



**Ayr Housing Aid**  
Centre scio

## ANNUAL REPORT

1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2020 – 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021



SCOTTISH CHARITY NO: SC049609

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## GOVERNANCE

### Objectives & Activities

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO is established for charitable purposes only, and the objectives are:

1. Relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, homelessness or threat of homelessness or other disadvantages
2. Relief of poverty
3. Advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation
4. Advancement of education.

Our office is at 7 York Street, Ayr and Prison Housing Advice are normally based in HMP Kilmarnock Link Centre. During this reporting year staff followed the Government “Work from Home” advice throughout the pandemic. Despite this we still maintained our core opening hours to the public (9am-12.30pm and 1pm – 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 4pm on a Friday remotely). All face to face, Outreach and HEY services were suspended although exceptions were made on a case-by-case basis where no other option but to engage directly was suitable.

### The Board

1. Allan Shaw, Chairperson (from 5/6/21)
2. Ethel Riach, Treasurer
3. Alex Anderson, (Chairperson to 4/6/21)
3. Pat Lappin
4. Alan Berry
5. Bob Baillie, (resigned 4/3/21)
6. Margaret Greenan, (joined 29/3/21)
7. Bill Gilmour

### The Team

- John Mulholland, Chief Executive Officer (employment ended 30/6/21)
- Suzanne Slavin, Services Manager
- Karen Miller, Office and Finance Manager
- Suzanne Mcilloney, Engagement Manager
- Neil Gray, Advice & Advocacy Team Leader
- Leica Malkin, Welfare Reform Officer
- Emma Gaughan, Prison Housing Adviser
- Shirleyann Reid, Prison Housing Adviser
- Gavin Kennedy, Care Experienced First Home and HEY Officer
- Janet MacAlister, First Home Officer (employment ended 1/10/20)
- Amy Wallace, First Home Officer (employment ended 16/2/21)
- Mandy Burrell, First Home Officer (employment ended 29/9/20)
- Jasmine Salmons, First Home Officer (employment commenced 23/11/20)
- Karen Jess, First Home Officer (employment commenced 23/11/20)
- Lucy Carroll, Tenure Sustainment Officer (employment commenced 8/10/20)
- Joseph Sproat, Administrative and Statistical Assistant
- Alison Hood, Finance & Administrative Officer

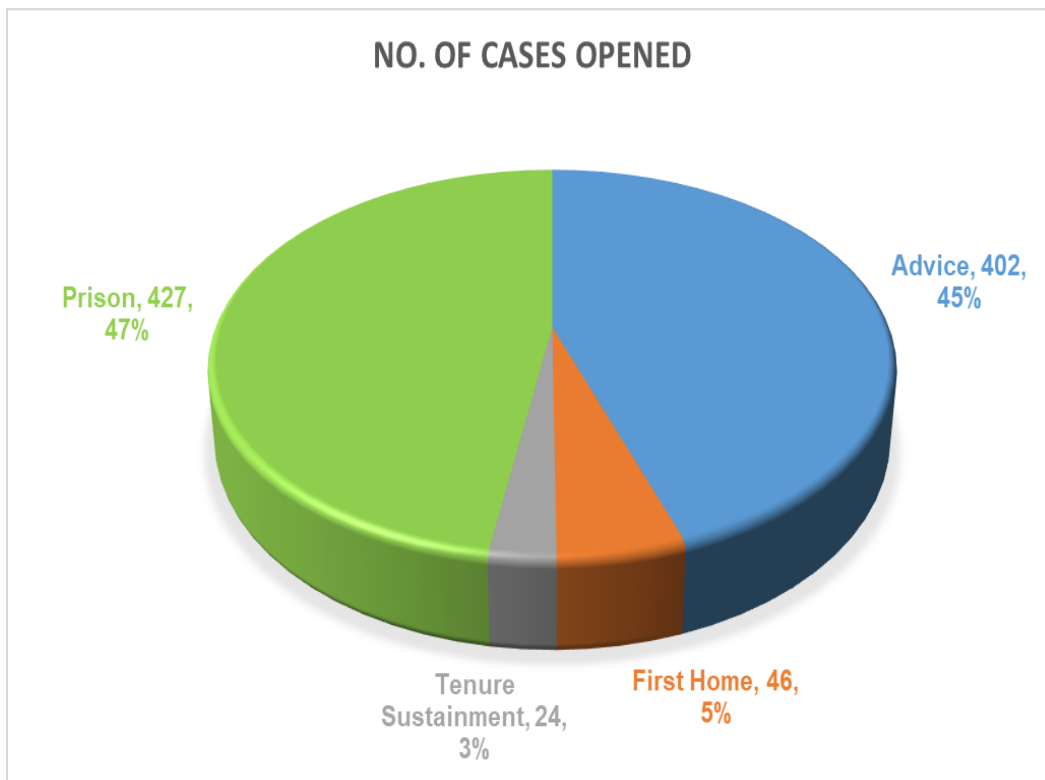
## PRINCIPLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Each of our Services contribute to the Centre meeting its aims and objectives, contractual obligations and our Service User's and community's needs. All Services produce Internal Annual Reports and statistics which feed into our Annual Report cycle including the Annual Service User Feedback Report. A total of 899 cases were opened during this year, despite COVID-19 and its many restrictions (1,099 previous year).

### Our Services

1. Type I, II and III Accredited 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. Tenure Sustainment (one-to-one service)
4. First Home, (one-to-one Engagement Services)
5. First Home Care Experienced (one-to-one Engagement Services)
6. HEY (Housing Education 4 Youths, Secondary School groups) suspended due to COVID-19
7. Home+ (Engagement Services group work) suspended due to COVID-19
8. Community Engagement and Promotion - reduced due to COVID-19

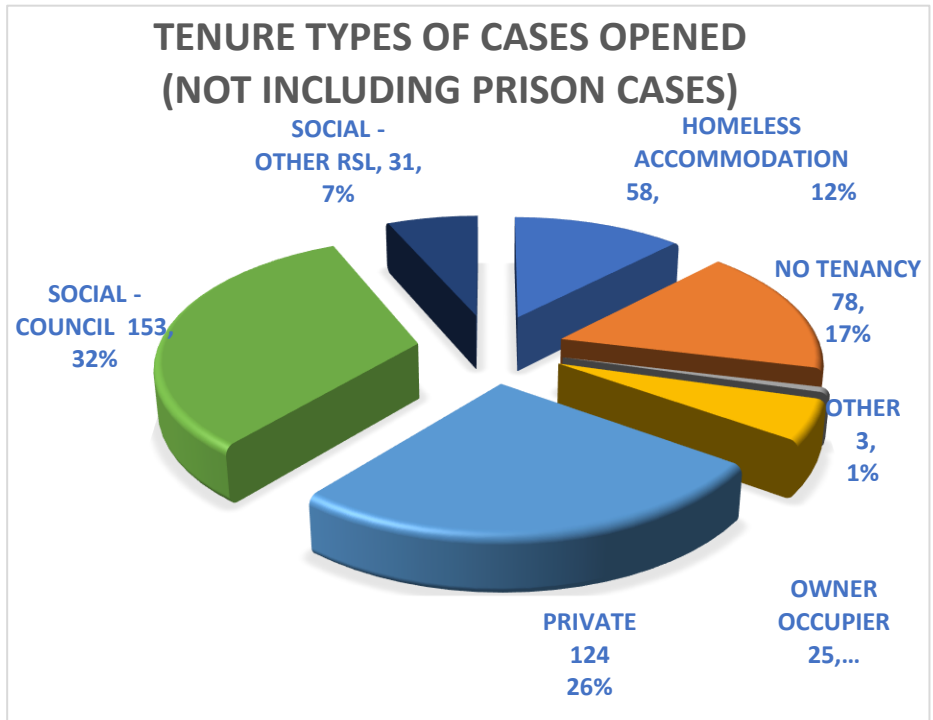
### Case Type Analysis



- 899 new cases opened
- 598 Services Users with disabilities
- 235 children in Service Users' households (202 children involved in homeless cases (Prison not included))

## Tenure Breakdown of cases Opened

- 63% were in some sort of secure tenancy
- 26% of cases opened were private rented tenants (including First Home cases).
- 17% had no tenancy
- 12% were in Homeless Accommodation
- 5% were owner occupiers



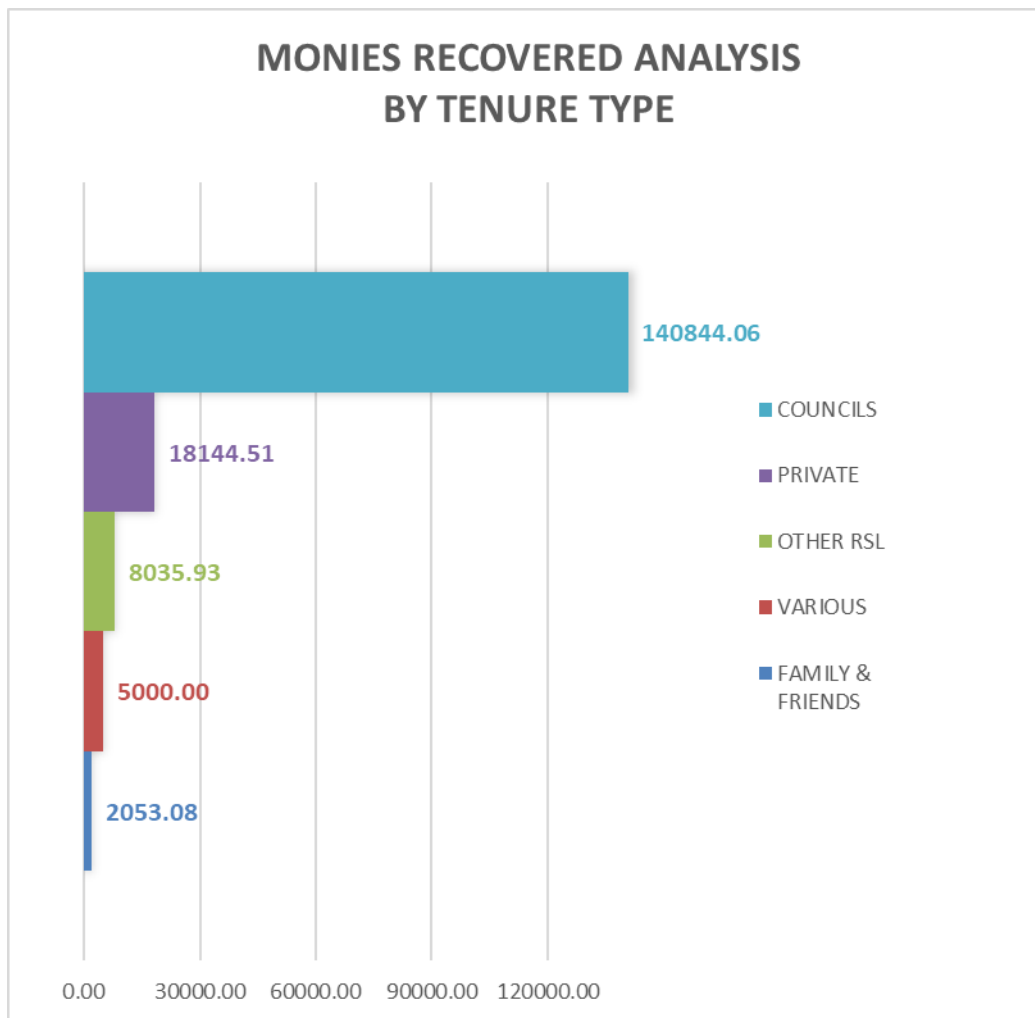
## Key Outcomes from Casework

- 899 new cases opened
- 833 cases were closed in this reporting period (some from the previous year)
- 645 outcomes – (Not including Prison Cases)
- 303 Homelessness Prevented Cases (191 from Prison Advice)
- 1,343 appointments were carried out remotely in this reporting year compared to 935 previously: an increase of 44%
- 82 Service Users permanently re-housed (Prison Cases not included)
- 180 Service Users acted on advice from the Centre (Prison Cases not included)
- 759 cases had a positive outcome achieved or likely including Prison Cases
- Monies recovered including arrears reduced and income maximised across all sectors £176,055 including prison cases
- 6 Homeowners remained in their homes as a result of homeless prevention (not including prison cases)
- 493 referrals made to external agencies and organisations
- 26% of prison service users were provided with temporary homeless accommodation on release, 25% previous year.
- £2,043,080 future rental income to all sectors (Service Users x weekly rent x 52 weeks)
- Value of homelessness prevented - £2,121,000 (relates to temp accommodation costs)
- Estimated value to secured lenders £90,000

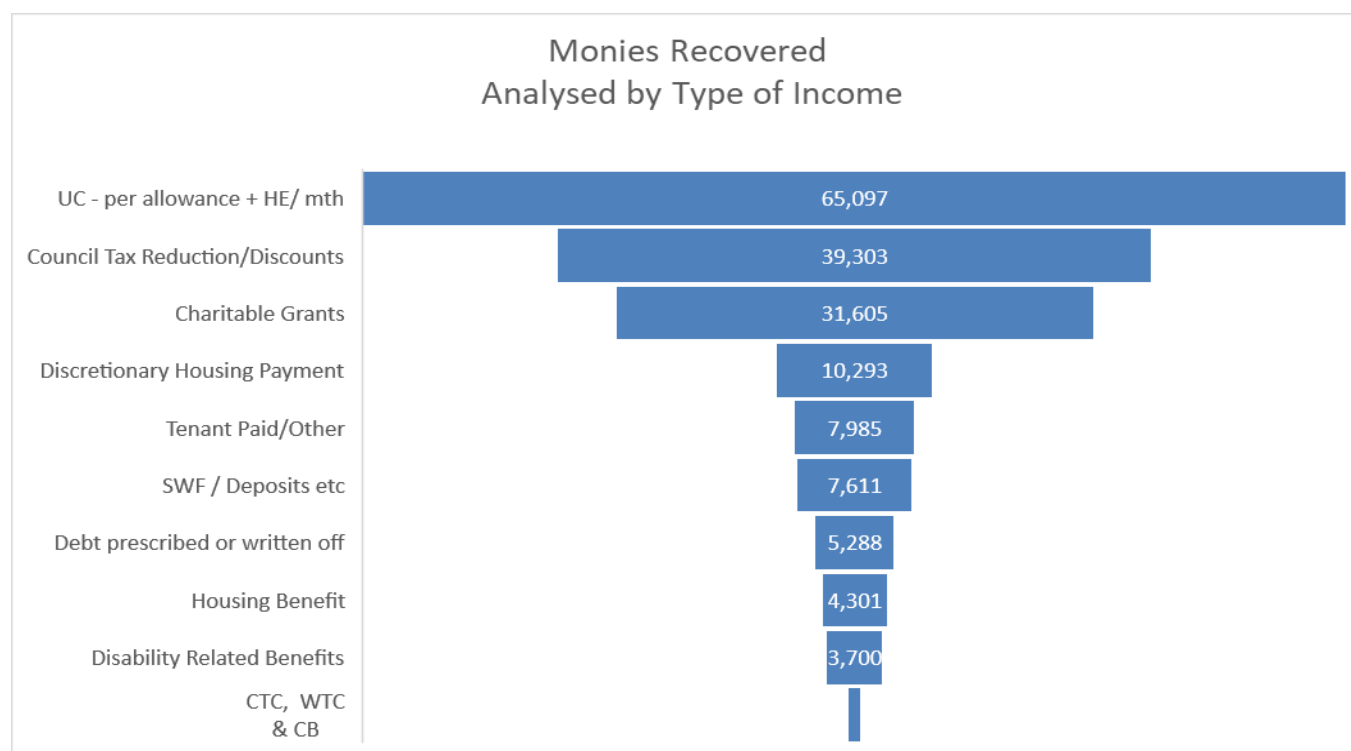
- Less demand on social, family, education, health and housing services estimated value £9,090,000

### Tenant and Third-Party Beneficiaries – (Including Prisons)

Over the past 18 years we have been monitoring monies recovered to Rent, Council Tax accounts, income increased to tenants and owner occupiers. The Centre has developed a monies recovered database to log grants monies received on behalf of service users as well as other income improved /funding. Most of the grants we apply to go direct Service Users and their rent accounts to reduce arrears, prevent homelessness or begin or sustain tenancies. The charts below highlight overall monies recovered which in many cases prevented eviction and homelessness across all sectors.



- Total monies recovered was £176,055 INCLUDING PRISON
  - £70,282 recovered to Council rent accounts and tenants
  - £16,870 recovered to private sector rent accounts and tenants
  - £5,000 - Various is a group grant from Community Resilience Fund across all tenures



- £65,097 awarded in Universal Credit Claims
- 106 Charitable Grants totalling £31,605 received in the year including £4,776 from Frontline Network
- £39,303 worth of Council Tax reductions, discounts and exemptions awarded
- £10,293 Discretionary Housing Payments to alleviate poverty from rent top ups due

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

Homelessness prevention in all sectors reduces demands on Public Sector resources, in particular, the provision of 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. The monies we recovered, summarised in the section above, highlights increased co-operation in terms of rent arrear cases and income maximisation. Our recovery amounts and income maximisation remain high across all sectors. 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 sectors. We have seen a reduction in those with arrears coming to us due to COVID-19 and the suspension of evictions. We know that we will see an increase in repossession actions once these bans are lifted in 2021.



