



Ayr Housing Aid
Centre scio

ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

2022-23

HELPING THOSE IN HOUSING NEED SINCE 1986





CEO WELCOME

I have the pleasure of presenting the Annual Summary Report for 2022-23. Our full Annual Report can be accessed at: www.ayrhousingaidcentre.com/reports

This report highlights the frontline work and the value AHAC bring to the people we help, our funders and the larger community. I am very proud of AHAC team's achievements this year and their hard work and resilience has been instrumental in achieving so many positive outcomes despite the various economic challenges. Alleviation of poverty has been a priority again for us this year which is further highlighted in the ever-increasing monies recovered and homeless prevention savings our charity brings.

We have worked hard to identify changing needs and expectations from our services users to actively seek additional funding to ensure we have enough staff to meet the increased demand and reduce crisis situations. We welcome new collaborations in the coming years to further reach those in need and ensure everyone has the right to a safe, secure, suitable place to call home through improving rights enforcement and access social justice. We will continue to build on the excellent collaboration we have with our main funder, South and East Ayrshire Councils who benefit greatly from the work we do in our core objectives of preventing homelessness and negating the need for temporary accommodation. They understand the spend to save philosophy that adequate investment in accredited, independent housing advice and support is instrumental in ensuring a fair, just community where people feel valued, heard and respected. - Suzanne Slavin

BACKGROUND

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO is a local charity operating in South and East Ayrshire, established in 1986 following a Shelter Conference on homelessness. Our primary aims and objectives are to provide free, accredited, independent information, advice, advocacy, representation and engagement services to these who are homeless, threatened with homelessness and/or are in housing need.

We are an OSCR registered Charity and are regulated and inspected by the Care Inspectorate and accredited under the Scottish National Standards for Housing Information and Advice Providers at Type III. Our office is based at 7 York Street, Ayr with Prison Housing Advice staff based within HMP Kilmarnock Link Centre.

FINANCE STATEMENT

The Centre's income for this financial year was £513,582.14 (£460,733.73 received from Public Authorities as part of the Contract, and £52,848.41 from fundraising, donations and other income.

Expenditure for the year was £446,211.76. The primary expenditure heading was salaries including pensions, which accounted for £369,447.65.

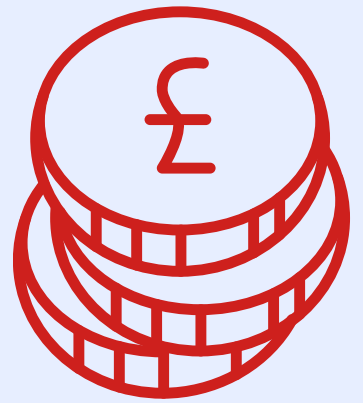
OUTCOMES

03

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

FOR EVERY £1 INVESTED FROM THE PUBLIC PURSE, THE CENTRE GENERATES -

£1 = £43.33



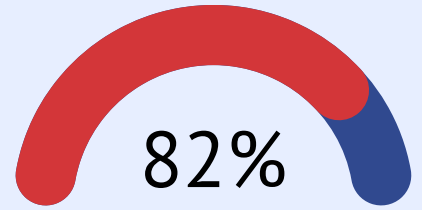
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CASES OPENED OVER ALL SERVICES



100%

WOULD RECOMMEND THE SERVICE TO OTHERS



82%

CASES WITH POSITIVE OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

PROJECTED MORTGAGE INCOME

£45,500

+

PROJECTED RENTAL INCOME

£1,714,180

+

TOTAL MONIES RECOVERED

£390,768

+

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS SAVINGS

£4,320,000

+

HOMELESS PREVENTION SAVINGS

£11,910,000



= £18,380,448 TOTAL PUBLIC PURSE SAVINGS

SERVICES

04 FREE, INDEPENDENT, ACCREDITED HOUSING INFORMATION, ADVICE & ADVOCACY SERVICE



Due to increases in case numbers Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO continue to apply for additional funding and resources to compliment core council funding. We continue to evolve to meet changing needs and aspirations including eviction bans, cost of living restrictions, legislative and regulatory changes and challenges.



6% Type I - Active Signposting



71% Type II - Casework



23% Type III - Advocacy, Representation and Mediation



I'M IN! PROJECT

I'M IN! is a collaboration between Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO and SeAscape providing early upstream advice, advocacy and short term support to people threatened with homelessness from the private sector.

VASA CASEWORKER

The VASA Mental Health and Wellbeing funding has allowed us to employ a Caseworker to help more vulnerable people by empowering them to enforce their housing rights, alleviate poverty and improve mental health.



TRIBUNAL OFFICER

Our Tribunal Officer actively negotiates with Landlords and Agents to reduce the threat of eviction and crisis. Through preventing homelessness and finding alternative solutions demand on temporary accommodation is reduced. Representation is proved at Tribunal to defend and delay ejections in collaboration with South Ayrshire Council Housing Options to secure positive outcomes.



