

2023 - 24

SUMMARY IMPACT REPORT

HELPING THOSE IN HOUSING NEED
SINCE 1986





CEO WELCOME

Our Summary Impact Report is designed to highlight the frontline work and value AHAC bring to the people we help, our funders and the larger community. As always, I am very proud of AHAC's achievements this year. The team's hard work and resilience has been instrumental in achieving so many positive outcomes despite economic challenges. Alleviation of poverty has again been a priority for us this year resulting in increased monies recovered, homeless prevention savings and those we help being better off.

We have continued to adapt and evolve to the changing needs and expectations from the people we work with. We continue to seek additional funding to ensure we have enough staff to meet the increased demand and reduce the impact a crisis situation has.

We stand strong to improve the enforcement of rights and promote social justice. We will continue to build on the excellent collaboration with our Council funders who benefit directly from the work we do. We are proud of the positive impact preventing and delaying homelessness and reducing the need for temporary accommodation has in reducing trauma and negative health outcomes. The Councils are to be commended for understanding the spend to save philosophy that adequate investment in accredited, independent housing advice and intensive support is instrumental in ensuring a fair, just community where people feel valued, heard and respected.

In 2025-26 we will maintain our commitment to put the needs of those we help at the centre of everything we do. We welcome new collaborations across South and East Ayrshire in the coming year to reach those in housing need. AHAC's core ethos is that everyone has the right to a safe, secure, affordable place to call home. - Suzanne Slavin

BACKGROUND

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO is a local charity operating in South and East Ayrshire. We were 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 those who are homeless, threatened with homelessness and/or in housing need.

We are an OSCR registered Charity, 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.

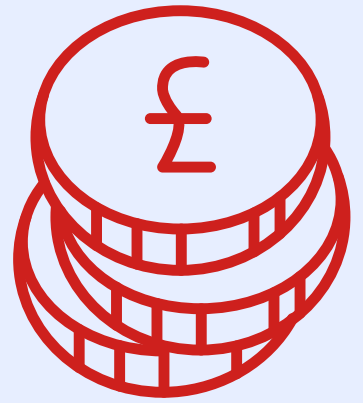
OUTCOMES

03

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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

£1 = £38.94



1351 + 190

CASES ENQUIRIES

OPENED ACROSS ALL SERVICES

TOTAL MONIES RECOVERED

£554,822

+

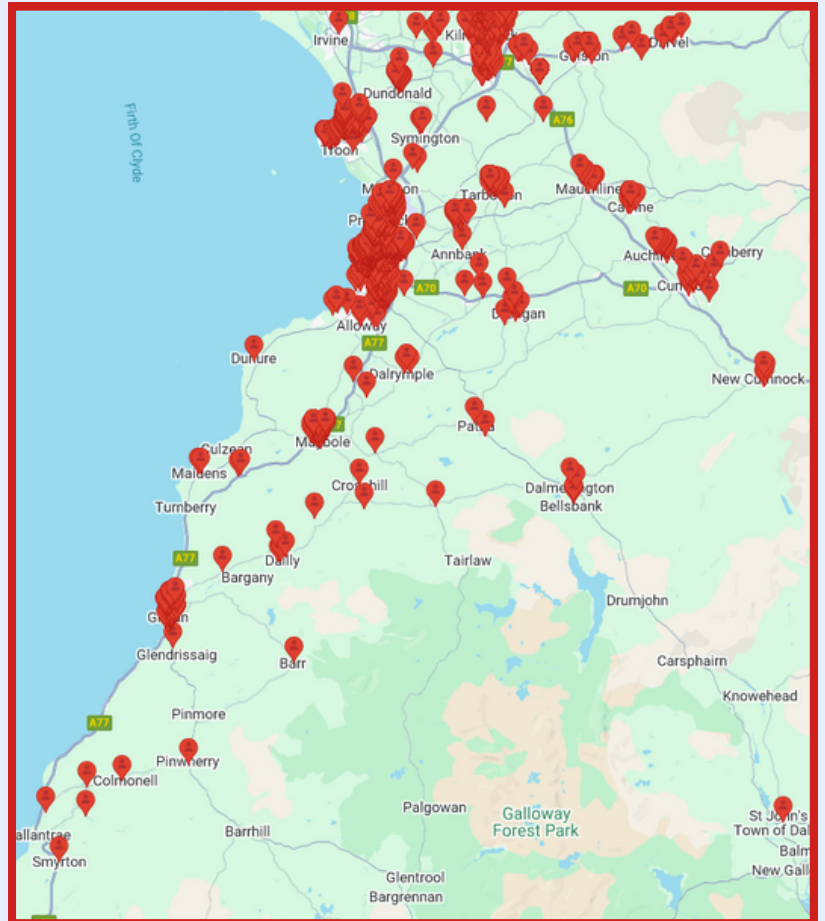
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS SAVINGS