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

266 Public Sector tenancies x £90 (average rent) x 52 weeks =	£ 1,643,980
18 RSL tenancies x £100 (average rent) x 52 weeks =	£ 93,600
47 Private Sector tenancies x £125 (average rent) x 52 weeks =	£ 305,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 2,043,080</b>

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

We had no Owner Occupiers within this period, mainly due to COVID-19 mortgage support for homeowners and eviction bans preventing any immediate ejections in this period.

### Homeless Prevention achievements in detail

The Centre firmly believes early intervention and access to free, independent, accredited 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 303 cases this year. The estimated saving to the public purse for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation only would have been **£2,121,000**. This figure is worked out by multiplying the 3 figures below:

A: - Average weekly rent for temporary accommodation (£350)

B: - Number of cases (303)

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 £20,000 and £95,000. For the purposes of this calculation, we use the figure of £30,000 which is on the low range. In a period of 17 years the Centre has directly prevented homelessness in over 3,958 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 £9,090,000 for these 303 cases.

## Value of Services

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 type III National Standards Housing Advice Accreditation. 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 and so 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 **£518,888** 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 £14,329,134 (£12,015,632, last year). Economic value is an important indicator and for every **£1** put in by the Councils the Centre generates a value of **£27.62**, (**£26.19** last year). Please note this has been impacted on the deferral of income into 2020/21.

It is a fair estimate that every year around 4,000 Individuals/Organisations directly or indirectly benefit from our Services.

## CHAIRPERSON'S OVERVIEW

### Introduction

This was a particularly difficult year for not only the Centre but everyone generally. The Centre finally converted to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in October 2020. We had to work from due to COVID-19 and the stay-at-home message. The Board's main priority throughout this period was to protect and support our staff and service users. I would like to convey how proud I am of the Board, staff and management team for getting through such a tough year.

2020/21 was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Centre proactively working with a range of stakeholders to mitigate the economic, health and social impact on our most vulnerable service users. We did this by focusing our attentions to accessing essential grants to alleviate poverty, in particular, food and fuel.

The Centre's services provide a range of benefits including health, wellbeing, educational and economic. Our main aims continue to be the prevention of homelessness, housing need and the alleviation of poverty. We have continued to deliver high quality services under our contract with South and East Ayrshire Councils. In addition to this the Centre continues to look for additional funding to plug gaps and fill recognised much needed additional services.

In this reporting period the Centre also had to go through the procurement process for existing services which was further burdened by the contract being split resulting in not only one, but 2 tender processes. This process was undertaken by the Board's Sub-Committee and Senior Management team between February 2021 – June 2021. Further work on Contracts and TUPE were completed after this and will be outlined in next year's report.

The one thing the pandemic brought was a need to bring forward technology planning. In this reporting year the Centre embraced digital technology ensuring business continuity. We were able to ensure staff were able to work remotely and put in place systems to facilitate and support staff to continue to deliver high quality services to our service users throughout the pandemic. The Centre continued to monitor operational and financial performance throughout the year and adapted services for our staff and service users.

## **Future Development and Plans**

The next 12 months will focus on continuing to deliver high quality services and with our reduction in income due to procurement outcomes which we will seek additional funding to bridge the gap to ensure we have sufficient staff to meet our service users' expectations. We will work on our next 5-year plan which will include looking to future funding streams to maintain adequate service delivery.

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. Recovery from COVID will set new tasks for the Centre in the year ahead. Likewise, we hope to reinstate our engagement and Outreach services which were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will look to re-establish our fundraising activities to secure additional funding to enhance our existing services.

There are many significant changes and challenges for the Centre and our Services within the next year and beyond, mainly linked to decreases in income and contractual changes ahead. 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.

The Board has a long proud history of supporting staff training and development which of course will continue. We will continue to provide high quality services to meet all the regulatory and quality assurance requirements and beyond.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Board are particularly grateful to the Staff and Management Team in this difficult year, for their resilience and imaginative responses to people's needs. Not only did we all go through COVID-19, lockdowns but the challenge of 2 procurement processes took a lot of additional commitment and work over and above the day to day running of the Centre. For the additional hours and effort from everyone I am truly grateful. I would like to extend my thanks to all the partner agencies we have worked with throughout this year to ensure we all work together with the aim of helping those in need. I am also grateful to the Board for the work they have done during this reporting year.

Allan Shaw, Chairperson

## TREASURER'S FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2020/21

Within this Report I have enclosed the Statement of Financial Activities from our Financial Statements which were audited and submitted to Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). The results for the year showed a small deficit of just under £4k. The charity is in an acceptable financial position with net current assets amounting to £174,458.

The Board recognises the need to hold reserves to provide the necessary working capital to carry out our activities and to provide protection against future adverse financial circumstances. Our target is to retain an amount equivalent to four months operational expenditure in designated reserves for this purpose. We have designated reserves of £135k to provide for identified redundancy liabilities of £80k and £55k for 2 month's salaries in the event of current funding streams ceasing and plan to increase this figure at the next year end. Restricted funds are linked to specific conditions and expectations. At present our restricted reserves are £7,535. Unrestricted reserves amounting to just under £32k are available for any purpose.

### Independent Auditor Statement

#### *Opinion*

*"We have audited the financial statements of Ayr Housing Aid Centre (SCIO) (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 June 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).*

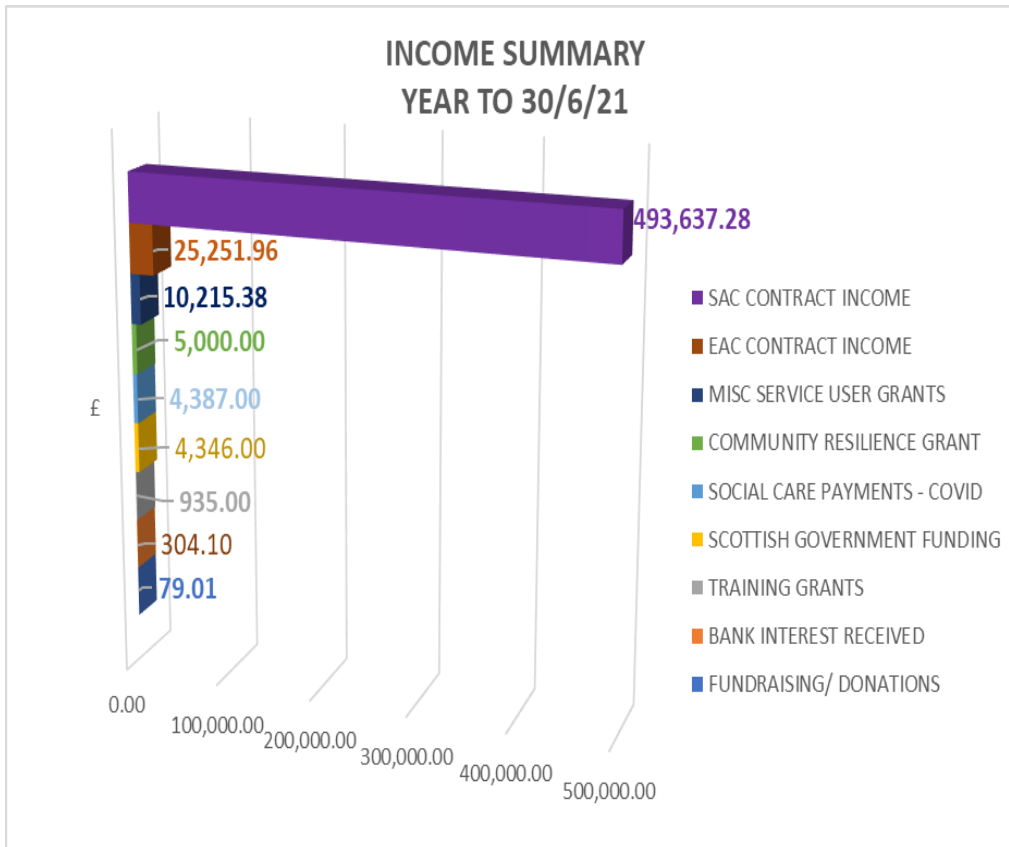
*In our opinion the financial statements:*

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 June 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;*
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and*
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006."*

**Kenneth C. Livingstone B.A., C.A., A.I.P.F.M., Xeinadin Audit Limited**  
**24 Beresford Terrace, Ayr KA7 2EG**

**30 March 2022**

## Income

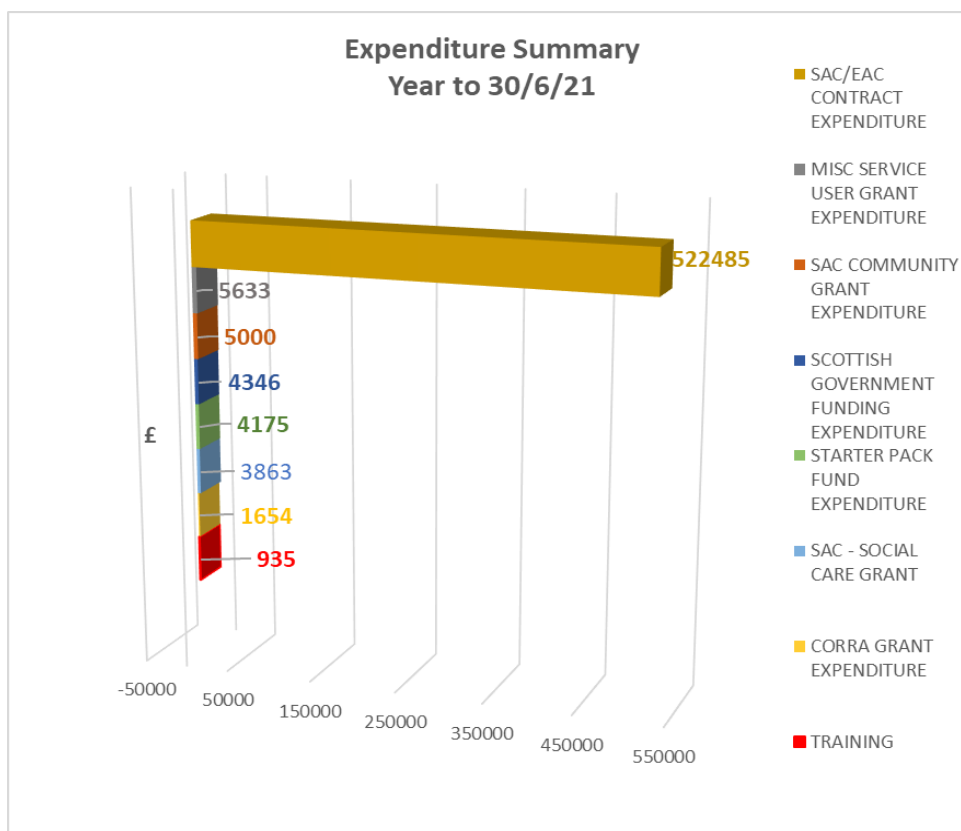


Total income was  
**£544,155** in this year

**95.4%** of income was  
**£493,638** from South Ayrshire  
Council Contract and  
**£25,251** from East Ayrshire  
Council Contract

**4.6%** of income was  
**£25,266** by way of grants,  
fundraising, donations and  
other income.

## Expenditure



Total expenditure was  
**£548,091** in this year  
(including **£473,179** salary  
costs)

**95.3%** of expenditure is  
**£522,485** - South and East  
Ayrshire Contracts

**4.7%** of expenditure was  
**£25,606** by way of grant  
expenditures, government  
funding, and other costs

## Projections for 2021/22

Our revised budget for the year ended 30/6/22 shows a surplus which is mainly due to a significant restructure, vacancies, additional income secured and tight spending restrictions. Our estimated income for next year is projected to be around £448k. Our budget forecasts have also been prepared which show that we will continue to grow and develop in the next few years and go from strength-to-strength to achieve our aim of preventing homelessness and alleviating poverty. Due to pressures on funds and reductions to our main income stream we have made application to external organisations such as Nationwide Building Society for a Tribunal Worker for 2 years and our collaboration with SeAscape for the I'M IN! Project funded by the Scottish Government. We will continue to seek additional funding to minimise risk and fundraising activities will be increased when it is covid safe to do so.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank our former Accountant, Andy Howat for his services over many years and we wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Thanks to our newly appointed Auditor Stewart Gilmour & Co for carrying out our financial review, annual audit and we look forward to working with them in the coming year to provide our annual independent financial review and payroll services.

J P Lappin, Treasurer

# Statement of Financial Activities

## For the year Ended 30th June 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds as restated £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	80	-	80	2,166
<b>Charitable activities</b>	5				
Provision of housing advice, advocacy and support		-	543,771	543,771	545,265
Investment income	4	304	-	304	952
<b>Total</b>		384	543,771	544,155	548,383
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
<b>Charitable activities</b>	6				
Provision of housing advice, advocacy and support		-	548,091	548,091	554,657
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		384	(4,320)	(3,936)	(6,274)
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	15	(3,491)	3,491	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		(3,107)	(829)	(3,936)	(6,274)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>					
As previously reported		142,723	8,364	151,087	184,668
Prior year adjustment	12	27,307	-	27,307	-
<b>As restated</b>		170,030	8,364	178,394	184,668
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		166,923	7,535	174,458	178,394

### CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure have arisen from continuing activities



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

### Introduction

I echo the Chair and Treasurer's reports above and agree that nothing could have prepared us for the challenges that COVID-19 and the stay-at-home message brought. As C.E.O my main concern was to ensure staff and service users were safe. The Response Teams we established in March 2020 stood us in good stead to ensure issues were dealt with as they arose, and staff were able to still fully function and be productive while working at home. I would like to thank the Board, the Senior Management Team, and all staff for not only surviving this difficult time but often flourishing in it and taking the challenges head on and adapting to whatever our service users needed quickly. Much of our time was listening to our service users and tailoring our service to their actual needs there and then, addressing food and fuel poverty.

The pandemic certainly pushed our systems to their limits, and we were able to successfully move into the Cloud and embraced digital technology to ensure continuity and quality was enhanced. Staff were able to work remotely to continue to deliver high quality services to our service users throughout the year.

The Centre's core ethos continues to be the prevention of homelessness, housing need and the alleviation of poverty. Throughout this year we have continued to deliver high quality services under our contracts. Additional pressures were added when we had to go through the procurement process for our existing contract which was split into 2 tender processes. This process was completed by the Board's Sub-Committee and Senior Management Team between February 2021 – June 2021 and was difficult to say the least.

The Centre were finally able to conclude our conversion to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in October 2020 once the COVID-19 delays with banks etc allowed.

### Service Development

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO's main aims and objectives continues to be to prevent homelessness and alleviate poverty. We do this through a variety of preventative and responsive approaches. Much of the work has focused on emerging poverty consequences, getting grants and financial support and practical responses such as delivering 'Get Started Packs' for service users in need.

We undertook an intensive 2 rounds of procurement in this year in quick succession which was no mean feat for a small organisation. Our Covid Response Teams comprising of Senior Staff and Board Members were able to turn this round in a matter of weeks.

## Looking Ahead

The next 12 months will focus on continuing to deliver high quality services and with our reduction in income due to procurement outcomes which we will seek additional funding to bridge the gap to ensure we have sufficient staff to meet our service users' expectations. Due to reductions in income and TUPE implications we see next year to be just as challenging as this year, albeit in a very different way.

Over the next year we will work on our 5-year plan which will include looking to future funding streams to maintain adequate service delivery given the cuts over the next 4 years. We hope to be able to reinstate our HEY and Community Outreach services which were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to influence local and national policy through responding to homeless, housing and poverty related consultations which directly affect our service users. We will look to re-establish our fundraising and training activities to secure additional funding to enhance our existing services.

Our services have the flexibility to meet changing demands and needs and the pandemic emphasised how our robust internal systems and strong lines of communication with the Council and our many Partner Agencies have served us well. There are many changes and challenges for the Centre and our Services within the next year and beyond. 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 prepared for procurement in 2021, we went through a SWOT analysis which critically evaluated the work we do and how we must adapt and evolve to meet any changing demands.

## Thanks

The Centre's primary strength is our committed staff who deliver an efficient, quality service which puts our Service Users at the centre of everything we do. Their commitment and dedication underpin the services we provide and is reflected in our high levels of engagement across all. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their continued support, strength and resilience in what has been an unforgettable year. Special thanks this year goes to John Mulholland, retired CEO for his dedication to the Centre and its development from being the only staff member back in 1993.