05 PRISON HOUSING ADVICE



Jointly funded by East and South Ayrshire Councils, AHAC has provided this service since 2017. Based in HMP Kilmarnock, Barlinnie and Greenock our advisers provide advice to people in custody from entry to liberation, this includes remand, convicted, short term and long term prisoners from all tenure types. Our key aim is to reduce and prevent homelessness through early intervention and working collaboratively with Prison staff to identify those in housing need.



257 Homeless Prevented Cases



2545 Case Actions Completed



£89,860.51 Monies Recovered

Notable figures from cases opened this year:

- 81% had mental and/or physical health issues
- 45% reported having an addiction
- 83% previously had a custodial sentence with 60 people coming back into custody within 1 month of release



TENURE SUSTAINMENT SERVICE

CRISIS INTERVENTION, HOMELESS PREVENTION SUPPORT SERVICE

Tenure Sustainment includes liaising, mediating and negotiating with landlords. We request the eviction process is suspended pending our intervention. We support Service Users to understand their tenant rights and responsibilities, housing options, housekeeping and budgeting. A full income maximation check is completed to increased unclaimed benefits and applications for grants are made to reduce poverty. Once crisis is averted we encourage continued engagement with appropriate agencies within the community.



£125,766 Monies Recovered



100% of cases has rent arrears fully cleared or significantly reduced

Our Tenure Sustainment Service is Care Inspectorate regulated and staff are SSSC registered.



CARE INSPECTORATE REPORT

- Quality of Care and Support - Grade 6 (Excellent)
- Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 6 (Excellent)

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

06 HOUSING EDUCATION 4 YOUTHS



Housing Education 4 Youths

HEY is an award winning project consisting of 2 information sessions provided to school pupils in S4/S5. These sessions provide vital information on understanding homelessness, housing options, tenant rights and responsibilities, benefit awareness, budgeting and bills, coupled with interactive learning activities. (Funding paused 1/9/23)

"I actually learnt a lot, this should be taught so much more in schools."

287
PUPILS
PARTICIPATED

"The lessons were educational and helped me."

OUTREACH

The Centre continues to attend regular drop-in sessions within the Community and work collaboratively with external partner, some of whom are listed below:

- East and South Ayrshire Council
- Local Foodbanks
- Health & Social Care Partnership
- Local Colleges and Universities
- Employability and Skills
- Women's Aid
- Homeless Network Scotland
- Justice Services
- Child Poverty Action Group Scotland (CPAG)
- Frontline Network



TUESDAY
LOCHSIDE
FOODBANK
10AM - 12PM



WEDNESDAY
CARE & SHARE
RIVERSIDE
2PM - 4PM



THURSDAY
WORKING FOR
WALLACETOWN
2PM - 4PM



FRIDAY
THE ROOM
@ NEWTON
1.30PM - 2.30PM

CASE STUDY 1

SINGLE MALE WITH RENT ARREARS DUE TO MENTAL HEALTH:

- **£18,925.90** benefit entitlement awarded
- **£600** Re-payment plan agreed preventing eviction
- **£500** Grants awarded
- Emotional and wellbeing support to promote engagement creating new ability to trust support agencies
- Engaging with Mental Health Team to address complex history of trauma
- Bathroom adaptations completed, improving health
- Time spent on case - 108 hours

TOTAL BETTER OFF:
£20,025.90

CASE STUDY 2

VULNERABLE FEMALE WITH DISABILITIES, AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS DUE TO ARREARS FOLLOWING HUSBAND PASSING:

- **£2164.32** Rent Arrears Cleared, Homelessness Prevented, Tenancy Sustained
- **£33,009** Recovered from unknown pension
- **£37,206** entitlement awarded, income maximised and poverty alleviated
- **£2760** Funeral service payment
- **£6933** Grants awarded
- Adaptions made to tenancy (stair lift and rails)
- Mental health and quality of living improved
- Time spent on case - 104 hours

TOTAL BETTER OFF:
£82,072.32

“I am on the way to being debt free. SAC have agreed to not evict me as long as I keep engaging. I just wanted to thank you for all your help. If you didn't step in & help when you did I don't know where I would be. I honestly can't thank you enough & appreciate all you've done to help. People like you are worth their weight in gold.”

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CASE STUDY 3

SINGLE, VULNERABLE, FEMALE PARENT, LANDLORD SEEKING EVICTION:

- Homelessness delayed - offered permanent offer via Homeless application but avoided needing temporary accommodation
- Permanent alternative social tenancy secured prior to ejection date
- Payment plan regarding arrears agreed, income maximised and affordability improved
- Mental health and anxiety reduced by us taking control and taking pressure off
- **£1,000** Compensation for Landlord's conduct was provided as part of the disposal of his criminal case
- **£2750** received in grants
- 2 Tribunal Case Management Discussions attended

“The service I received was first class. When it came to the tribunal everything was explained step by step. The team were very supportive throughout as my case wasn't as straight forward as any other. If the support wasn't in place I genuinely think I would've had a nervous breakdown and that would lead to affecting my family situation.”

