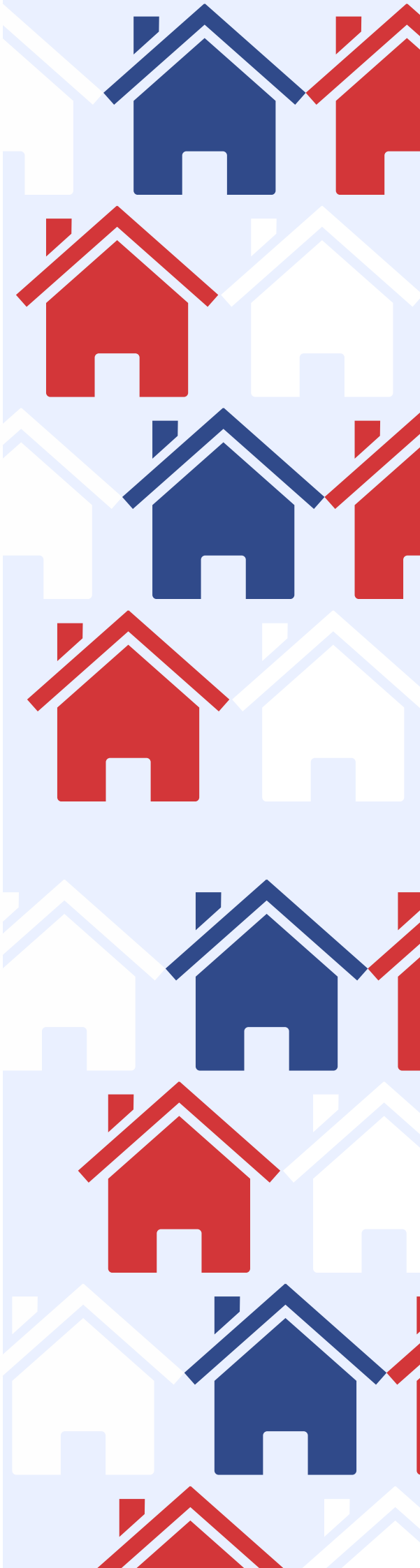
Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO

2024 - 25

SUMMARY IMPACT REPORT

HELPING THOSE IN HOUSING NEED SINCE 1986



CEO WELCOME



Our Summary Impact Report highlights our frontline work and the value AHAC bring to the people we help, our funders and the larger community. Year on year I continue to be extremely proud of AHAC team achievements, hard work, resilience and determination to go above and beyond to ensure everyone gets the best service. 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. We have worked hard to identify changing needs and expectations from our service users to actively seek additional funding to ensure we have enough staff to meet the increased demand and reduce crisis situations. Our £37.59 for every £1 Social Return on Investment cannot be underestimated in how this saving helps not only the individuals but the wider public purse.

This year both Advice & Support teams underwent compliance audits, including an unannounced Housing Support Care Inspection in November 2024 resulting in the Care Inspectorate grading our Tenure Sustainment service as “sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for people” across Wellbeing Support and Leadership and “significant strengths...supporting positive outcomes” in our Staff Team and Care Planning. AHAC are extremely proud to be one of very few services consistently achieving grade 6, particularly with the changes in scorings and expectations. Our Advice service was SNSIAP re-accredited in May 2025 as Type III across all Housing Law Competencies.

In 2025-26 we will continue to maintain our high standards ensuring those we help receive the best outcomes. We will continue to work across South and East Ayrshire to ensure gaps in services are identified and funding is secured to meet need. By working together with households we ensure everyone can be empowered to exert their rights to a safe, secure, affordable, suitable place to call home and access social justice. We will continue to build on the excellent collaboration we have with our main funders, South and East Ayrshire Councils who significantly benefit from our work improving housing outcomes, preventing homelessness and reducing 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