Suzanne Slavin, Chief Executive Officer

## OUR SERVICES IN DETAIL

### Type I, II and III Accredited Housing Information, Advice and Advocacy Service

In this reporting year 402 advice and advocacy cases were opened, (556 in 2019-20). We had expected a decrease in cases mainly due to COVID-19 restrictions, the eviction bans and government provision for everyone to be provided with temporary accommodation meant many did not feel at risk of homelessness during this time. This does not include our prison service which is shown separately below. 1,073 Internal Action Plans were created from the 402 cases opened, averaging 3 per case. Despite the eviction ban and a lot of certainty for many we still saw our cases surrounding Housing Options (48%) and Homelessness (42%) continue to be the main reasons people come to us for advice. Many sought reassurances and looked for alternative accommodation, in particular, where they were living in accommodation which didn't meet their needs or was unsuitable. 63% of our service users were unemployed, sick, or ill.

#### Advice and Advocacy Stats:

- 402 advice and advocacy cases opened
- 428 cases were closed generating 645 outcomes (some from previous years)
- 91% positive outcome achieved, likely or information given
- 56 families permanently housed
- 165 Service Users empowered to act on info and advice given
- Affordability improved in 118 cases
- 25 successful grants totalling £11,986.84
- Out of a possible 103 cases that were not already in the homeless system 88 resulted in Homelessness Prevented (85%)
- From 187 cases involving homelessness (166 people: 57 children and 109 adults) a total of 263 outcomes were generated
- Of the 428 cases closed, 760 people in total were helped including 234 children
- 68 cases were still live at the year end and continued to be worked with

#### Homeless Reviews

We submitted 7 Homeless Review during this reporting year. Again, we had predicted this would be the case due to COVID-19 and service users were generally being accepted and helped into accommodation during the pandemic. In this reporting year two cases were accepted, 4 offers were withdrawn, and 1 service user stopped engaging.

## Private Rented Sector (not including Prisons)

The private sector in Scotland currently remains stable for now, accounting for 14% of tenures in Scotland. Most recent statistics taken from the Landlord Registration Scheme show there are over 6,000 registered private lets within South Ayrshire, 13%. In this reporting year 124 (26%) of our cases opened were in the private rented sector compared with 163, (29%) in the previous year. This drop could be linked to Scottish Association of Landlords (SAL) published member survey which found 34% of landlords are planning to reduce their portfolio in the next 10 years. We have also seen some landlords being repossessed and choosing to sell in the current buoyant market with prices reaching record highs due to lack of supply.

We already see pressure within the sector with Agents advising us for every vacancy they are receiving between 200-1000 enquiries. This means many Landlords are having the choice to choose new tenants who are working and not reliant on benefits, leaving our more vulnerable service users, often without working Guarantors unable to access this sector simply due to lack of supply and demand pushing up rents charged. In this year, despite us having access to Grants to access new accommodation (£1,000) for rent in advance and deposits our service users still struggled to persuade Landlords to take them over those who had more cash up front, a full time employed guarantor and guaranteed regular income.

We urge the Scottish Government to look at social quotas or tax incentives to keep the much-needed supply available to those who choose this sector.

## Private Rented Sector Statistics

- 124 cases generated 293 Internal Action Plans
- 45 advice cases were threatened with homelessness, 22%
- 15 cases needed help to claim grants
- 46 cases wanted Housing Options help, 37%
- 15 cases involved disrepair
- Out of 124 cases opened there were 37 families including 67 children
- 15 cases wanted help to claim Discretionary Housing payments.
- 126 cases were closed in the year generating 189 outcomes
- 119 cases had a positive outcome achieved or likely or information given, 94%
- Affordability was improved in 41 cases
- Homelessness was prevented in 32 cases
- 9 were permanently housed
- 70 service users remained in their current accommodation

## Prison Housing Advice Service

Our Prison Housing Advice Service, funded by South and East Ayrshire Councils has been provided by AHAC since 2017. Our key aim is to reduce and prevent homelessness by early intervention when a prisoner enters the Prison. We collaborate with the Prison staff who identify those in housing need and make referrals to us at key stages such as Core Screen, Induction and prior to liberation. In this reporting year we opened 427 cases generating a total of 2,524 types of assistance.

### Prison Stats:

- 1,343 appointments were carried out remotely in this reporting year compared to 935 previously: an increase of 44%
- 64% of service users had between 10 and 20 appointments and it is rarely just one conversation with them, they need a lot of ongoing support
- Total monies recovered was £77,529.23: 52% more than previous year.
- 321 cases were closed in the year
- Homelessness was prevented in 191 cases: 60% of cases closed, 58% previous year. This was mainly by ensuring rent entitlement was in place or providing housing information and advice on tenancy sustainment and affordability
- 26% of service users were provided with temporary homeless accommodation on release, 25% previous year.
- 23 offers of permanent accommodation were given by East Ayrshire Council. However only 13 of our service users moved into these tenancies: some were either rejected by the service user or were unable to move in due to receiving a further sentence, so the offer was withdrawn, (17 previous year).
- 99% of cases had either a positive outcome achieved, a positive outcome likely or information given: 99% previous year
- 41 service users were referred to SeAscape for ongoing intensive support on liberation

## Tenure Sustainment Service

This is a crisis intervention Service where there is an imminent risk of homelessness due mainly to rent arrears. There is often an intensive response required at the point of referral. This service is predominantly Council tenants where our case flow comes from referral from Council Housing Officers. During this reporting year 24 Tenure Sustainment cases were opened, and 129 Internal Action Plans were identified mainly involving homelessness and rent arrears. A total of 18 cases were also brought forward from the previous year. This year there were 33% less referrals than the previous year due to working from home due to COVID.

### Sustainment Stats:

- 24 cases opened generating 129 Internal Action Plans (average 5 per case)
- 31 cases were closed during the year (some from the previous years) generating 121 outcomes
- 87% of cases had a positive outcome achieved, likely or information given
- Homelessness was prevented in 24 cases closed in the reporting year, (77%)
- Affordability was improved in 21 cases and arrears reduced in 65% of cases
- 4 cases were permanently housed or chose to move in with family
- 9 grants successfully applied. N.B. other grants were applied for but due to COVID-19 there was some disengagement
- 94 external referrals were made to various agencies
- Cases were open for an average of 30 weeks (2 cases were open more than 80 weeks)
- 46% of cases resulted in rent arrears reduced by between 50% and 100%
- 9 cases had NIL arrears when case closed and were able to make a fresh start
- £43,642 monies recovered recorded included reduction of rent arrears by various means such as successful grant applications, discretionary housing payments, correction of benefit claims, council tax reductions and discounts, DWP claims, etc

## First Home Service

The First Home Service has developed within the Centre since 2012 and covers the full geographical area of South Ayrshire with a preferred target age group of 16 – 24 years old who have applied for housing with SAC. The focus was widened to include homeless young people owed a full housing duty which was part of the merger and expansion in April 2015.

The First Home Service opened 46 new cases in this reporting year and identified a total of 268 Internal Action Plans to focus on including help with housing options, seeking accommodation, budgeting, universal credit, and council tax reduction. The service also continued to work on 54 cases brought forward from the previous year.

### First Home Stats:

- 46 new cases opened generating 268 Internal Action Plans (average 6)
- 42 cases were closed within this period, some from previous years with 88 outcomes
- 96 external referrals made to external agencies such as funding bodies, Employability & Skills, Scottish Welfare fund, etc
- 39 cases had a positive or positive outcome likely outcome (83%)
- 20 service users permanently housed
- 35 service users had affordability improved due to grants and income maximisation
- The average time spent on each case was 65 hours
- Cases were open for an average of 69 weeks (5 cases were open more than 100 weeks and 1 for 230 weeks.)
- 58 cases were still live at the year end

## First Home Care Experienced Young People Service

The primary aim of the Care Experienced service is to improve housing outcomes for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP). Majority of referrals came from the Youth Housing Support Group (YHSG) for us to provide our adapted First Home model. Previously we had provided sessions within the Children's house to build on housing options knowledge so informed choice could be made ready for when their chose to leave the Children's House. This was using an adapted version of HEY. The Service has been directly impacted by the fact that many of the Young People were already in or were about to go into the Homeless system, mainly due to the nature of the current referral route through YHSG.

Improving housing outcomes for CEYP has been key to our work with South Ayrshire Council and other partners. A key change was the allocation of the short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) and allowing more choice for which areas they would like to stay. The Centre made a recommendation to South Ayrshire Council for a blank canvas approach for all SSST's as part of the improving housing outcomes which is proving very positive and is recognised as making the transition into their own tenancy easier.

We continued to work with the 24 cases still open from the previous year.

### CEYP stats:

- 11 cases were closed generating 45 outcomes (averaging 4 outcomes per case)
- 91% of cases saw affordability improved
- 82% of cases has income successfully maximised
- 73% of service users had grants successfully awarded to them
- 54 external referrals were made to outside agencies
- 100% of cases had a positive outcome achieved or likely
- Referrals were made to external grant bodies such as The Champion's Board, Life Changes Trust and Who Cares? Scotland
- 10 cases were referred to Student Services and Employability & Skills
- An average of 128 hours were spent on each case
- Cases were open for an average of 69 weeks (2 cases were open more than 100 weeks)
- £11,737.62 of monies recovered including poverty related grants, underlying entitlement and correction of benefit claims, Council Tax Reductions and Discounts and COVID-19 grants
- 3 cases took over 200-320 hours to complete
- 2 CEYP gained employment and 4 became students before the case closed
- 13 cases were still live at the year end



## HEY (Housing Education for Youths), Home+ and Community Engagement and Promotion

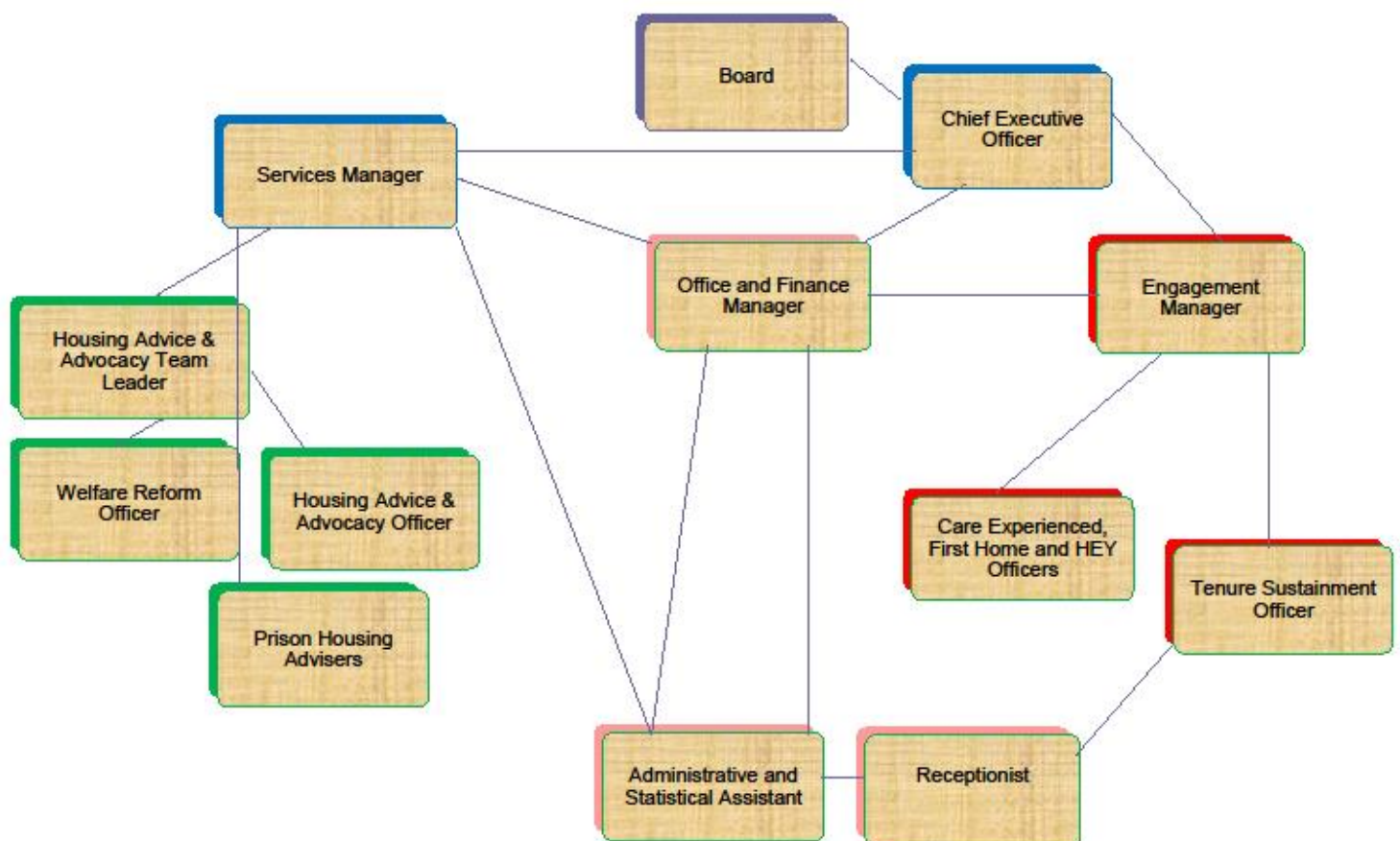
Unfortunately, due to COVID these services did not take place within this reporting year.

### STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS & DEVELOPMENT

The Administrative, finance and statistical support is vital to the overall running of the Centre in running an efficient office. This includes ensuring compliance with legislation, OSCR, Care Inspectorate and National Standards, etc. Our senior management team ensure we are up to date with regulatory requirements, human resources, personnel issues, finance, projections, statistics, reporting, health and safety and quality control all form part of this service. Despite COVID-19 restrictions staff kept up to date with their continuous professional development with internal and external training throughout this year.

#### Staff

The organisation employed 14 members of staff during this time.



## Retirements and Promotions


John Mulholland, who joined the organisation in April 1993 retired in June 2021 after over 28 years of loyal service as Chief Executive Officer. The Centre had a small online presentation to show our appreciation to John for his dedication and commitment in building the Centre to what it is now. He received gifts from staff and the Board. Suzanne Slavin, previously Services Manager who joined the organisation in August 1997, had been acting up as Chief Executive Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, and was formally offered the position of Chief Executive Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

## SERVICE USER FEEDBACK


The Centre has produced a Service User Feedback Annual Report for cases opened during the period 1.7.20 to 30.6.21. Each service has different feedback forms tailored to Service Users needs and expectations. Please see analysis below:

SERVICE PROVIDED	NO. ISSUED	NO. RETURNED	% RETURNED
Advice	206	39	18.93%
Tenure Sustainment	17	7	41.18%
First Home- (Stage 6)	11	11	100.00%
First Home- (Interim Feedback)	11	11	100.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>27.76%</b>

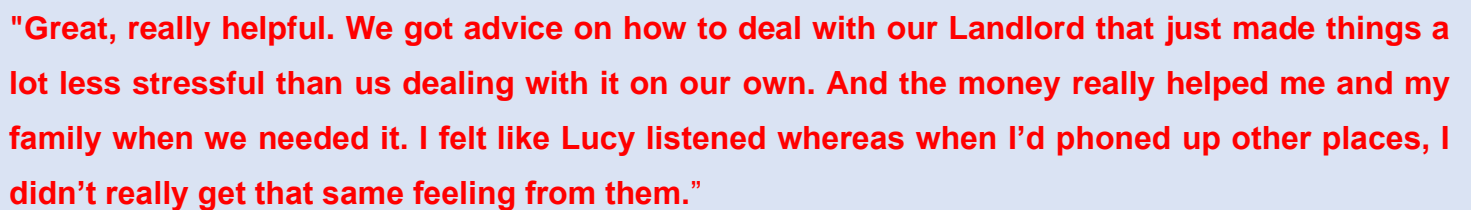
Out of a total of 245 surveys issued, 68 were returned, an overall return rate of 28%. The results of the feedback surveys were very positive. Most service users were happy with the service they received. Please see some comments below.



"Outstanding, Lucy really went out her way for me and went above and beyond when I was really not in a good place "



"Got more info in 5 minutes than had been trying with landlord for months and you were superbly helpful. Absolutely delighted with service. Provide a reassuring service, explains things clearly and are always treated like a human being."



"Great, really helpful. We got advice on how to deal with our Landlord that just made things a lot less stressful than us dealing with it on our own. And the money really helped me and my family when we needed it. I felt like Lucy listened whereas when I'd phoned up other places, I didn't really get that same feeling from them."

## Feedback Comments Continued:

18/12/21

"Hi again Leica just a quick message to just to say again to everyone at the office thanks so much for the time and the patience effort and support in more ways than one which has helped me financially and mentally through this terrible year I'm having and from the bottom of my heart Leisha you have been a pure angel with all moaning I've done and you're the only person that has listened and gave me advise about whatever I needed to get off my chest at any one time. You are an amazing person with a great heart and such a professional at your workplace which I'm sure your colleagues would agree with me so enjoy Christmas and your holiday with your family. Most grateful 🎅"

31/3/21

"... We live in a world where we are so good at complaining when we don't receive good service that I think we forget to speak up when we get good service! But what you guys do is on another level! You really are changing people's lives and I hope you know how appreciated you are! I can imagine at times in this current climate not all your clients have the same happy outcome that I have had and that must be hard on you guys to hear day in day out! It's a hard job you have and I'm glad that stories like mine will remind you that it's all worthwhile and what you are doing is really making a difference to people!!"

