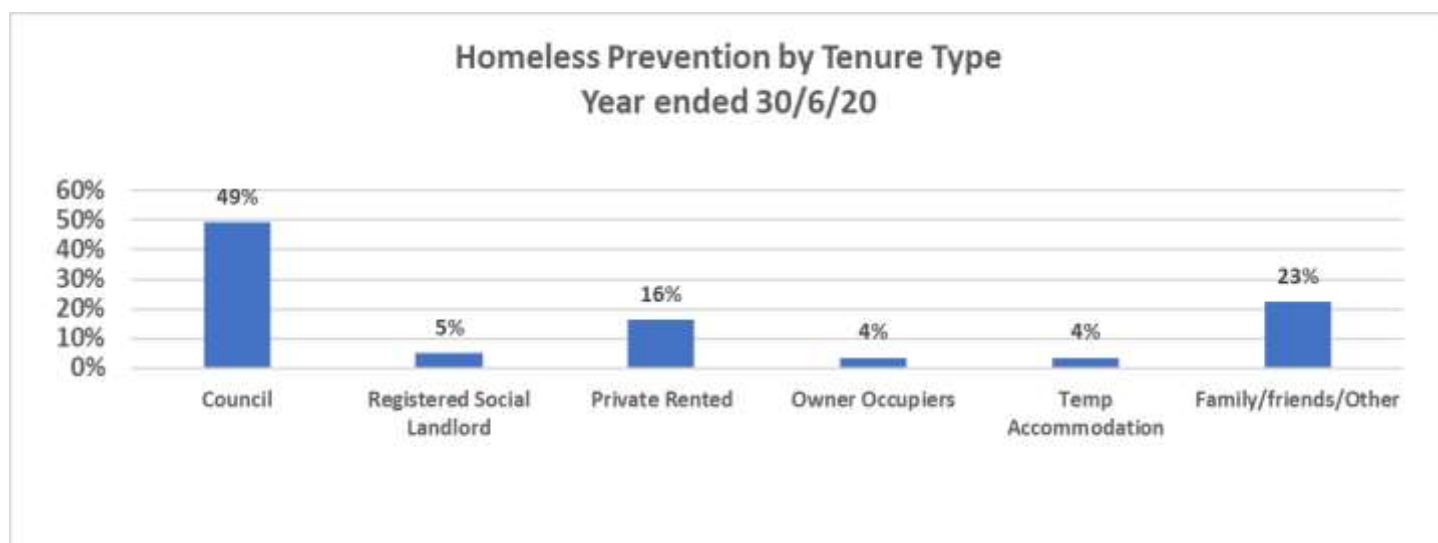


Chart 27

## **CASE ASSESSMENT**

This graph below provides an analysis of assessments relating to cases closed within this reporting year. The vast majority of closed cases had a positive outcome or positive outcome likely: 464 cases out of the 627 cases closed fell into this category. Another 99 service users were given information to enable them to positively achieve their own results. A total of 37 cases were closed due to losing contact with the service user: last year this figure was 44. The Centre has systems in place to minimise the possibility of losing contact and we follow up cases quickly to avoid this. This is vital, in particular when trying to prevent homelessness and encouraging engagement and a positive interaction.