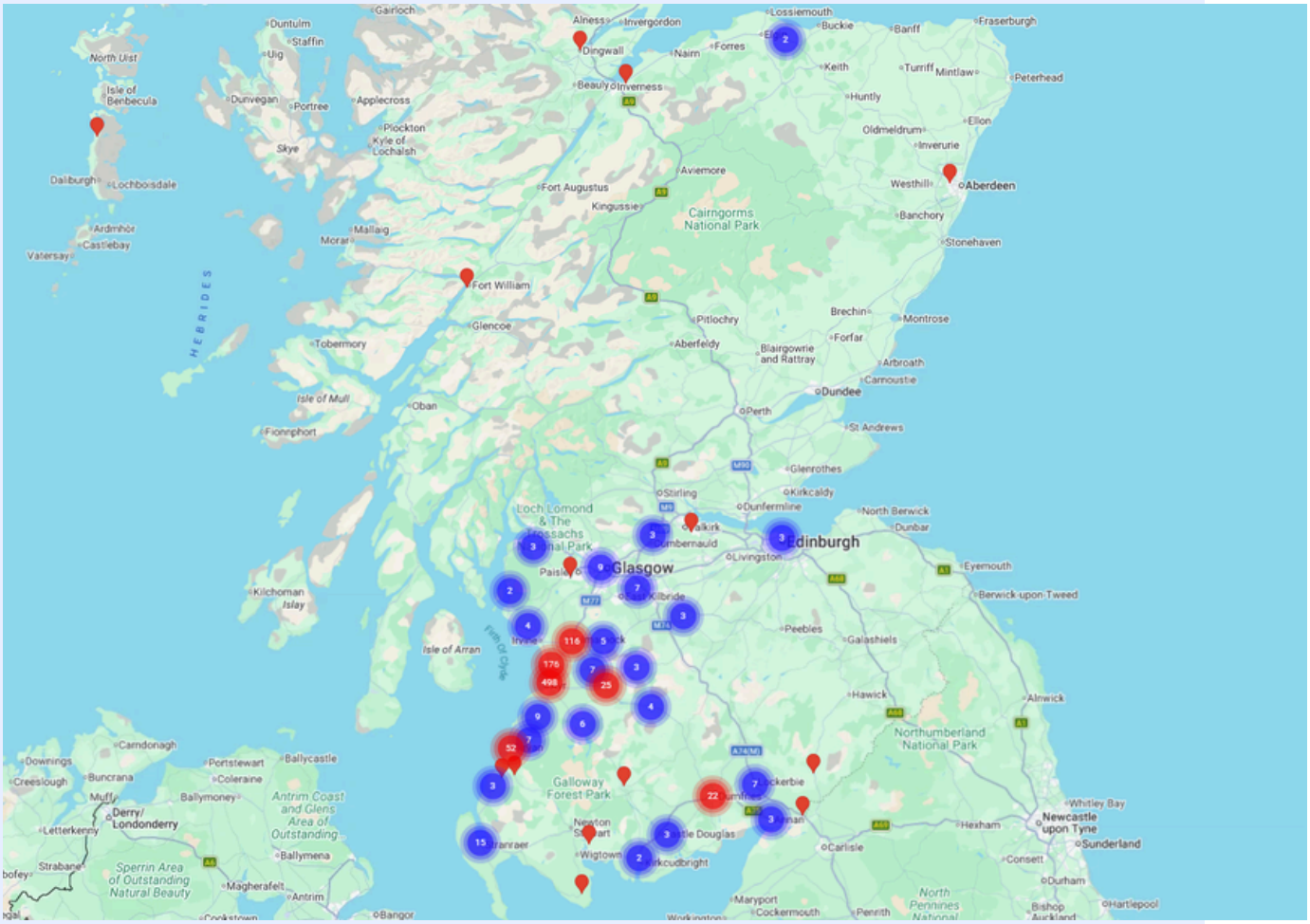
BACKGROUND

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO is a local charity operating in South and East Ayrshire. 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 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.

The below graph pinpoints all cases opened within this reporting year, with high intensity areas in red. All cases out with South and East Ayrshire are mainly from people helped in prison, reaching across Scotland.



SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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

£1 = £37.59



£554,822

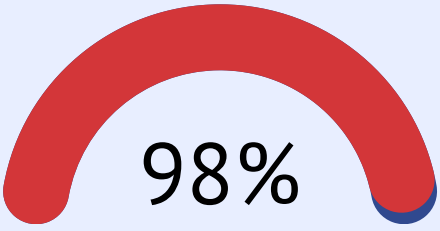
TOTAL MONIES RECOVERED DIRECTLY BENEFITTING OUR SERVICE USERS

£16,944,822

TOTAL PUBLIC PURSE SAVINGS

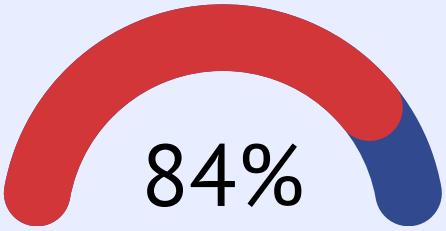
1,423

CASES OPENED ACROSS ALL SERVICES



98%

WOULD RECOMMEND THE SERVICE TO OTHERS



84%

CASES WITH POSITIVE OUTCOMES

462

HOMELESSNESS DELAYED AND PREVENTED CASES

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, Staff and Community First Aid Training and Christmas gifts for service users' children.