E-mail from MP, Jan 2021:

"Dear Suzanne and Team,

I received a most welcome email from a constituent today, one that contains great appreciation and praise for Ayr Housing Aid staff, and I wanted to share the content.

My office was contacted in July by *Ms R* applying for a council property and Gail, my Caseworker, put her in touch with Ayr Housing Aid. Today T emailed citing the positive experience she had dealing with your office. She specially mentioned yourself and Leica as being "God Sent" and is delighted to have just signed the lease for her new council property Troon. She thanks you too for the practical help in providing materials to decorate as well as the support and advice so freely given.

It is important to share with you the feedback about the service and please accept my thanks for all you and your Team do for constituents, making their lives that little bit better and brighter when there is so much heartache and trouble in the world.

Well done and thank you. Take care and keep safe."

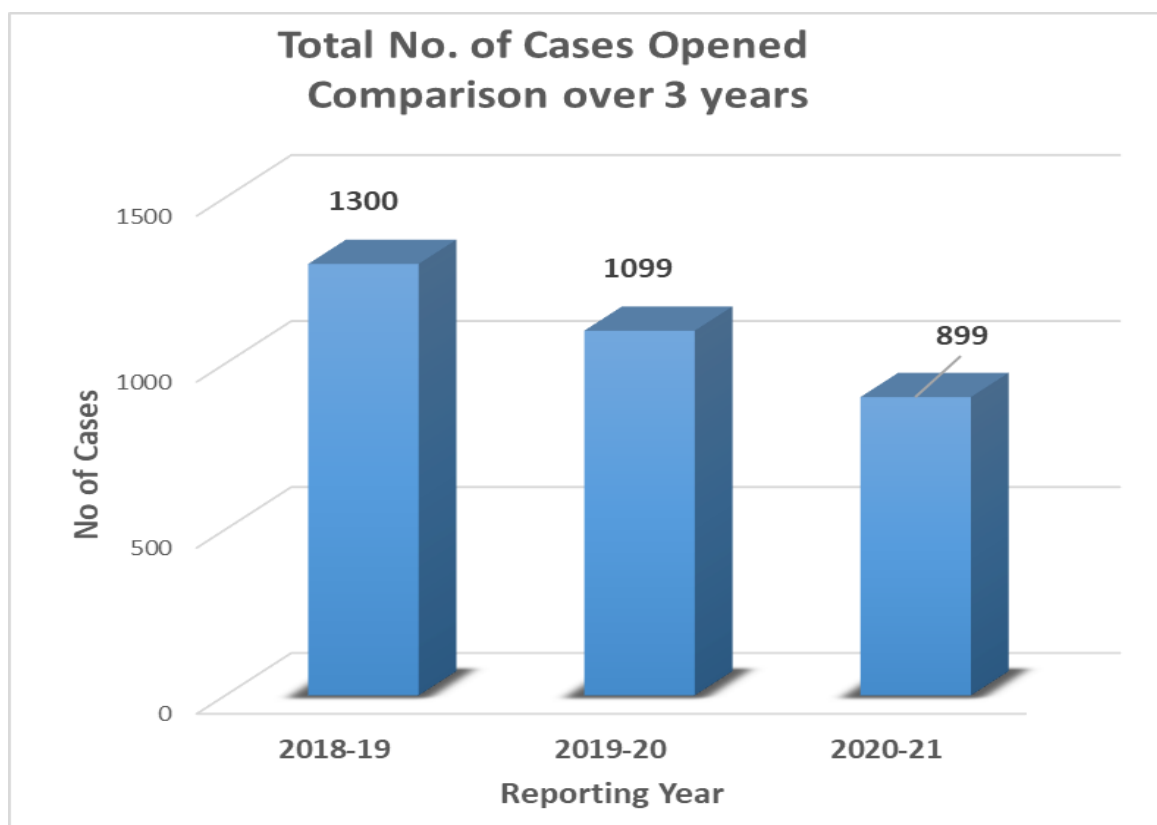
## DETAILED STATISTICAL REPORT

Our statistics are generated from Microsoft Excel Databases. These databases and related statistical analysis and reports are integral to the Centre's reporting and evaluation cycle. This enables us to produce accurate reports for each service, 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. The information is updated onto the database for each case from the excel case sheet which records the information for each case in a way that it can easily be uploaded onto the database to provide meaningful information. Please note the Prison Housing Advice Service covers both East and South Ayrshire areas. We have included this Service in the relevant statistical analysis wherever possible.

### Cases Opened Statistics

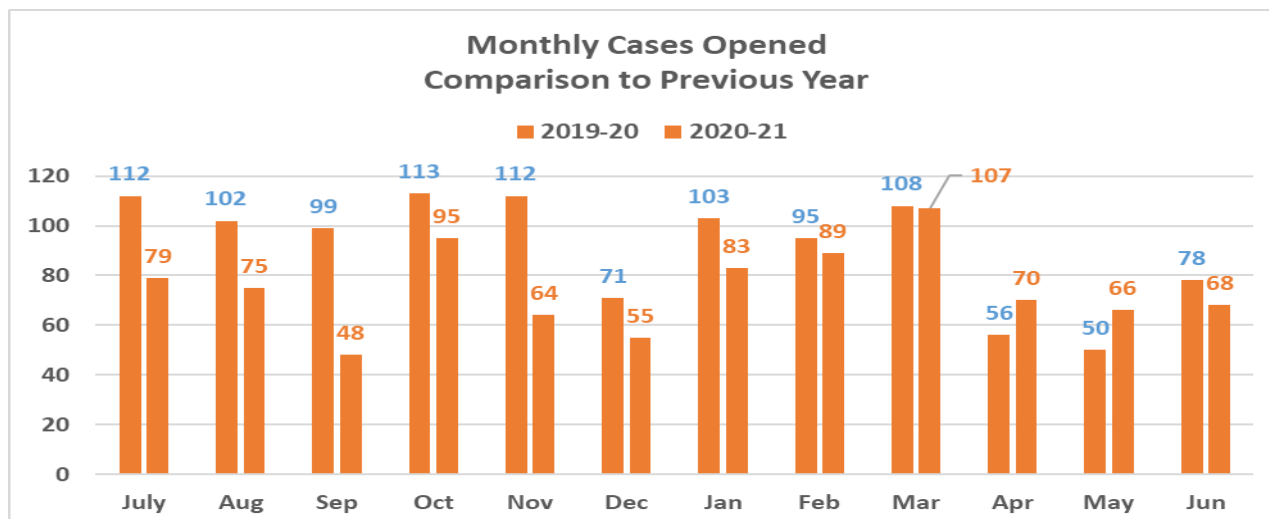
#### Comparison of Cases opened over last 3 years

The Centre opened 899 cases in this reporting year: a reduction from 1,099 in the previous year. We had expected this to reduce due to COVID-19 pandemic. This included 427 Prison Housing Advice cases.



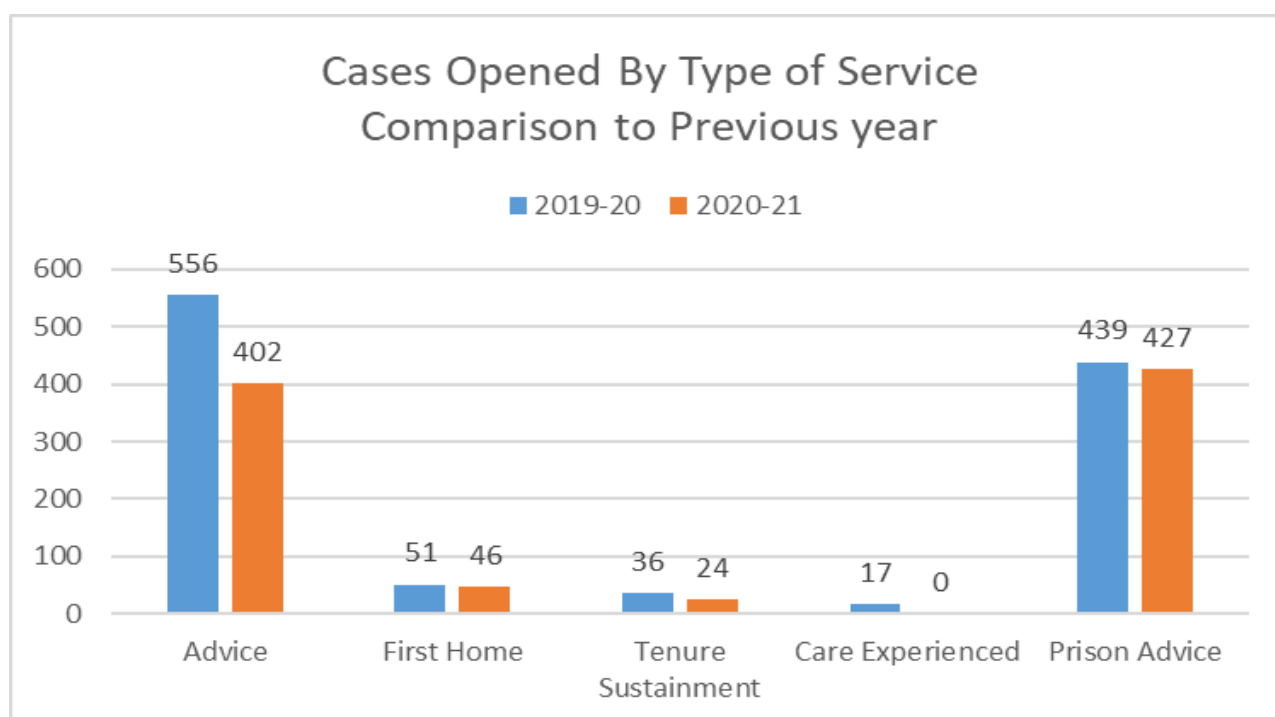
## Monthly Cases Opened

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 pandemic affected the number of service users contacting us, mainly in 2020. The average cases opened each month was 75 in comparison to 92 in the previous year.



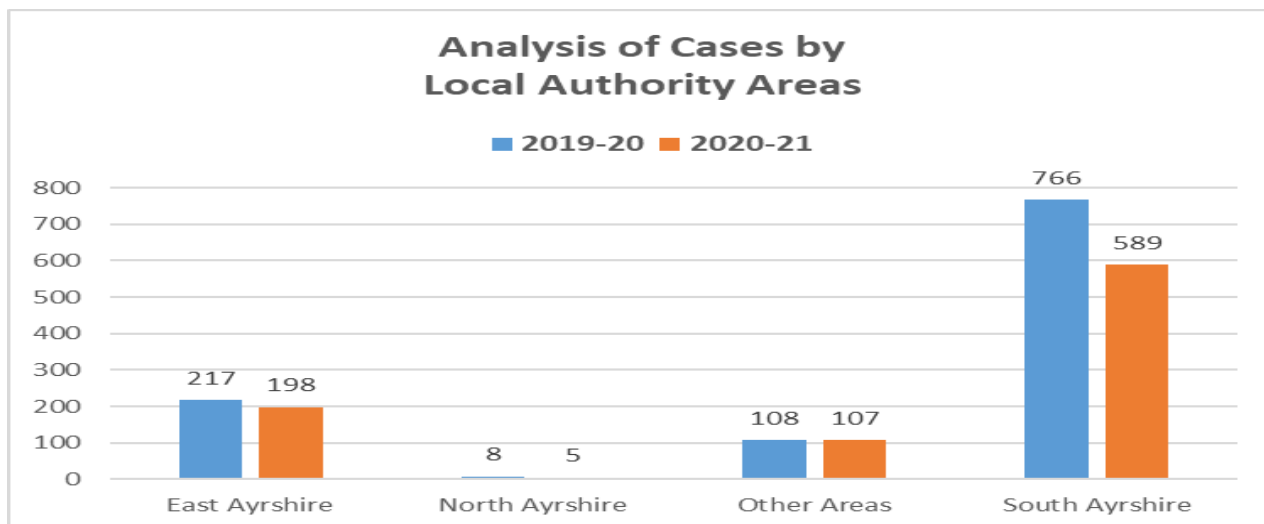
## Types of Services

During the year to 30/6/21 we provided a range of different services to individuals and families. The graph below provides an analysis of how the 899 cases opened are split between the different services.



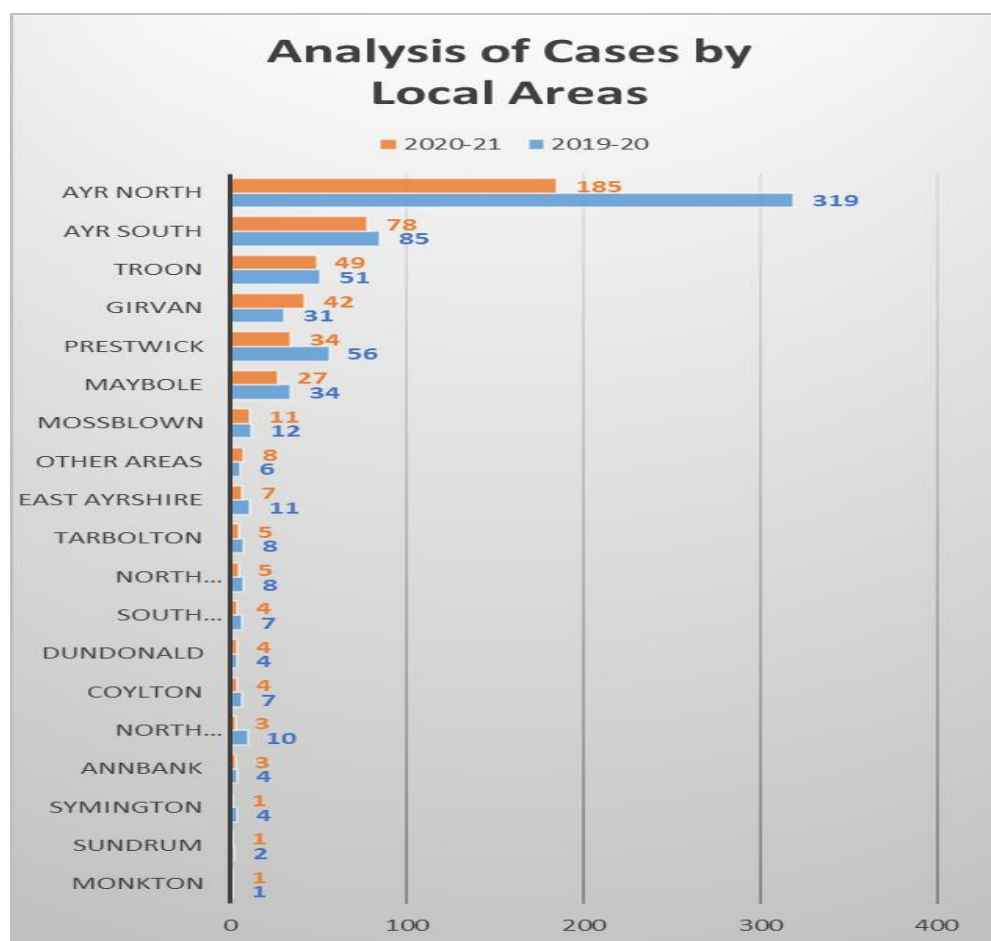
## Local Authority Areas

Analysis of local authority areas follows the same trend as the previous year. Most cases opened were from Service Users currently residing within South Ayrshire. Most of the 198 East Ayrshire cases and the 107 cases from other areas are linked to the Prison Housing Advice project.