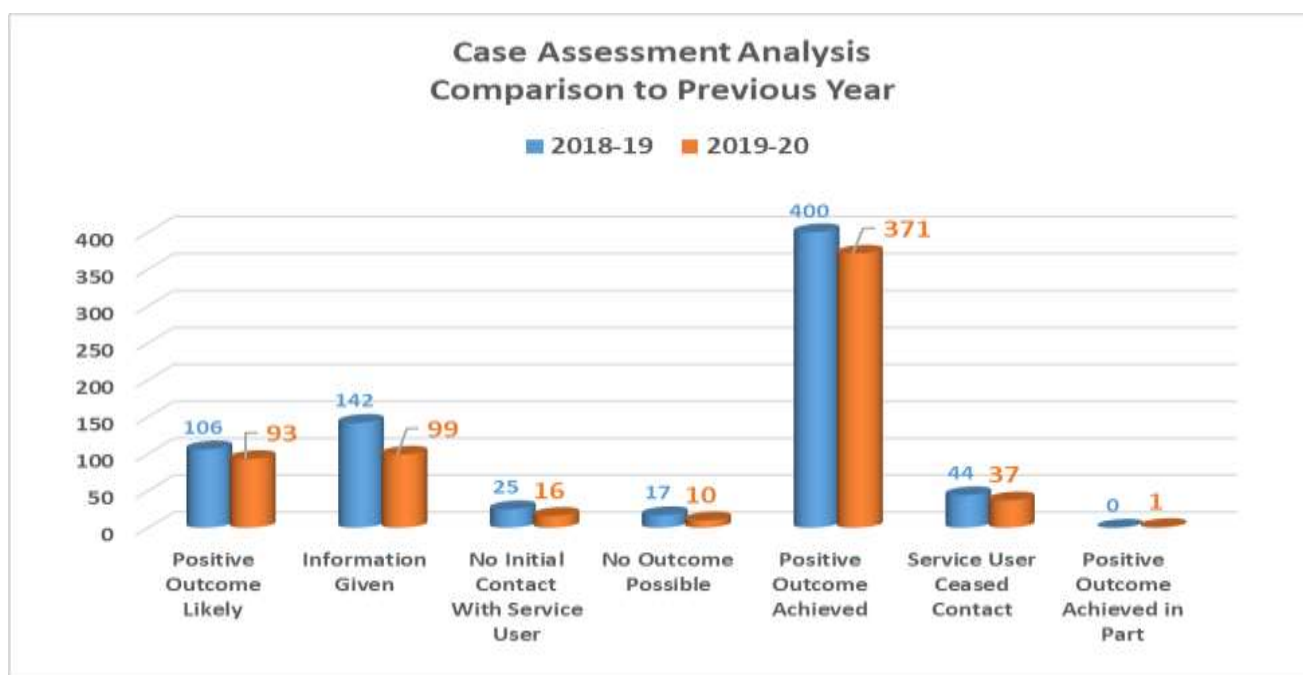


Chart 28

**PRISON HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE**

**INTRODUCTION**

This Service covers both East and South Ayrshire areas. Since the Contract integrated this service on 1.11.17 we have created a Prison Housing Advice Policy, reviewed and adapted the existing database for collation and extraction of statistics for reports, created a backup of the database and created Service User Feedback forms. This report has additional information from our statistical systems in line with The SHORE Standards.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS**

The Local Authority areas in the graphs below show where the 439 prisoners resided prior to coming into prison. Similar to last year, the majority of our Service Users are from East Ayrshire, mainly due to the location of the Prisons. From a total of 439 prisoners in both charts, 206 (47%) came from East Ayrshire and 131(30%) from South Ayrshire. The remaining 102 prisoners (23%) came from other areas. Last year the percentages were 57%, 27% and 16% respectively.