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

follow us on facebook

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

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 cost of living, legislative and regulatory changes and social challenges.

7% Type I - Active Signposting

78% Type II - Casework

15% Type III - Advocacy & Representation

I'M IN! PROJECT

I'M IN! is a collaboration between AHAC and SeAscape providing advice, advocacy, representation and short term support to people threatened with homelessness from the private sector in South and East Ayrshire.

AHAC employed 2 part time 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.

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 housing advice to people in prison 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. We provide assistance to anyone unable to access housing advice across Scotland to reduce local presentations.



- **4,700 Case Actions Completed**
- **£91,643 Monies Recovered**
- **50% Reported having an addiction on entry to custody**
- **83% Previously had a custodial sentence**

TENURE SUSTAINMENT SERVICE

CRISIS INTERVENTION, HOMELESS PREVENTION SUPPORT SERVICE

Tenure Sustainment includes liaising, mediating and negotiating with social 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 to promote citizenship.

- **£236,969 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. Please visit our website to read our most recent Care Inspectorate Report which we were graded as “sector leading”.

08 ACCREDITATIONS

ADVICE STANDARDS (SNSIAP)

Type III Scottish National Standards Housing Advice re-accreditation across all housing topics was awarded and thereafter invited to Scottish Parliament in May 2026 for formal presentation of certificates by Màiri McAllan MSP, Cabinet Secretary of Housing & Siobhian Brown MSP, Minister for Victims and Community Safety.



COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY

In March we proudly became the first Social Care Communication Friendly Accredited Service in South Ayrshire – this involved Makaton training, creation of symbols and signs to ensure everyone, no matter what their communication needs can be understood and we have a two-way clear communication pathway.



CARE INSPECTORATE REPORT

Unannounced Care Inspectorate visit resulted in our Tenure Sustainment service graded as “sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for people” across Wellbeing Support and Leadership and “significant strengths...supporting positive outcomes” for our Staff Team and Care Planning. AHAC are extremely proud to be one of very few services able to achieve grade 6, particularly with higher inspection criteria expectations.

15 Nov 2024 (I) **Care Inspectorate Inspection Report** View details → Hide

Wellbeing support	Leadership	Staff team	Setting	Care planning
Excellent (6)	Excellent (6)	Very Good (5)	Not Assessed	Very Good (5)

More information on our acceditiations and other awards achieved can be found on our website.

CASE STUDY 1: TENURE SUSTAINMENT

PARENT WITH NON-DEPENDANT DAUGHTER, DECREE GRANTED, EVICTION PENDING:

- Joint working with Advice staff to assist with Minute of Recall submission
- Supported to Sheriff Court during eviction proceedings
- Rent Arrears cleared and tenancy sustained
- Homelessness Prevented for both mother and daughter
- **£26,266** total debt cleared
- Fuel Bank vouchers
- Food Bank vouchers
- Mental Health improved
- General wellbeing and quality of life improved
- SIM Card provided

BETTER OFF BY:
£26,759

CASE STUDY 2: TENURE SUSTAINMENT

SINGLE FEMALE WITH HIGH DEBT:

- Rent Arrears cleared, Homelessness Prevented, Tenancy Sustained
- **£24,091** total debt cleared
- Various Fuel Bank and Food Bank vouchers issued
- Council Tax discount awarded
- Tax credit refunded
- Grants accessed to provide:

1. Ongoing income maximisation
2. Sim Card
3. Bed/bedding,
4. Vacuum cleaner
5. New glasses
6. Food

BETTER OFF BY:
£29,390.54

"My mental health is much better now. I'm going to the gym, swimming and eating a healthier diet now as I have the money to do these things."

CASE STUDY 3: ADVICE

SINGLE MALE PARENT FACING HOMELESSNESS DUE TO RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN:

- Immediate crisis intervention issuing fuel & food vouchers
- Advised of current private tenancy rights and information regarding First-Tier Tribunal
- Advised of housing options and homeless rights
- **£500** Glasspool grant for new tenancy deposit
- **£500** VRF grant for first months rent in advance
- **£916** Community Care Grant for furniture for new home
- Mental health improved and poverty alleviated
- Homelessness prevented and avoided use of temporary accommodation

BETTER OFF BY: **£2,035**

"Jennifer eased the stress and worry from myself. She was in a class of her own. Thank you to everyone in the organisation who has helped me."