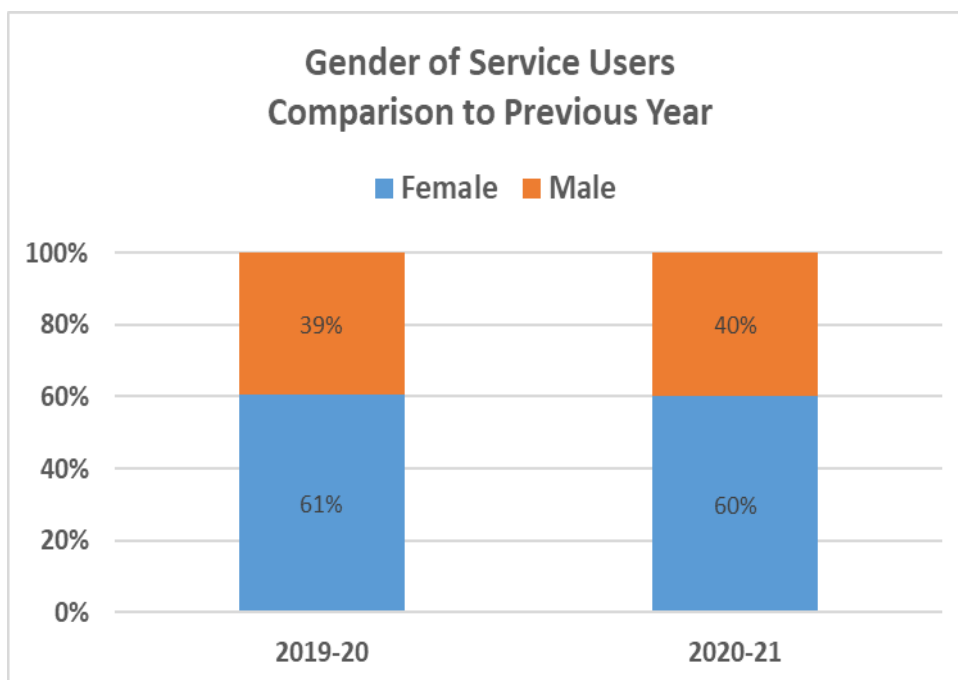
## Local Areas (Prison Service not included)

This data relates to the local area the Service User resided at the time they contacted us and is very similar to last year. The largest group were from Ayr North.



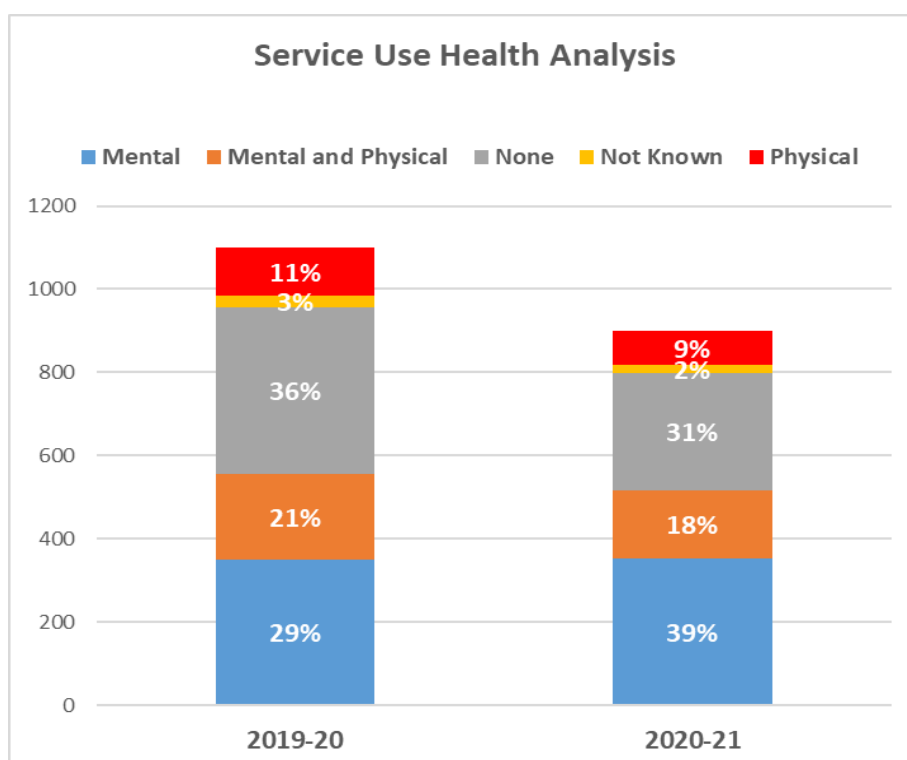
## Gender of Service Users (Prison Service not included)

The gender analysis of cases opened remains consistent with the previous year.



## Health Analysis

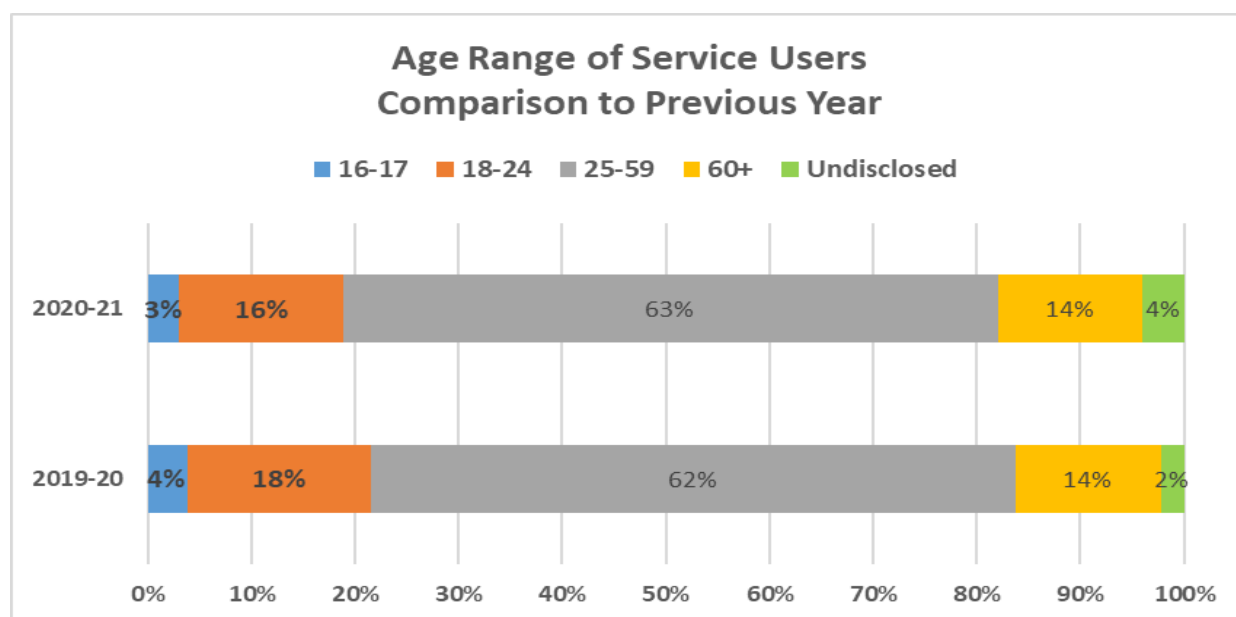
In this year only 31% of Service Users indicated they had no health issues compared to 36% in the previous year. This shows the impact of COVID-19 within this period, in particular, those with mental health issues increased from 29% to 39%.





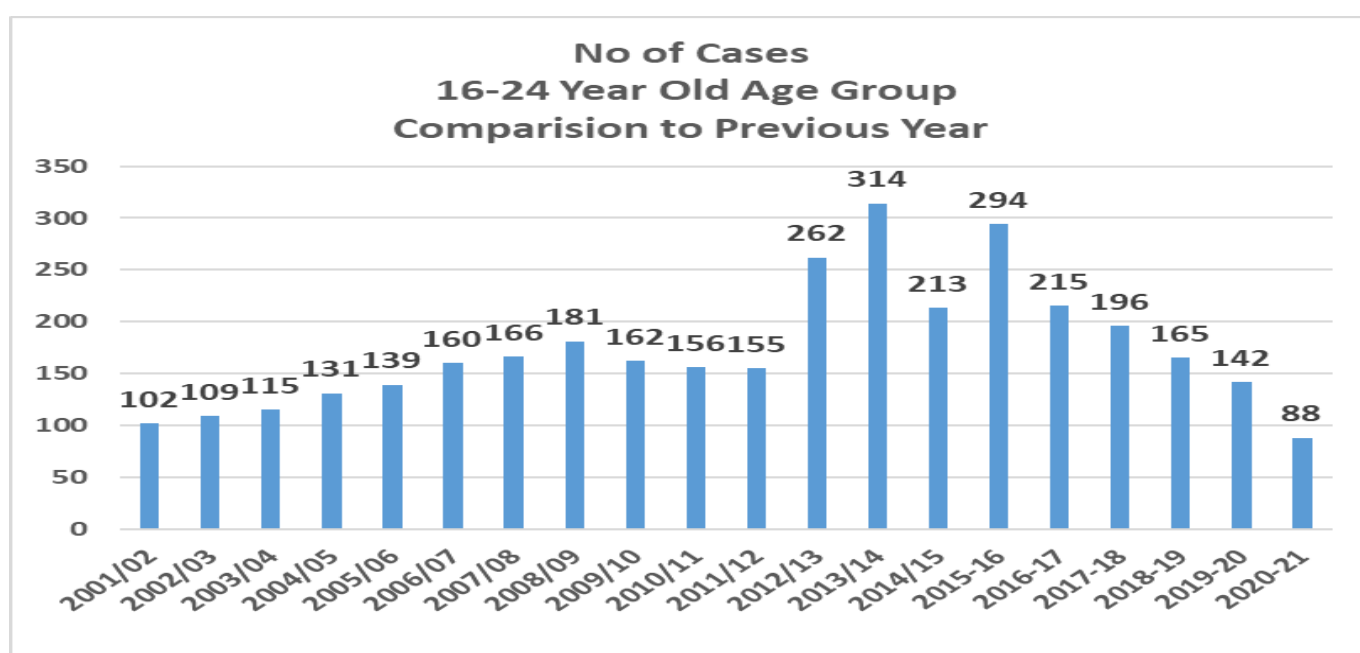
## Age Range (Prison Service not included)

Despite COVID-19 the age range of service users has not changed with the majority of those who get in touch being within the 25-59 age group.



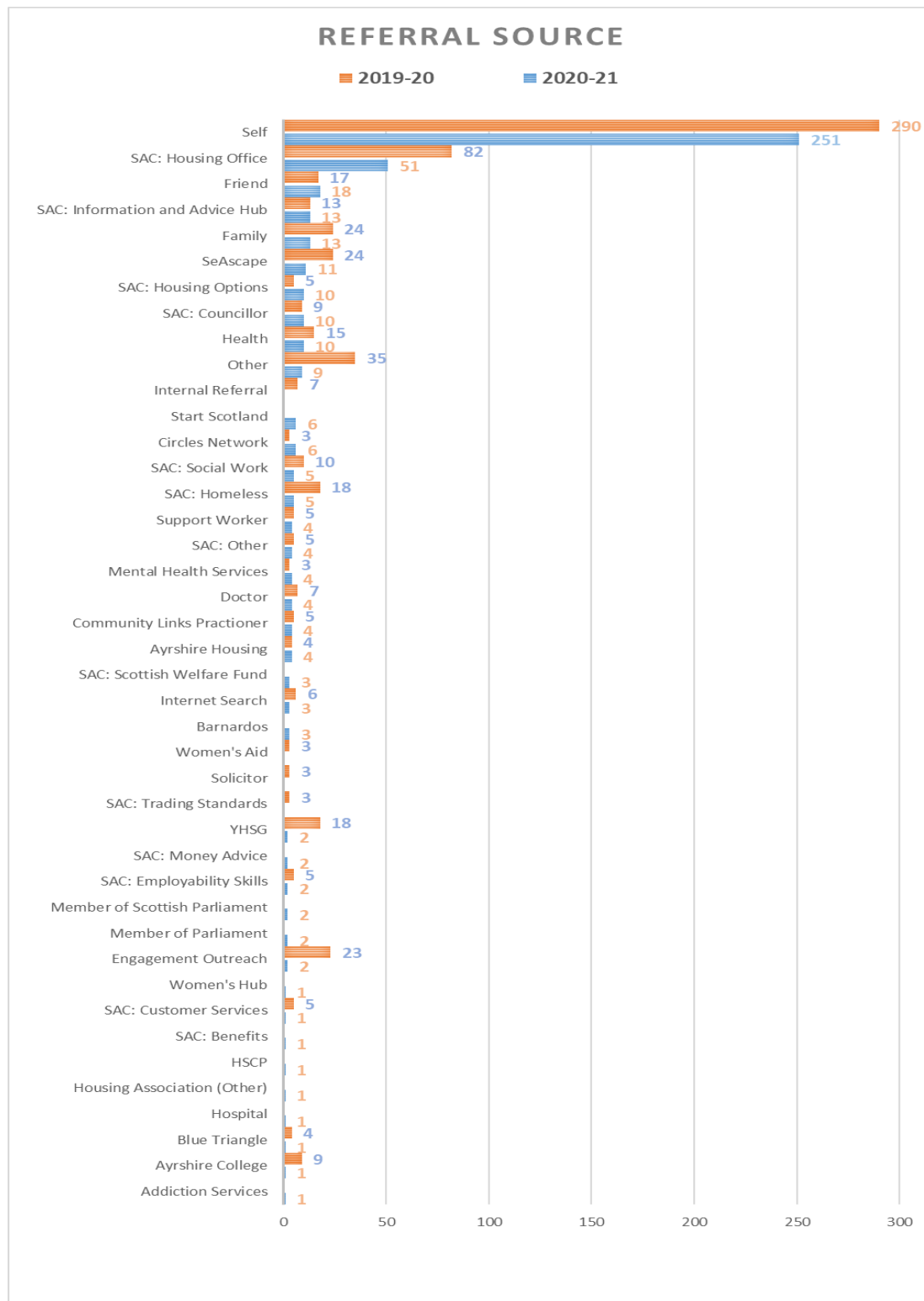
## No. of Cases 16 – 24-Year-Olds (Prison Service not included)

The number of cases opened in the 16-24 age group has been falling steadily since 2016-17 mainly linked to our First Home cases being referred directly from the Council and so very few needed separate advice and information through our Advice Service. Last year this category accounted for 19% of cases opened.



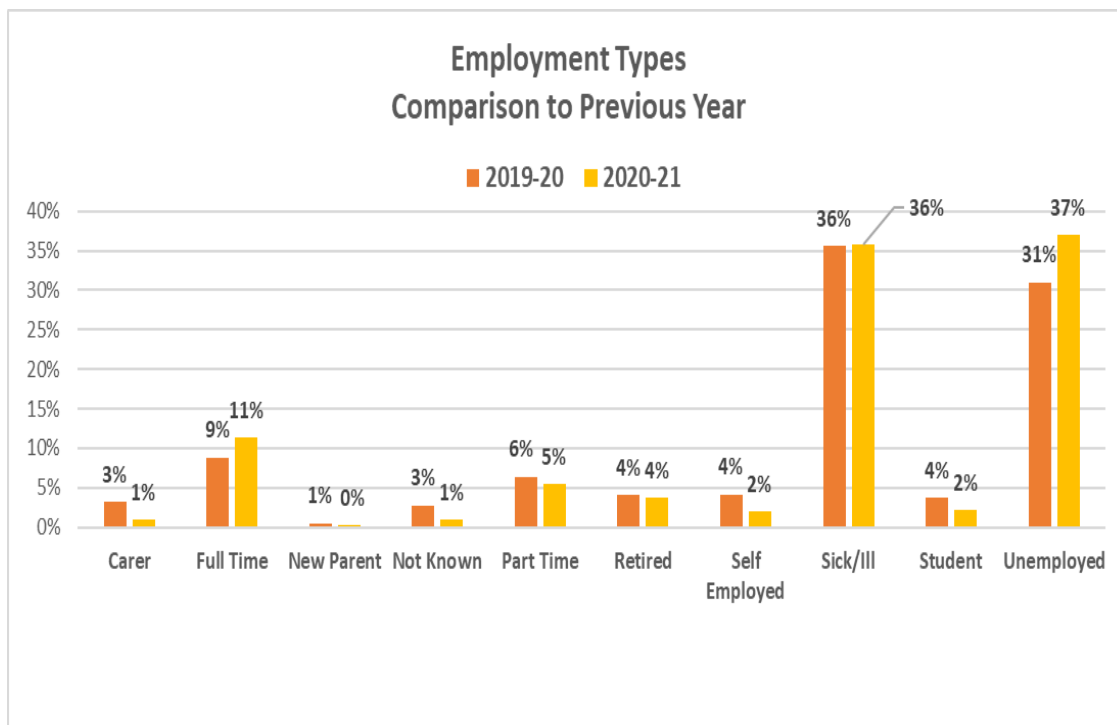
## Referral Source (Prison Service not included)

The chart below illustrates how the service user found us or who referred them to us. As you can see there are several agencies who send referrals to us. The self-referral category continues to be the primary method of referral with many telling us it is word of mouth and our reputation, 53%. Referrals from the housing Office were down 38% this year.