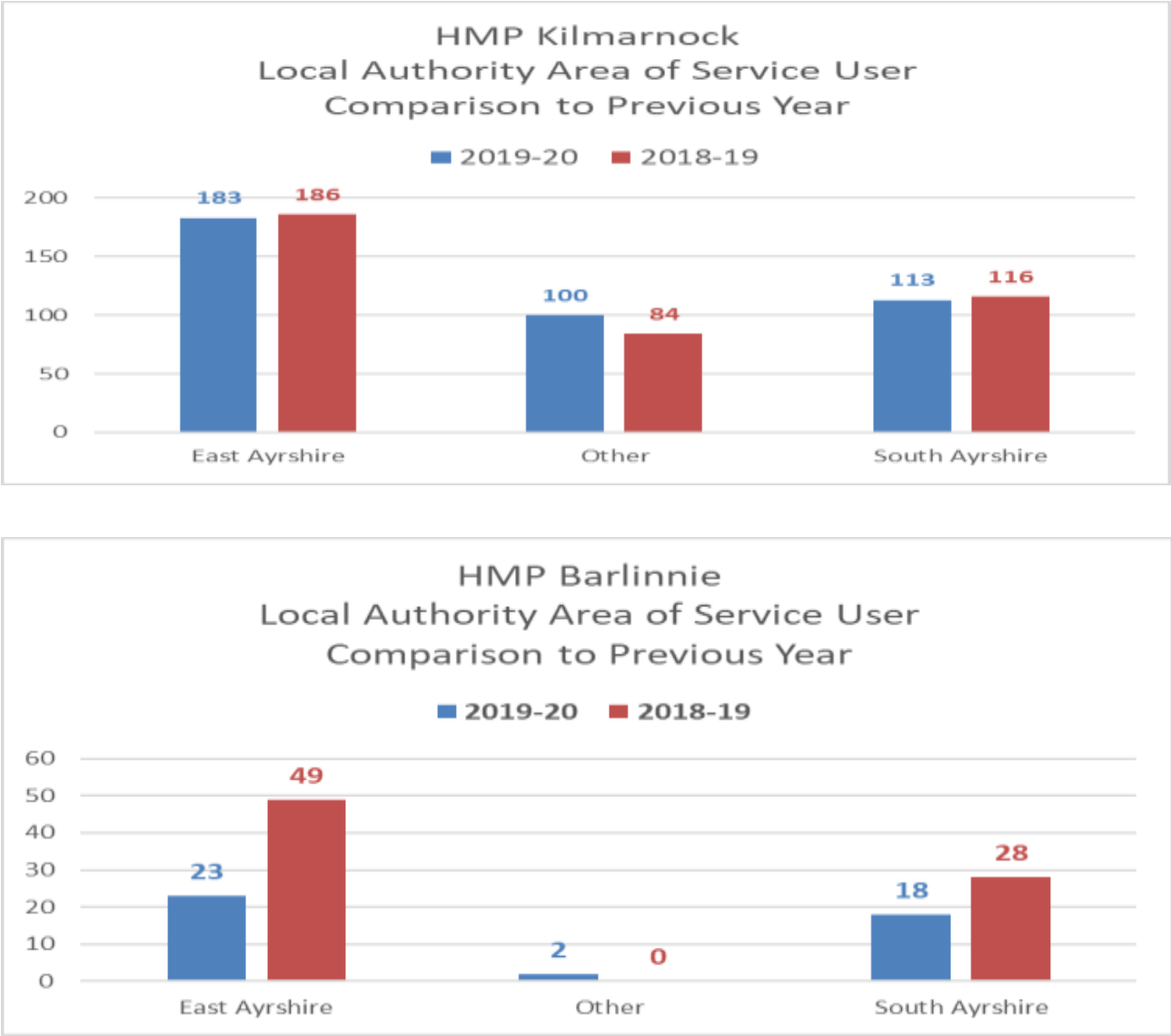


Chart 29

## REFERRAL AGENCY

The following charts shows that the majority of the cases were referred to us via the Prison Core Screen and the Prisoner Induction which is carried out by Prison Officers to identify Service Users' needs when they come into Prison. There have been numerous self-referrals received which are usually from mid-sentence if circumstances change following sentencing after their core screen.