CASE STUDY 4: ADVICE

SINGLE MALE WANTING TO REFUSE HOMELESS OFFER OF PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION:

- Advised of rights under homeless legislation and discussed grounds for refusal or review
- As there were no legal grounds, explained duty discharge process and options
- Due to limited private sector availability, after considering options, service user decided to accept original homeless offer of social housing
- Grants accessed for furniture, carpets, white goods
- Council Tax reduction awarded
- Permanent offer of accommodation has reduced stress and improved mental health

BETTER OFF BY: **£3,294**

CASE STUDY 5: ADVICE/I'M IN! TRIBUNAL

SINGLE PARENT RECEIVED NOTICE FOR REMOVAL, IMPACTING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS:

- Property repossessed by landlords creditors and ejection date set
- Advised of rights and entitlement of appropriate Notices of new property owner
- Contacted Solicitors managing the repossession and Sheriff Officers instructed by Solicitors to advise of tenancy rights
- Advised Service User of expectations re Notices and First Tier Tribunal
- Advised of long term and short term housing options
- Eviction stopped - Service User and their children were not removed from property
- Avoided need for temporary accommodation
- Service User sourced alternative private rented tenancy
- Poverty reduced through grant funding: **£375** deposit, **£375** first months' rent
- Homelessness prevented & mental health improved through providing clear advice, advocacy, guidance and reassurance

CASE STUDY 6: ADVICE/I'M IN! TRIBUNAL

SINGLE MALE WITH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH FACING EVICTION VIA TRIBUNAL:

- Advised on tenancy rights, legislation and Tribunal process
- I'M IN! Tribunal Officer drafted and lodged submissions around reasonableness of granting eviction order and presented these submissions at Case Management Discussion in September 2024
- Due to evidence led by both parties full evidential hearing was arranged and Tribunal scheduled for January 2025 to decide on reasonableness
- I'M IN! Tribunal Officer argued that the Landlord's Solicitor had failed to demonstrate a necessity to sell
- Hearing adjourned to allow the Tribunal clerk to contact the Agent
- Once reconvened, I'M IN! Tribunal Officer again submitted application be refused – Tribunal concurred
- Landlord's application for eviction refused
- Service User remained in tenancy but has now moved into a permanent offer made by the local authority providing a suitable secure home
- Homelessness Delayed and time allowed for suitable offer

CASE STUDY 7: SERVICE COLLABORATION - PRISON ADVICE, TYPE III ADVICE & TENURE SUSTAINMENT

SINGLE MALE TRANSITIONED FROM PRISON TO COMMUNITY AT RISK OF EVICTION AND DEPORTATION:

- Notice of proceedings issued while in prison for rent arrears due to benefit entitlement ending while on remand over 6 months
- Possible deportation due to repeat offences
- Dogs within household on entry to prison

Prison Advice Service

- Liasied with Housing Officer to ensure dogs temporarily rehomed
- Informed of rights and entitlement periods at various points during time in prison including changes of circumstances
- Repayment plan arranged towards rent arrears from prison wage, assisted sending cheques to rent account
- Internal referral to Tenure Sustainment and Type III services
- Minute of Recall assistance and Type III advice and advocacy
- Laison with Immigration Officer, Home Office and Immigration Solicitor to provide information on housing circumstances and help maintain tenancy to strengthen case
- Released from remand, found not guilty at Court, eviction not granted and not deported, homelessness prevented and able to return to tenancy on release

Tenure Sustainment Service

- Assisted to maximise income and reduce rent arrears
- Awarded Council Tax Reduction and Discount
- Awarded backed Limited Capability Work Related Activity
- Assisted with fuel vouchers and Cash for Kids for daughter
- Tenure stabilised and homelessness prevented

Our internal pathway from Prison Advice to Community Tenure Sustainment support provides continuity, person-centred, trauma informed and responsive approaches. Type III Advice provide specialist, expert legal advice across all services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & COMMITMENT

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO would like to take the opportunity to thank our service users, funders and partner agencies for their ongoing support.

For over 39 years Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO 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*

14 NOTES & NETWORKING

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

"I don't think I would be sitting in my new home without this service. It was great."

"The service was brilliant and they were respectful of my situation. The staff were kind, helpful and knowledgable."

"The service's team work made it a very efficient service."

"My worker was our lifeline as we faced homelessness. They gave us encouragement and confidence to pursue the tribunal route."

"We were desperate when we turned up at Ayr Housing Aid Centre and left with a positive mindset."

"I hope you continue your great work in South Ayrshire."

Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO

Helping those in housing need since 1986.

7 YORK STREET, AYR, KA8 8AN

01292 288111

INFO@AYRHOUSINGAIDCENTRE.COM

WWW.AYRHOUSINGAIDCENTRE.COM