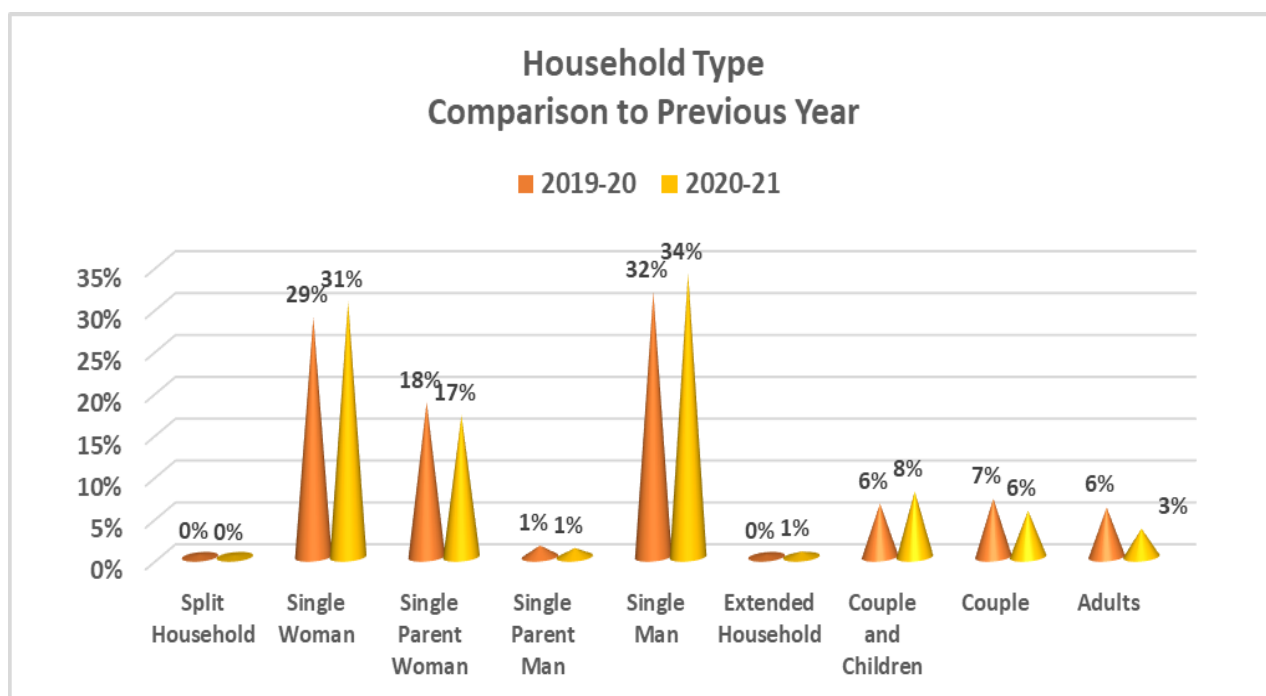
## Employment Types

Employment types amongst new service users are generally similar to the previous year. However, with COVID-19 we saw an increase in those reaching out who were working full time (mainly due to furlough, hours reduced and redundancies). Those without work rose by 6% again mainly relating to COVID-19.



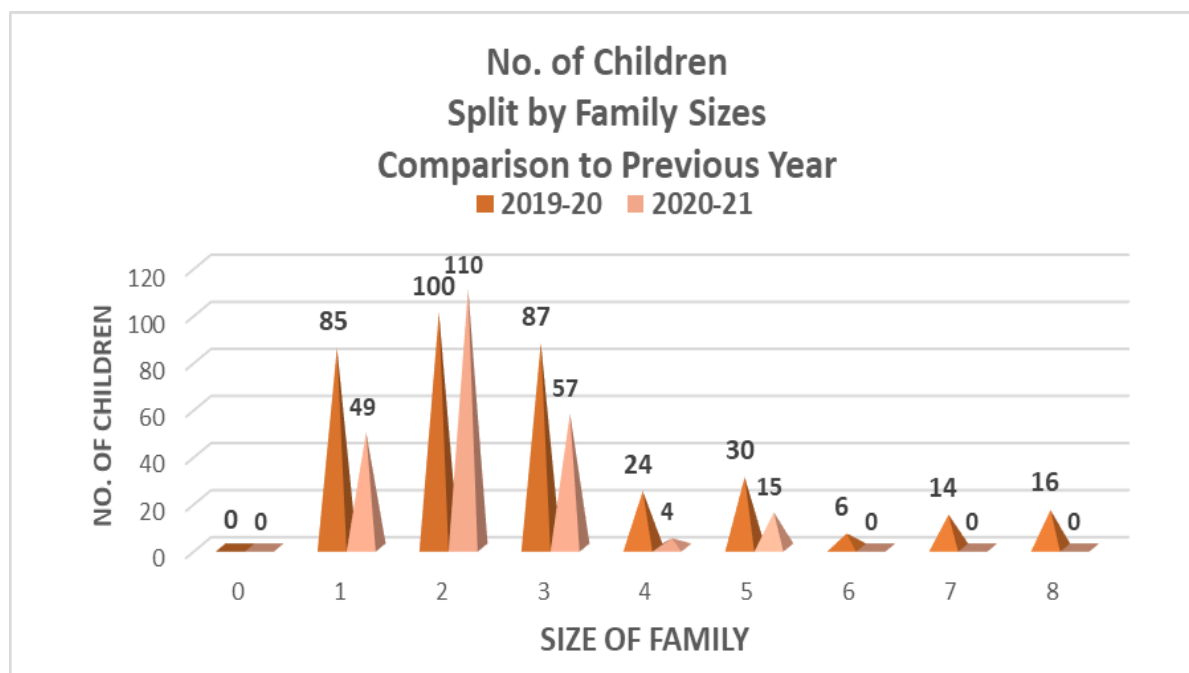
## Household Types (Prison Service not included)

Similar to last year single men and women make up the majority of our cases, 65% compared to 61% in 2019-20. Many of this group are involved in homelessness and is linked to their struggle to access reasonable accommodation: often linked to affordability for the under 35's. This group are often at a disadvantage in being able to afford and sustain accommodation due to lower income, benefits and the single room rent.



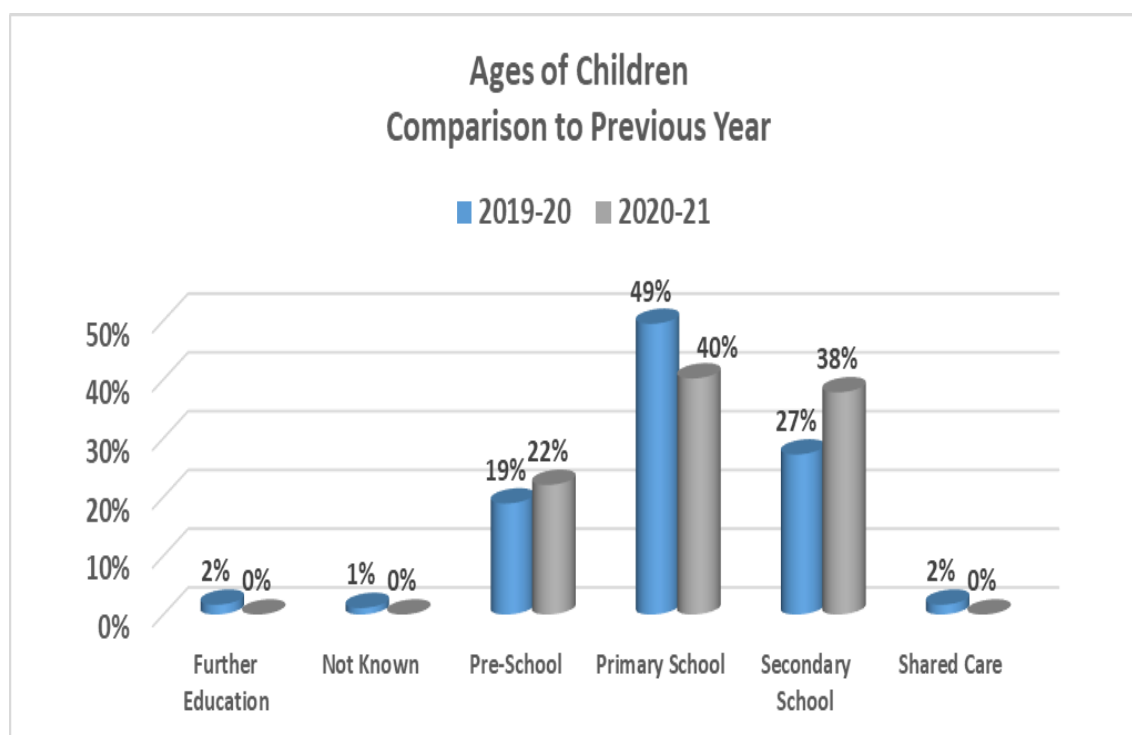
## Number of Children in Family (Prison Service not included)

The chart below is designed to identify how many children are involved in the cases opened. 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 are split into family sizes. There is a wide spread of family sizes and is very similar to the previous year. There were 127 cases which involved 235 children.



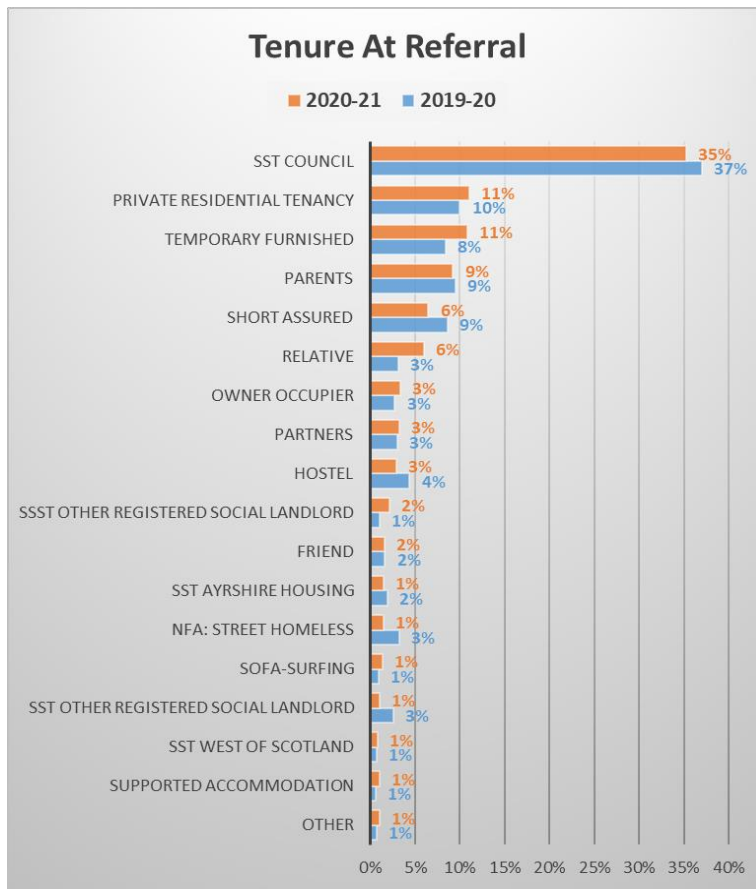
## Ages of Children (Prison Service not included)

The graph below compares the grouped ages of children in each family. This year there has been a decrease in those in primary school and an increase in those at secondary school.



## Tenure – (Including Prison Cases)

The chart below analyses the many different types of tenure when the case was opened.

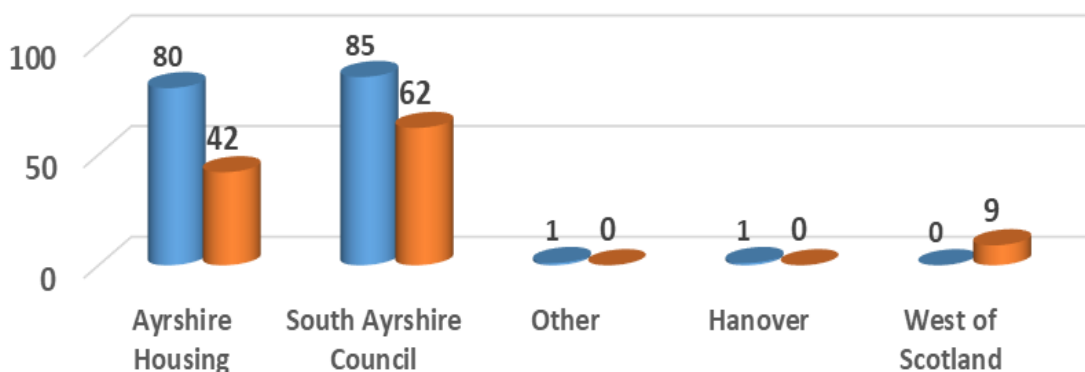


- Scottish Secure tenants decreased by 4%: linked to a reduction in referrals from SAC
- COVID-19 regulations meant those with no accommodation were booked. Many were allowed to stay in their accommodation longer
- 2% decrease in those telling us they were roofless
- 3% increase in those already in temporary accommodation including hostels.

## Housing Register (Prison Service not included)

### Housing Register Waiting List Analysis Comparison to Previous Year

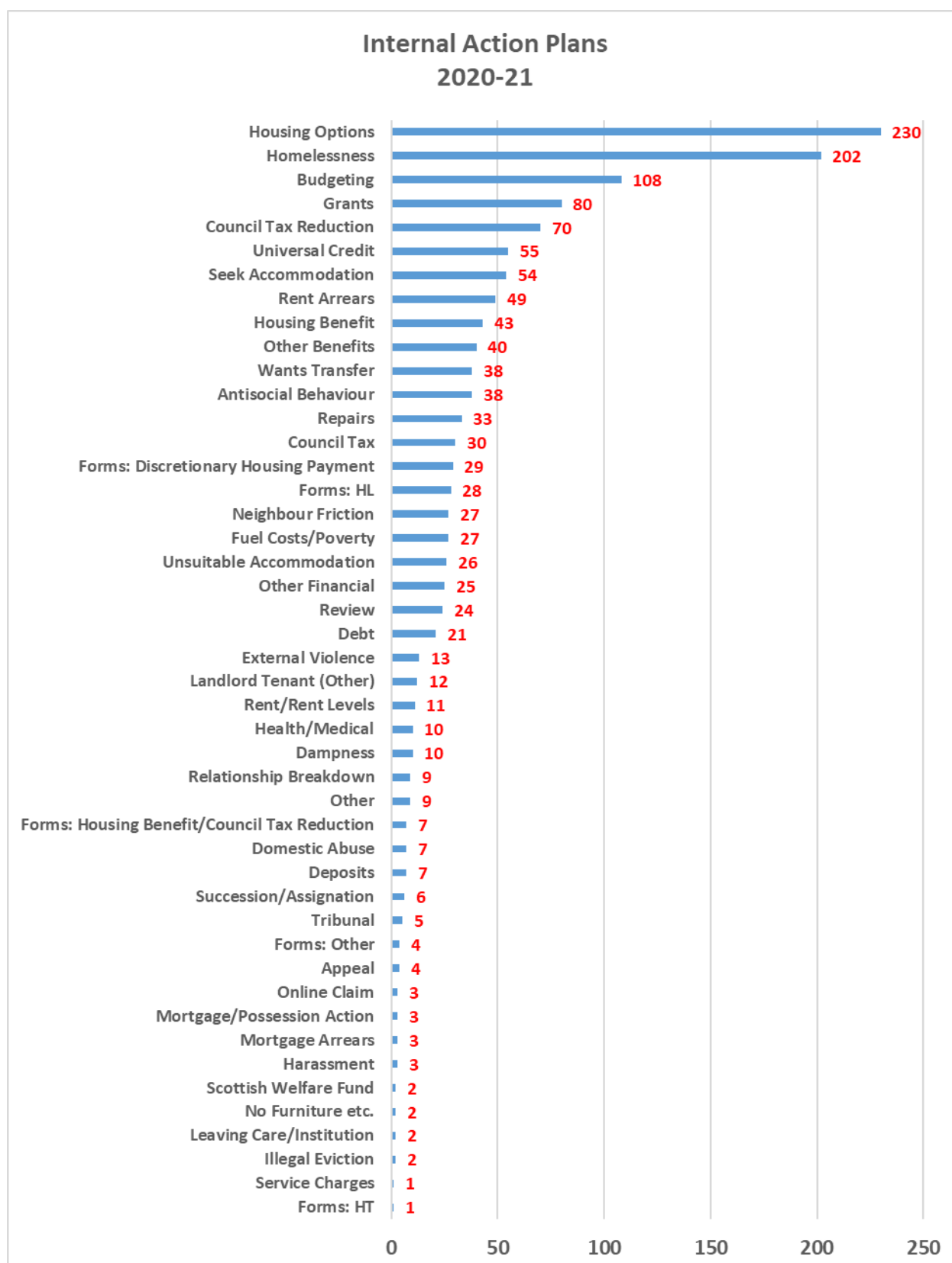
■ 2019-20 ■ 2020-21



From the 472 cases opened only 22% were on the Council and Ayrshire Housing waiting lists.