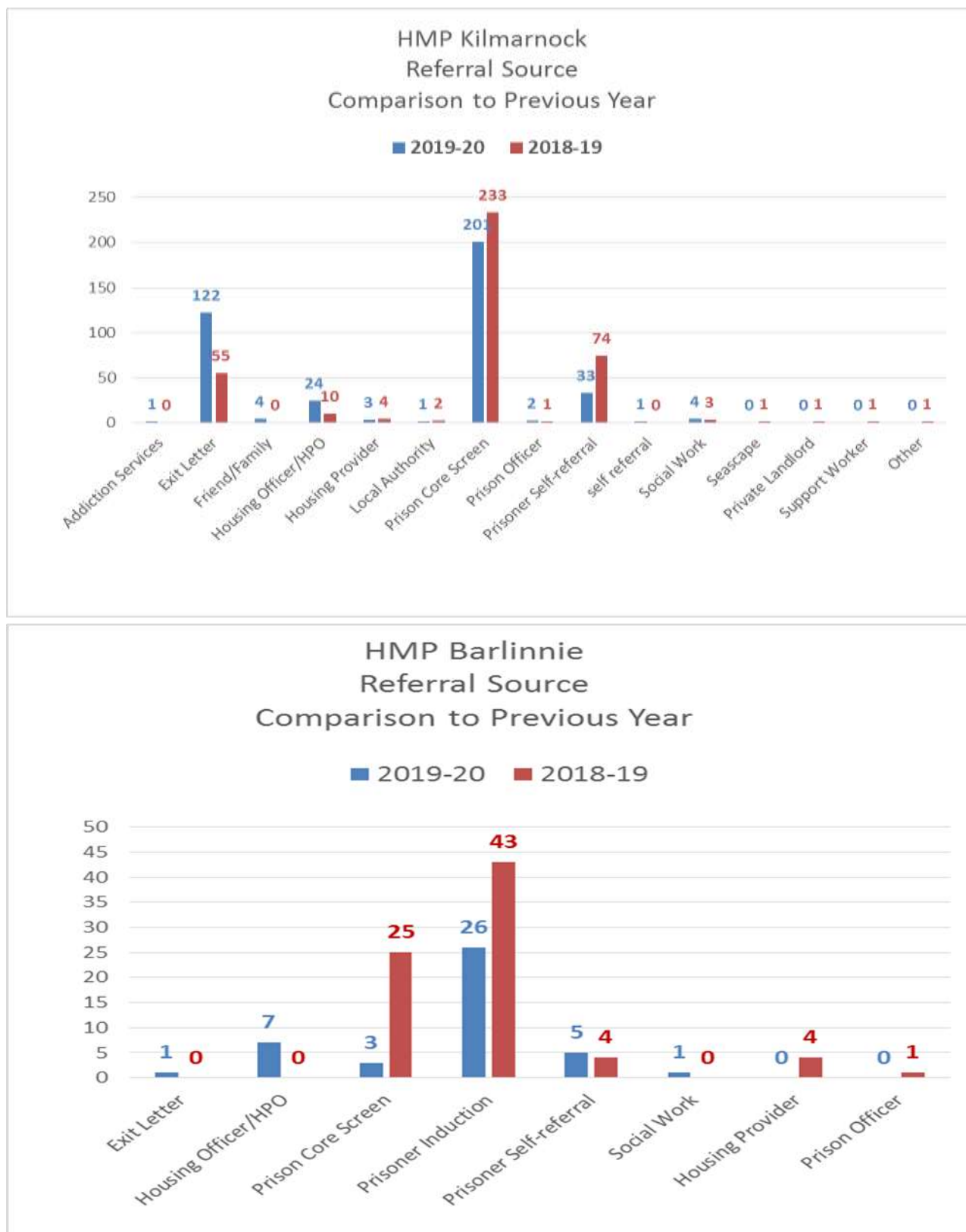


Chart 30

## INTERNAL ACTION PLANS

From the 439 cases opened in the current reporting year, 1695 issues were generated requiring advice: Kilmarnock (1489) and Barlinnie (206). This has increased from last year when 1197 issues were generated in total. This is only Service User led advice actions from cases opened and does not include the additional work carried out for e-mail and phone call enquiries from local authorities checking if their tenants are in custody, court appearances or sentence dates and any other work carried out. This illustrates the breadth of housing knowledge our Advisers have.

HMP KILMARNOCK			INCREASE/ -DECREASE
TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	2018-19	2019-20	IN YEAR
Antisocial Behaviour	3	0	-3
Appeal/Tribunal/Review	2	0	-2
Assignment	0	1	1
Assistance to complete form	5	6	1
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy HB	1	7	6
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy Other	3	6	3
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy UC	28	15	-13
Belongings Enquiry	7	22	15
Community Links Schedule	0	10	10
Contact Landlord/HO/HPO	89	315	226
Contact Link Centre/PCOs	0	31	31
Contact Social Work	3	27	24
Contact Other Agencies	4	16	12
CT - Council Tax	22	23	1
Decree eviction granted - whilst in custody	3	0	-3
Email a Prisoner	0	1	1
HB + CT	35	13	-22
Homeless Assessment Paperwork Complete	14	20	6
Homeless Assessment Paperwork Given	0	7	7
Homeless Referral Made	29	38	9
Homeless Telephone Interview Actioned	6	28	22
Homeless Telephone Interview Arranged	8	33	25
Homeless Telephone Interview Non-actioned	1	6	5
Homelessness	105	52	-53
Household Dispute	0	1	1
Housing Application	42	56	14
Housing First Project	1	0	-1
Housing Information + Advice	159	187	28
Housing Options	79	23	-56
Letter to Prisoner	0	14	14
Lock change	1	14	13
Message a Prisoner CMS	0	37	37
Mortgage Arrears	5	2	-3
Notice of proceedings - whilst in custody	13	6	-7
Offer of housing - whilst in custody	4	17	13
Other	7	8	1
Payment Plan Arranged	2	6	4
Referral to Other Agencies	3	10	7
Referral to SeAscape Housing Support	4	13	9
Relationship Breakdown	1	0	-1
Release from Court	0	6	6
Rent Arrears/debt	54	44	-10
Rent Deposit Scheme	1	10	9
Rent/Rent Levels	4	0	-4
Sub-let	1	0	-1
SWF Clothing Applied	119	155	36
SWF Enquiry	9	51	42
SWF Furniture Applied	5	12	7
UC + CT	112	99	-13
UC Update Enquiry	7	40	33
Utilities	2	0	-2
Vicar's Relief Fund	2	1	-1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>1489</b>	<b>484</b>