CASE STUDY 4

RISK OF HOMELESSNESS FOR PERSON IN CUSTODY AND SON IN COMMUNITY:

- Early intervention from entry, working with both individuals in custody and young adult son in community
- **£1000** Grant successful to reduce rent arrears and prevent eviction proceedings
- Support referrals made for son to have support whilst his father was in custody, this allowed him to continue studying at college
- Homelessness prevented, preventing the need for temporary accommodation, reducing stress and anxiety

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CASE STUDY 5

RISK OF HOMELESSNESS FOR PERSON IN CUSTODY, DUE TO HOUSING BENEFIT ISSUE:

- Complex case due to nature of crime and short period in temporary accommodation prior to custody with intent to return to SST tenancy
- Following legislative checks and research, housing benefit entitlement established although previously refused
- **£1159.08** backdated and benefit reinstated
- **£404.32** Council Tax exemption
- Homelessness prevented, arrears cleared and stress reduced.

I kept getting arrears letters and termination paperwork sent to my cell by the council. If I hadn't spoke to the advisers and got help I would have just ended the tenancy to stop the stress from the letters. I would have been homeless when I didn't need to be.

CASE STUDY 6

SINGLE NON-VERBAL FEMALE WITH COMPLEX HEALTH ISSUES AND RENT ARREARS:

- **£16,742.75** PIP reinstated and backdated
- **£11,396** UC + LCWRA reinstated and backdated
- **£1,431** rent arrears cleared, preventing homelessness
- **£1,200** Bereavement Payments awarded after husband passed
- **£150** Warm Home Discount awarded
- **£288** CT Discount and Refund
- Repairs completed including gas meter, wheelchair accessibility and shed demolition
- Stirling Park debt paid and all other debt owed to companies written off
- Electric wheelchair provided, Care Package in place and Community Alarm fitted improving living quality
- Death Certificate Issued for late husband, and 'Tell Me Once' updated who contacted all relevant agencies advised of passing
- Total case time spend - **183** hours

TOTAL BETTER OFF:
£29,776.75

“I was crying when I first contacted as my life was a mess, but Jenn made me feel better in the space of a few hours. I had been trying to get repairs fixed for over a year, but she got them sorted right away. My mental health was improved 100% and it is a weight off my shoulders.”

CASE STUDY 7

VULNERABLE SINGLE PARENT, STRUGGLING WITH DOMESTIC ABUSE DAMAGE TO HOME:

- RSL Landlord completed repairs, preventing homelessness and improving safety and living quality
- Poverty alleviated through income maximisation
- Court Orders in place to give protection in future from abuser, empowered to stay at home with child and not forced to flee
- **£2000** Grant awarded to the child for the following:



£300 HORSE RIDING LESSONS

£150 FAMILY ACTIVITIES

£200 CHILDRENS CLOTHING



£350 BED, BEDDING AND CURTAINS

£200 TABLET

£100 SCHOOL ITEMS

£300 CARPET



£400 ROOM DECORATING ITEMS & ACCESSORIES

CASE STUDY 8

ELDERLY, DISABLED COUPLE TRIBUNAL EVICTION ACTION DUE TO RENT ARREARS:

- Represented at Case Management and Evidential Hearings: - successfully preventing eviction and Landlord's expenses dismissed - saving **£20,000** legal fees
- Income maximised and affordability improved through entitlement of **£18,500**
- Arrears reduced **£9,000**
- Remaining in home suitable for their disabilities ensuring quality of living and reducing stress

TOTAL BETTER OFF & SAVINGS: £47,500

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & COMMITMENT

1 1 THANK YOU

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO would like to take the opportunity to thank our service users, funders and partner agencies for their ongoing support. Our staff thrive in building lasting working relationships.



For over 37 years the Centre has adapted and evolved to meet the changing needs and expectations of those we serve. We continue our commitment to the community to -

- *Relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, homelessness or threat of homelessness or other disadvantage.*
- *Relief of Poverty.*
- *Advancement of Human Rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation.*
- *Advancement of Education.*



Ayr Housing Aid Centre scio

"I wish I had contacted you sooner, your help was amazing and I am so grateful on behalf of myself and my kids."

"If I didn't have your help I may be homeless, I am happy to now be working and everything has fallen into place."

"The service provided was out of this world, the most valuable service I have ever had and it is free."

"Really improved my mental health, the assistance took a weight off my shoulders."

"The staff were very friendly and approachable, I certainly did not feel guilty about asking for support and I did not feel judged in any way. Moving forward, I feel more positive and confident in asking for help."



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