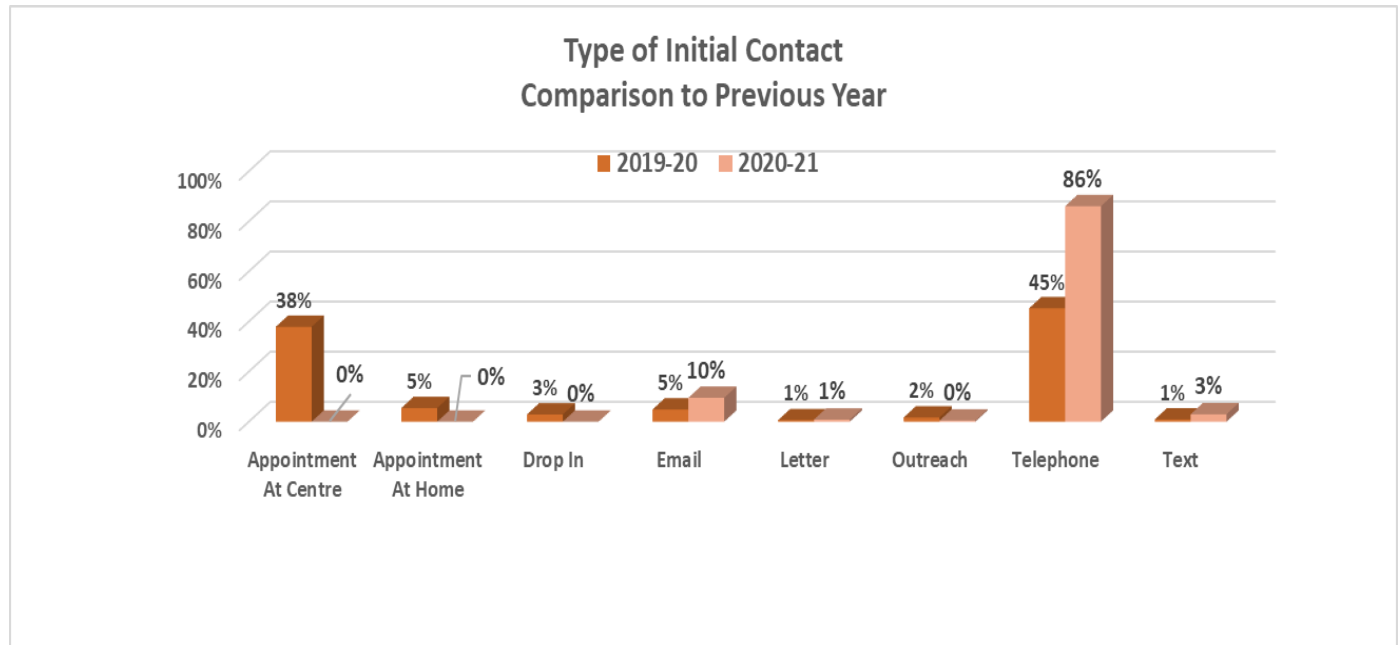
## Internal Action Plans (Prison Service not included)

Out of the 472 cases opened during this reporting year a total of 1,413 action plans were made, averaging 3 per case. Housing Options was the most common followed by Homelessness in 202 cases.



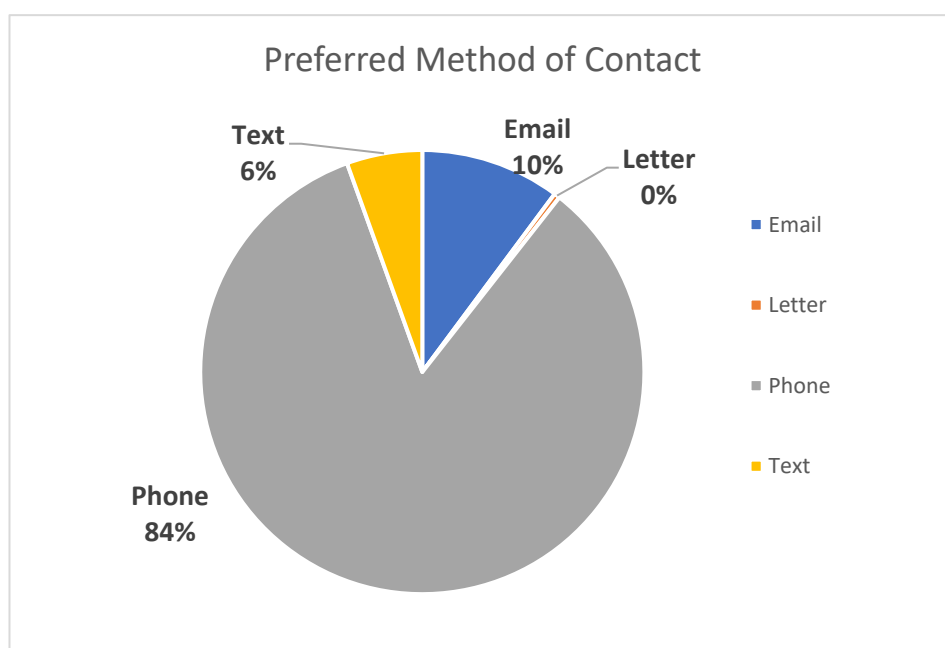
## Type of Initial Contact (Prison Service not included)

It is important to note that this year we were working from home due to COVID-19 so as expected more of our cases were opened via indirect means during this period. We did see some service users face to face where this was the only method available, and PPE was used where necessary.



## Preferred Method of Contact

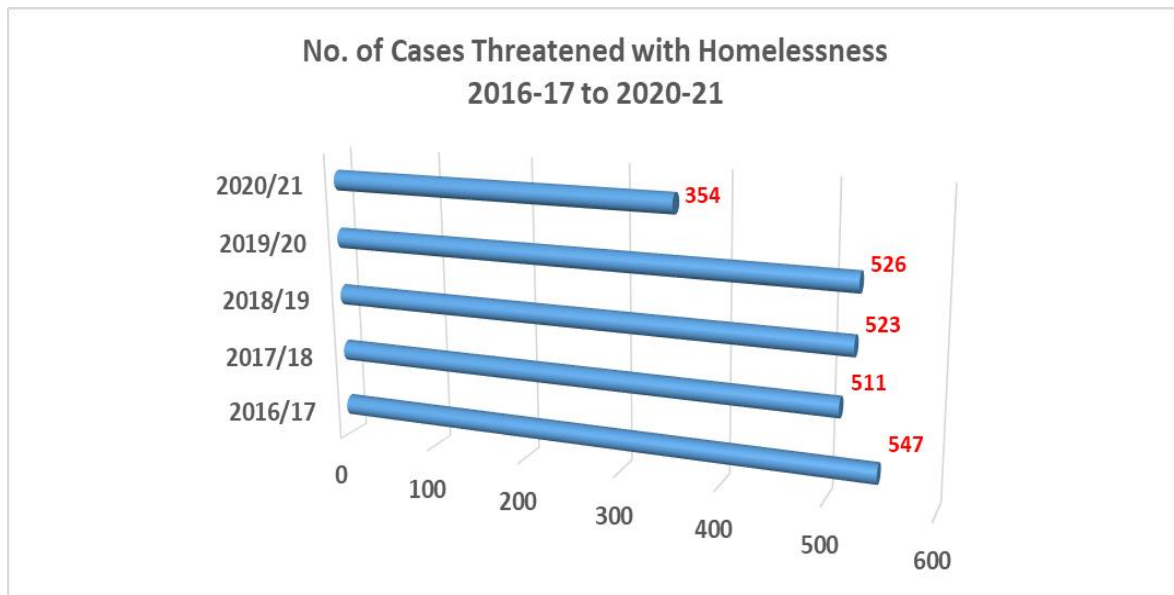
We actively ask service users how they would like to be contacted throughout the life of their case. During this period of COVID-19 there was no-one who wished face to face as standard due to restrictions.



- 84% prefer phone contact
- 10% prefer email
- 6% prefer text

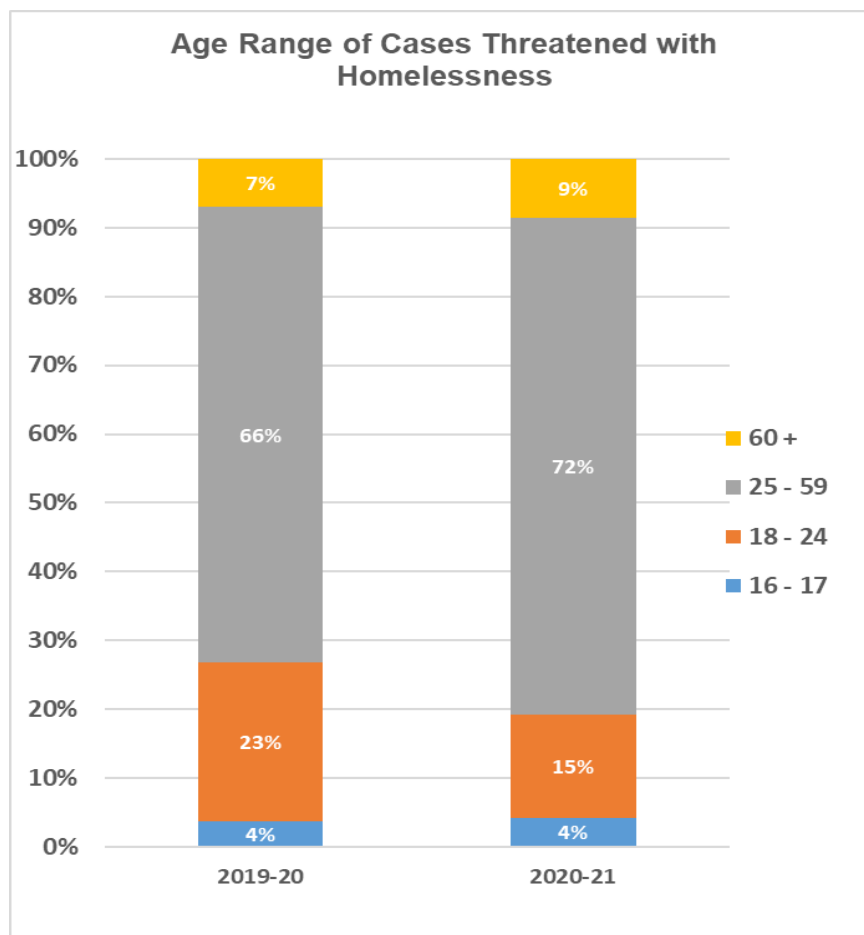
## Number of Cases threatened with Homelessness (Including Prison cases)

Homeless cases include those who were roofless, statutory homeless and those threatened with homelessness within 4 – 6 months. As expected, there was a large decrease in the number of cases threatened with homelessness in this reporting year due to the COVID-19 eviction ban.



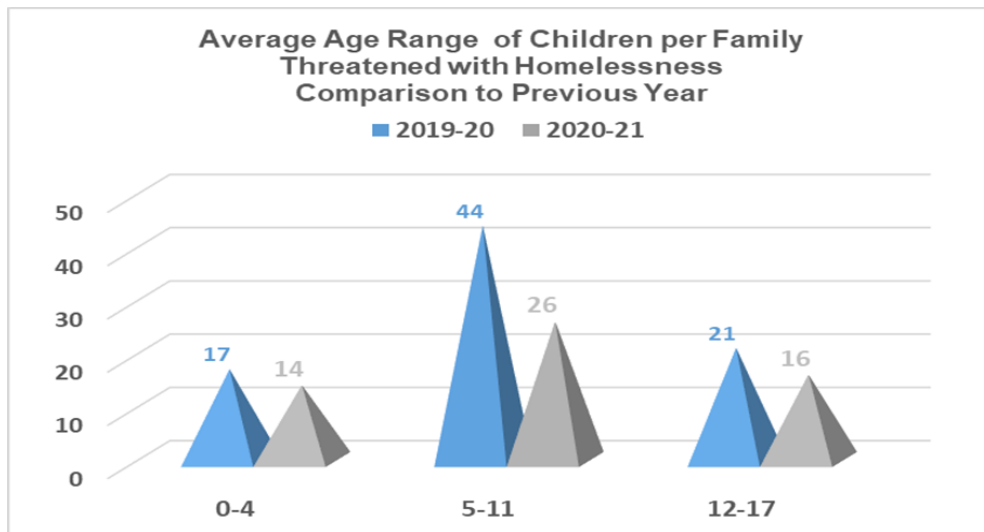
## Homeless Age Ranges (Prison Service not included)

Changes to ages groups: 25–59-year-olds - 6% increase and 18–24-year-olds 85 decrease



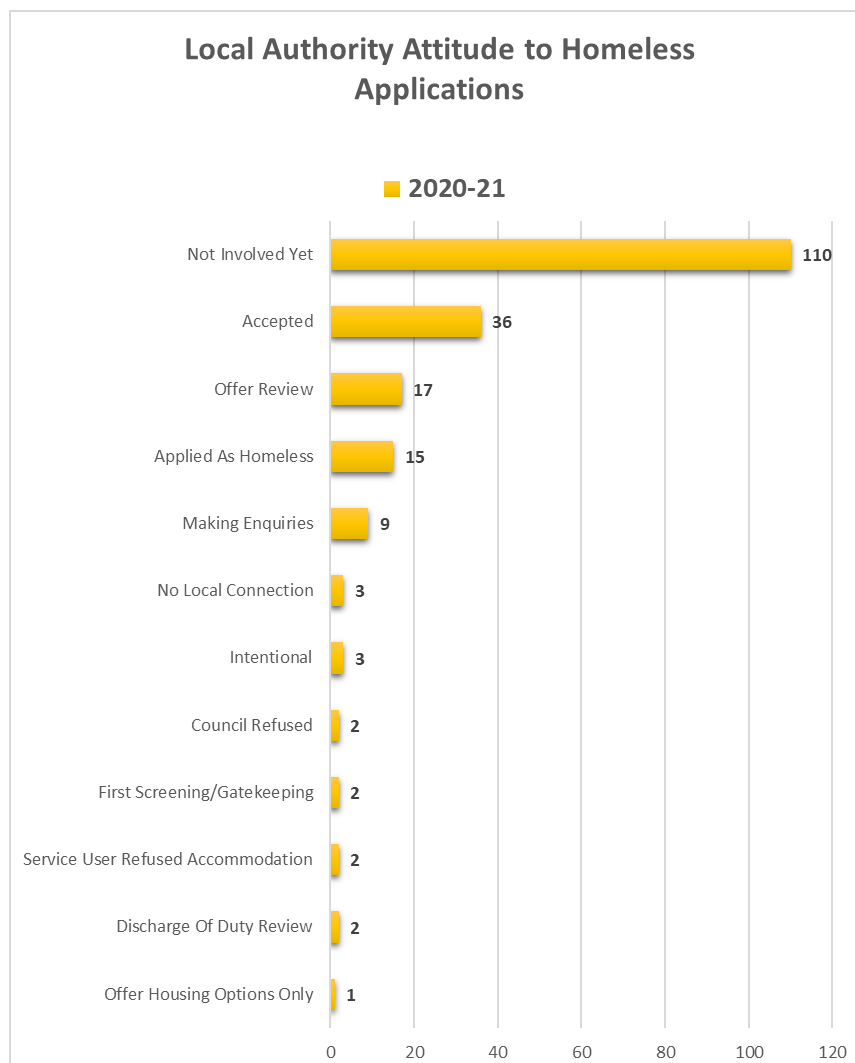


## Average Age range of children threatened with homelessness (Prison Service not included)



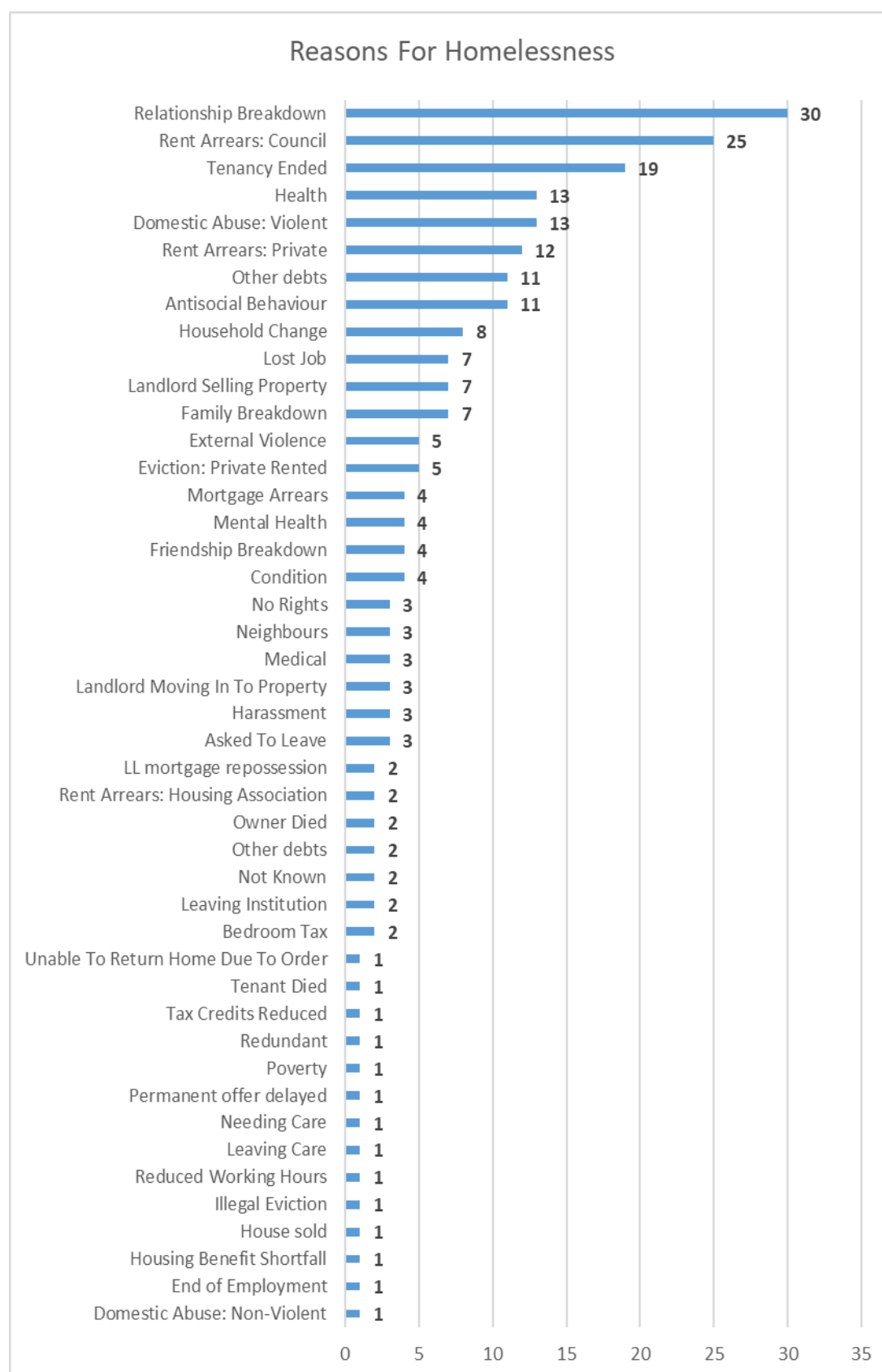
## Local Authority Attitude (Prison Service not included)

This chart represents the Council's attitude of the Homeless status at the time the Service User came us. 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 where possible.