HMP BARLINNIE			INCREASE/ -DECREASE
TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	2018-19	2019-20	IN YEAR
Antisocial Behaviour	0	1	1
Assistance to Complete Forms	1	0	1
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy HB	2	2	0
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy Other	1	2	1
Assistance to Terminate Tenancy UC	4	3	-1
Belongings Enquiry	2	6	4
Contact Bank	1	1	0
Contact Landlord/HO/HPO	21	54	33
Contact Social Work	0	3	3
CT - Council Tax	1	4	3
Decree eviction granted - whilst in custody	1	0	-1
HB + CT	12	3	-9
Homeless Assessment Paperwork Complete	2	0	-2
Homeless Referral Made	6	3	-3
Homeless Telephone Interview Actioned	2	4	2
Homeless Telephone Interview Arranged	2	5	3
Homelessness	14	9	-5
Housing Application	6	8	2
Housing Information + Advice	32	41	9
Housing Options	20	2	-18
Lock change	1	5	4
Message a Prisoner CMS	0	1	1
Notice of proceedings - whilst in custody	4	1	-3
Offer of housing - whilst in custody	0	2	2
Payment Plan Arranged	0	1	1
Referral to Other Agencies	0	2	2
Referral to SeAscape Housing Support	1	2	1
Rent Arrears	4	4	0
SWF Clothing Applied	12	8	-4
SWF Enquiry	1	1	0
SWF Furniture Applied	0	3	3
UC + CT	34	19	-15
UC Update Enquiry	5	6	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>14</b>

Chart 31



## OUTCOME OF CLOSED CASES

The two graphs below show the outcomes resulting from the closed cases. A total of 383 cases were closed: 350 in Kilmarnock and 33 in Barlinnie. From the 383 Service Users cases which were closed we prevented homelessness in 221 cases: 202 in Kilmarnock and 19 in Barlinnie. If our Service User had a live homeless case prior to coming into Prison their outcome would almost always be temporary housed as they would be accepted whilst in custody and would be told they will get temporary accommodation arranged for liberation. However, if this was not confirmed or if they had not yet been accepted, their outcome would be applied as homeless.