£4,930,000

+

HOMELESS PREVENTION SAVINGS

£11,460,000



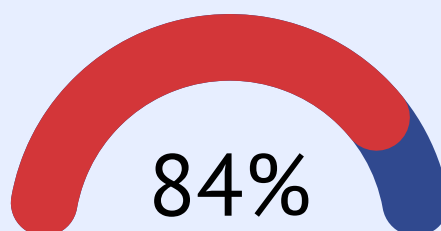
= £16,944,822

TOTAL PUBLIC PURSE SAVINGS



99%

WOULD RECOMMEND THE
SERVICE TO OTHERS



84%

CASES WITH POSITIVE
OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

493

HOMELESSNESS DELAYED
AND PREVENTED CASES

SERVICES

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



Due to increased demand, AHAC 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.



7% Type I - Active Signposting



63% Type II - Casework



30% Type III - Advocacy & Representation



I'M IN! PROJECT

I'M IN! is a collaboration between AHAC and SeAscape providing early upstream advice, advocacy and short term support to people threatened with homelessness from the private sector until 31/3/24 in South Ayrshire.

From 1.4.25 I'M IN! evolved to cover East and South Ayrshire areas with AHAC employing 2 part time Advocacy and Tribunal Officers and a part time Caseworker. Our partnership with SeAscape who co-ordinate and provide the housing support element has enabled us to adapt to meet frontline need. This much needed service has been able to delay and prevent numerous private tenant evictions to allow for a planned approach and reduce demand on scarce temporary accommodation.

VASA CASEWORKER

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



05 PRISON HOUSING ADVICE



Jointly funded by East and South Ayrshire Councils, AHAC has provided this service since 2017. Providing a service to those 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 and encouraging conversations.



**466
Cases**



257 Homeless Prevented Outcomes



4,323 Case Actions Completed



£82,256 Monies Recovered

Notable figures from cases opened this year:

- **56% reported having an addiction**
- **85% 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 to 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 increase 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.



£161,168 Monies Recovered



100% of people who engaged had 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 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Staff continue to engage with the community and dedicate their time in and out of working hours at various events, sessions and training. Here are some pictures from Wallacetown Arts Festival, SAC Community Fun Day, VASA Aging Well Event, Mental Health First Aider training and Christmas gifts helping our service users in need.



VISIT US ON FACEBOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR
UPCOMING EVENTS AND DROP-INS....



2023 - 24 OUTREACH PARTNERS



CASE STUDY 1

SINGLE FEMALE WITH RENT ARREARS AND OTHER DEBTS:

- ADP enhanced rate and LCWRA awarded
- Council Tax Reductions and Single Occupancy awarded and backdated
- Rent arrears reduced preventing homelessness
- Grants awarded to assist with clothing, food and energy costs
- Referral to CAP for debt advice - clearing all debts
- Engaging with CPN and Psychiatrist, improving mental health
- Reconciliation with husband and exploring employment opportunities

TOTAL BETTER OFF:
£44,452.20

CASE STUDY 2

VETERAN WITH MULTIPLE HIGH DEBTS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS:

- **£2,172** Rent Arrears Cleared, Homelessness Prevented, Tenancy Sustained
- **£18,800** Total debt cleared
- **£4,992** Yearly LCWRA entitlement awarded, income maximised and poverty alleviated
- Various Fuel Bank, Food Bank vouchers issued
- Council Tax reduction awarded
- Grants accessed to provide Sim Card, clothing and travel expenses, flooring and décor
- Mental health and motivation improved
- Relationship and engagement with landlord improved

TOTAL BETTER OFF:
£26,025.14

"The service vastly improved my mental health and wellbeing... Janet supported me or pointed me in the right direction to get out of extreme debt. It's a fresh start to my life, I can now open letters and answer the phone without worrying."