## Reason for Threat of Homelessness (Prison Service not included)

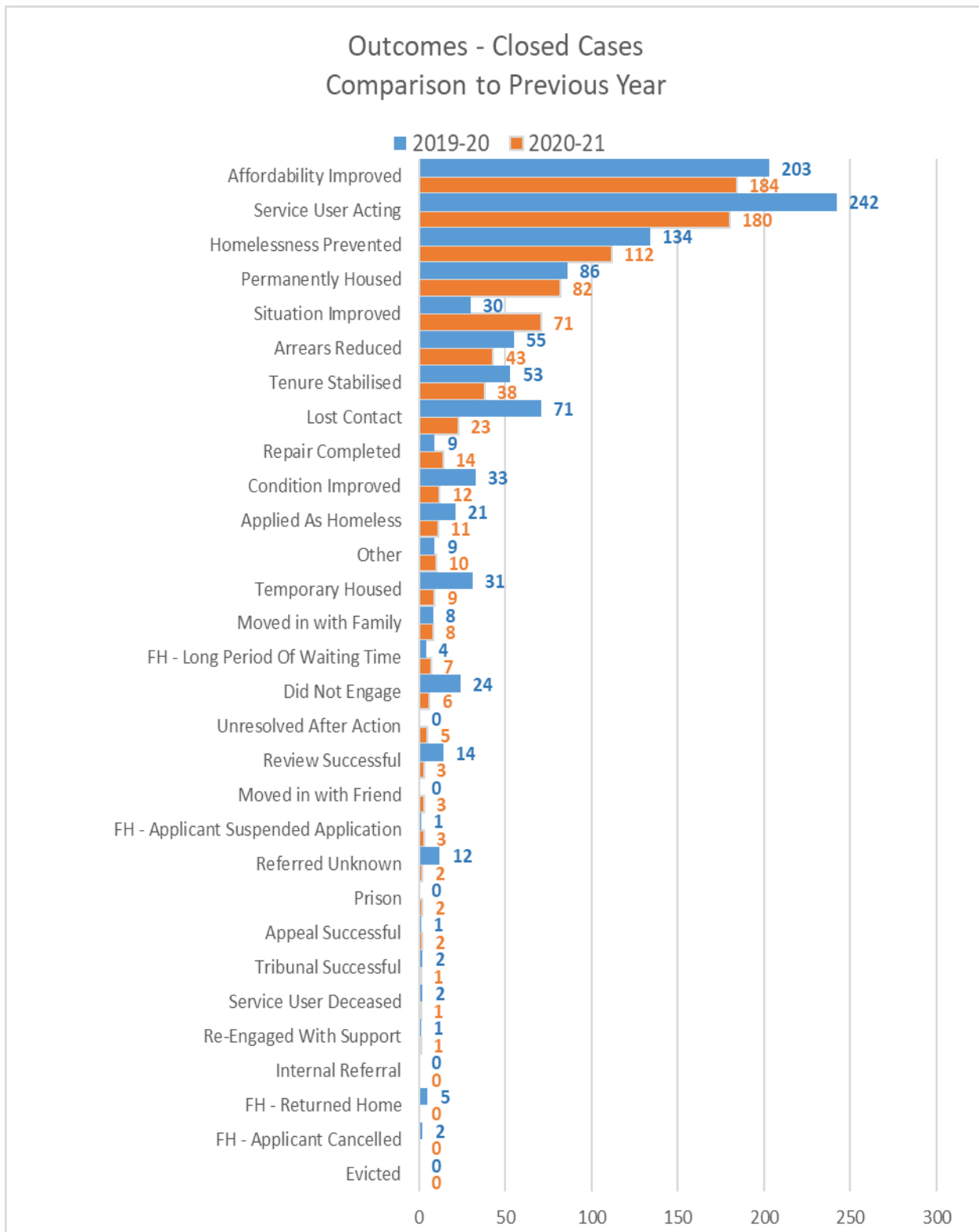
The graph below analyses the reasons for the threat of homelessness in cases opened during the year. Often there is more than one reason. The main reasons in this reporting year were relationship breakdown, rent arrears in the public sector and tenancy ending. Health was the main reason in 13 cases. Domestic abuse, antisocial behaviour and external violence was the main factor in 29 homeless cases similar to the previous year.



## Closed Cases Statistics

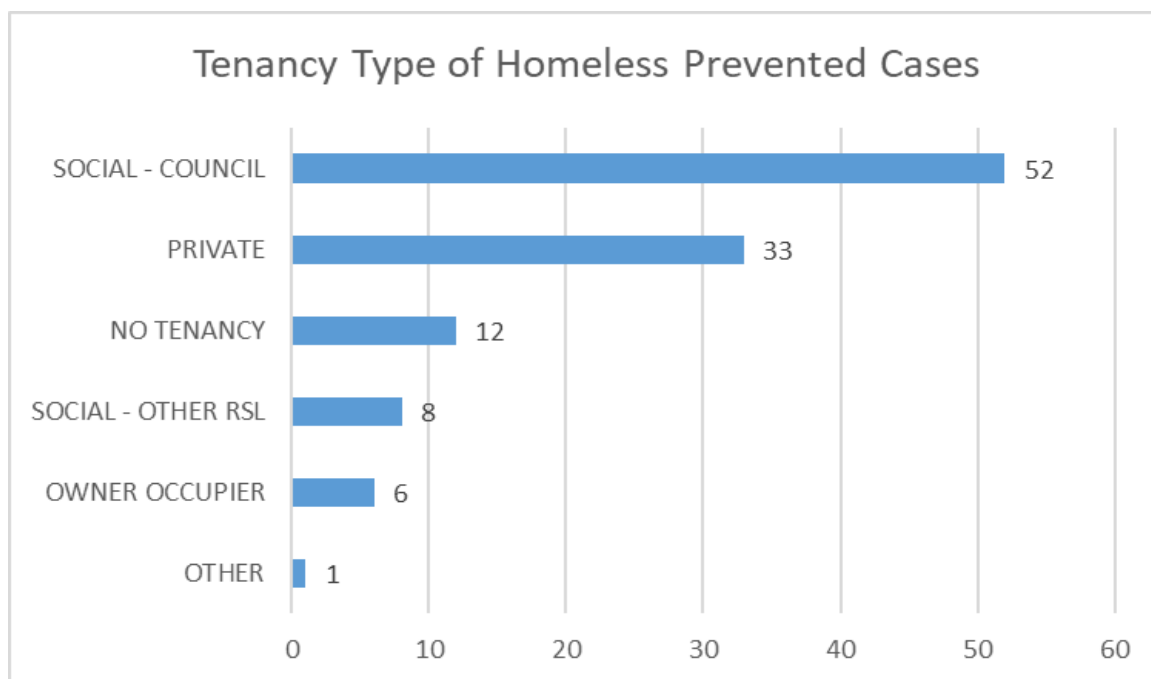
### Outcomes of Closed Cases (Prison Service not included)

Out of a total of 512 cases closed within this reporting year there were 897 outcomes. The graph below shows, like the previous year, the main outcomes were Homeless Prevented, Affordability Improved, Service User Acting and Permanently Housed.



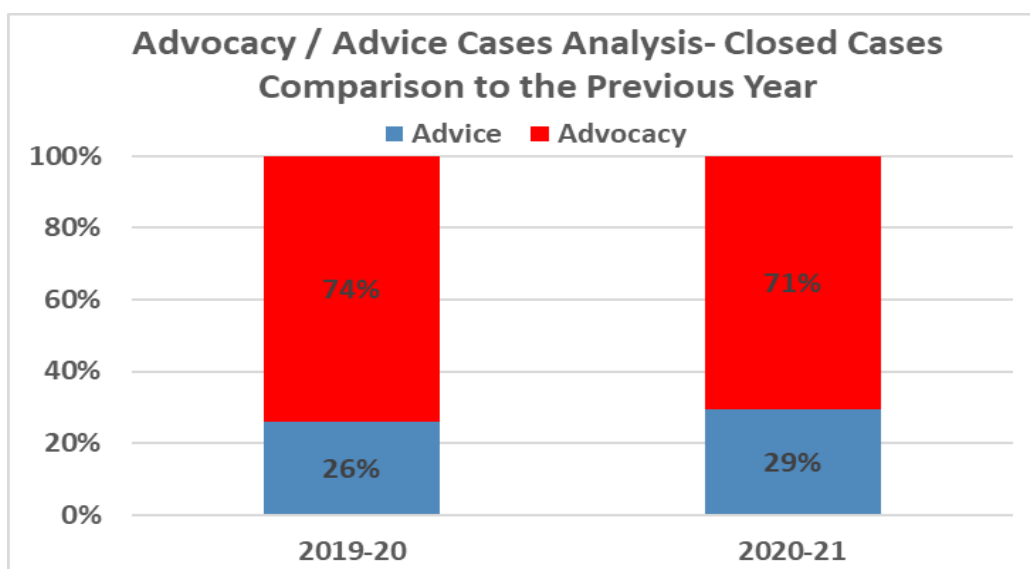
## Breakdown of Homeless Prevented cases by Tenure Type (Excluding Prison Cases)

Breakdown of tenures where we managed to prevent homelessness is shown below. As with last year most of the homeless prevention were Council tenants, 46% of cases and private tenants, 29%.



## Advice/Advocacy Analysis (Prison Service not included)

Advice can cover several topics and have many internal action plans which involves giving information, advice and discussing options. Service users will then consider options available and make informed choices. In advice cases there is no need to interact with a third party. Within our advocacy cases we often have regular contact with many Local and Central Government Departments, Landlords, Lenders, partner agencies and individuals. Positively advocating for Service Users at an early stage often proves crucial when trying to prevent homelessness.



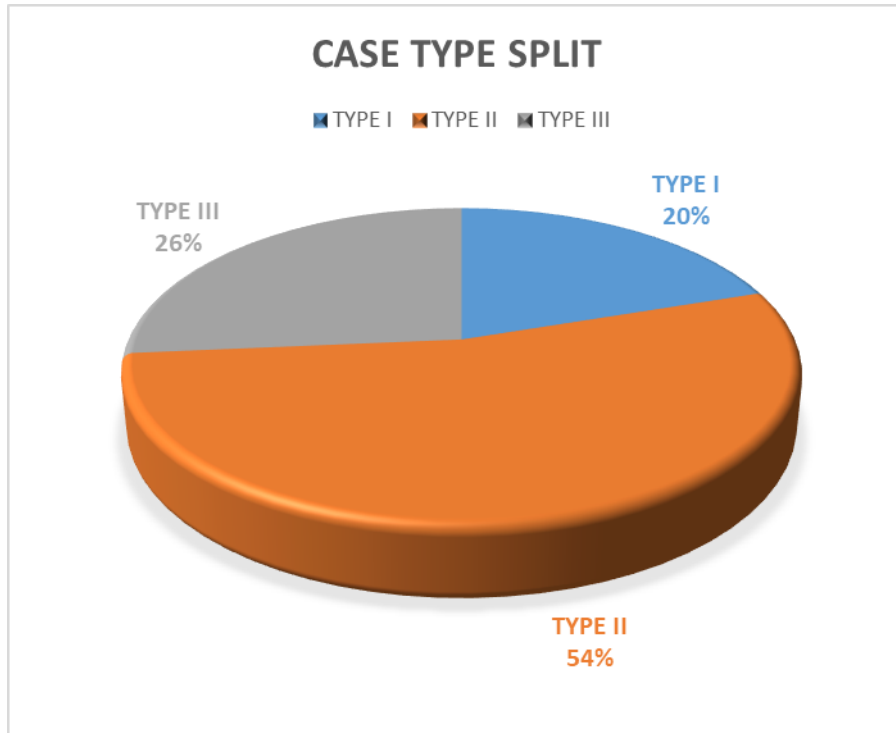
## Case Type I, II and III Breakdown – (not including Prison cases)

Type I – active signposting and information

Type II – advice and casework services

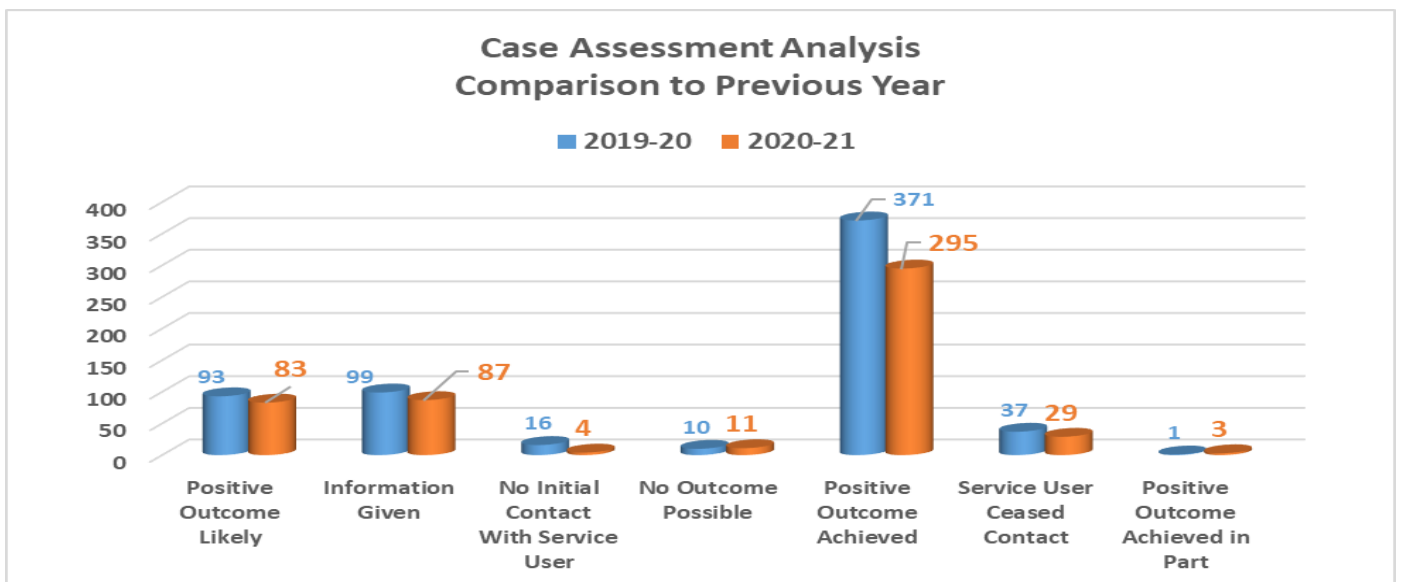
Type III – advocacy, representation and mediation including tribunal

The pie chart below shows the percentage of each type of case work.



## Case Assessments

Most closed cases had a positive outcome or positive outcome likely: 378 cases out of the 512 cases closed fell into this category, a total of 74%. Another 87 service users were given information to enable them to positively achieve their own results.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank and recognise our funders and partner agencies for all their support during this year, including:



Prepared by:

**Alison Hood, Finance & Statistical Manager and  
Suzanne Slavin, Chief Executive Officer**

**17/6/22**