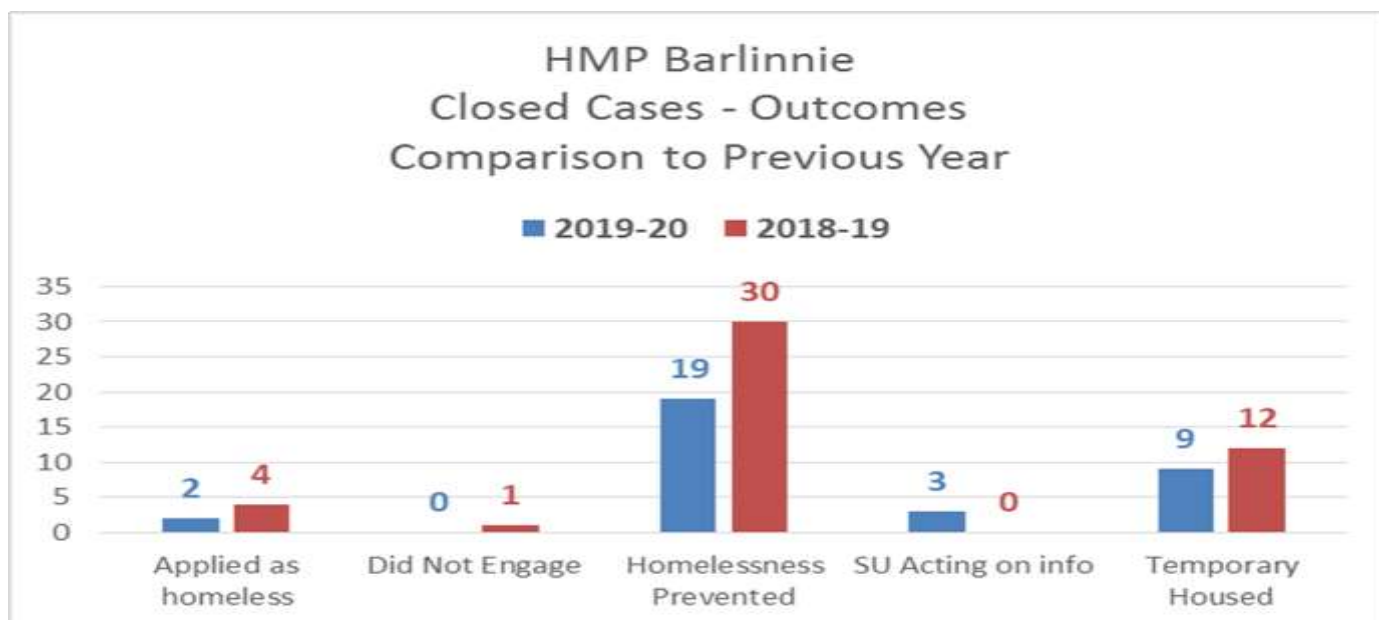
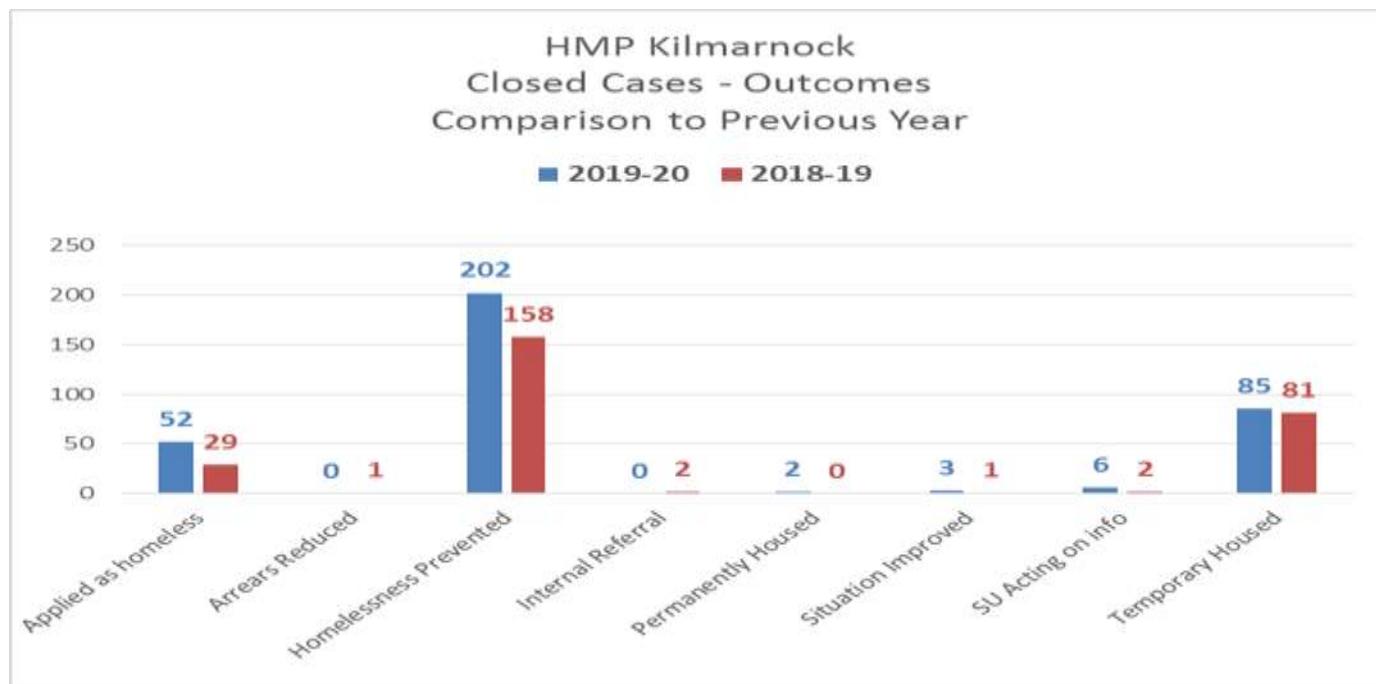


Chart 32