CASE STUDY 3

**SINGLE MALE WITH LONG TERM DISABILITY,
EXPERIENCING POVERTY:**

- Immediate crisis intervention issuing fuel and food vouchers
- **£575** advance Universal Credit payment
- **£638** monthly Universal Credit personal and housing element awarded
- **£2,844** Council tax reduction awarded and backdated
- **£400** monthly LCWRA awarded
- Phone and sim provided to help maintain UC claim
- Immediate and long-term poverty reduced improving mental health and motivation

TOTAL BETTER OFF: £16,304

"I would not be in the situation that I am at the moment without the help of Jennifer. She was so good in breaking things down and explaining it to me."

CASE STUDY 4

**PRIVATE TENANT THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS DUE TO
TERMINATION OF HMO LICENCE BY LANDLORD:**

- French national with limited English provided assistance and advice on housing rights
- Staff used multiple translation and communication methods
- Provided assistance to complete housing and homeless applications while delaying need for temporary accommodation
- Liaised with landlord and council to prevent the need for temporary accommodation and ensuring affordability
- Permanent offer of accommodation made reducing stress and improving mental health

CASE STUDY 5**COUNCIL TENANT AND PARTNER IN CUSTODY AT DIFFERENT PRISONS:**

- Early intervention from entry for both service users in HMP Kilmarnock and HMP Greenock
- Animal welfare concerns, RSPCA contracts and liaised with Housing Officer to gain access for safe rescue and temporary fostering until release
- Referral to Headway Ayrshire for support with brain injury and mental health
- Internal referral on release to Advice team for advice regarding anti-social behaviour and Tenancy Sustainment team due to high arrears caused by Universal Credit non-entitlement whilst in custody
- Supported positive transition from liberation to home
- Referral to SeAscape for housing support
- Homelessness prevented, reducing anxiety and improving mental health

CASE STUDY 6**SINGLE PARENT WITH 2 CHILDREN GIVEN EVICTION EJECTION DATE:**

- Advised on private tenancy rights and legislation re Tribunal decision of ejection
- Minute of Recall lodged requesting decision recalled
- Attended Case Management Discussion with tenant, ejection cancelled
- Assisted to complete housing applications and liaised with council for alternative accommodation
- Offer of permanent accommodation made prior to Case Management Discussion
- Homelessness prevented for family
- Referrals to external agencies to address mental health issues and domestic abuse, mental health improved

“The Tribunal Officer really helped me through a stressful period in my life. I’m grateful for his assistance at Tribunal.”

CASE STUDY 7

**PRIVATE TENANT THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS
DUE TO BREACH OF TENANCY CONDITIONS, RENT
ARREARS AND HOARDING:**

- Assisted to comply with tenancy agreement including staff being present during gas safety checks to help reduce anxiety
- Referrals to mental health team to address hoarding issues long term
- Homelessness prevented by ongoing liaison with Letting Agent and multi-agency engagement
- Mental health improved including reducing isolation, tenant now felt able to invite people into home
- Income maximised through grants to assist with household clearance
- Tenancy and individuals safety improved following household clearance reducing fire safety concerns

"She was sensitive and caring to my situation which made me feel better."

CASE STUDY 8

**FEMALE FLEEING DOMESTIC
ABUSE FROM OUTWITH SCOTLAND,
FORMER TENANCY DEBTS AND
HOMELESSNESS:**

- **£1,434** former tenancy debts waived, reducing poverty
- Assisted through homeless process, informed of rights and liaised with Housing Options Team to reduce anxiety
- Offer of permanent accommodation
- **£1,764** Scottish Welfare Fund awarded following declined application and review
- Mental and physical health improved
- Confidence increased and now volunteering within the local community

TOTAL BETTER OFF: £3,198

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.



East Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir an Ear



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



For over 38 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 by meeting our aims and objectives -

- *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

"The service was wonderful, just reassuring that there was someone there who knew what they were doing calmed us right down."

"AHAC would always be my first port of call if I have any issues in the future as I know that I would be well looked after."

"The best organisation I have ever worked with."

"It made the process a lot easier with someone advocating on your behalf and able to fight your corner."

"I was so stressed until I came for my appointment, I didn't know where I was going to live after the fire in my house. You got everything sorted."

"If this service hadn't been there I would have given up."



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