

**ROCKET  
SCIENCE**



# Homelessness in Scotland

Research for The Salvation Army:  
Supporting documents - methodology  
and research materials

January 2021



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# 1. Introduction

The Salvation Army commissioned Rocket Science to investigate whether current investment is sufficient to achieve the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan's ambitious objectives. This document sets out the methodology and research materials that supported that research.

## 2. Methodology

We designed a methodology that will deliver practical responses to the requirements of the brief, as well as additional insight into the challenges facing local authorities in addressing homelessness. The key stages in our methodology are set out below and summarised in Figure A.1:

- A desk-based review including a literature review, a review of local authorities' plans for addressing homelessness, and a review of publicly available data
- Fieldwork with local authorities and third sector providers
- Developing a costing model and budgeting tool

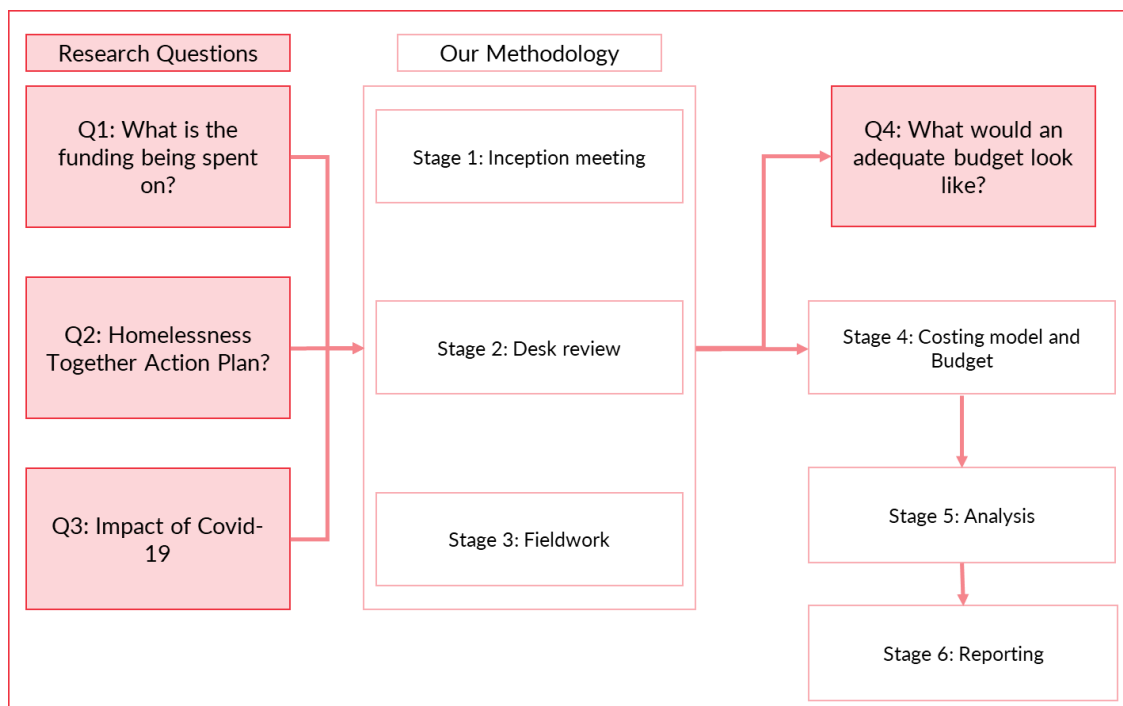


Figure A.1: Summary of the methodology for this research



## 2.1 Desk research

The desk research stage involved three tasks: literature review, review of local authorities' plans for addressing homelessness, and a review of publicly available data. The purpose of this stage was to:

- Develop a detailed picture of the background and context of funding homelessness in Scotland, and identify where the £200m (estimated housing and homelessness expenditure by local authorities) is currently being spent
- Develop a clear and succinct overview of ending homelessness in Scotland, including challenges and opportunities, changes in policy and welfare reform, and emerging trends (especially in light of Covid-19)
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of how the 32 local authorities in Scotland approach addressing homelessness, the funding that they align to this, and the challenges this presents
- Identify and analyse data on homelessness in Scotland, including clearly setting out the limitations and where the need for improvements lie, in order to make more accurate forecasts for funding

We have included a summary literature review in section 1 in the main report, with the full literature review and a summary of local authority housing strategies as a standalone document.

## 2.2 Fieldwork

The engagement phase of our research was informed by the emerging findings of the desk research, with the aim of identifying additional data and information to enhance the research. The stakeholder consultation involved semi-structured interviews with local authorities, as well as an online survey for both local authorities and third sector providers.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 15 of the 32 local authorities (47%) during November 2020. The topic guides for these discussions are provided in section 3. In addition to undertaking telephone interviews with local authorities, we implemented an online survey which was launched on 30th September 2020 and remained open for a period of eight weeks. Carrying out an online survey had the advantage of reaching a wider audience and provided an alternative way for local authorities to engage with this research to fit around their schedules and commitments. It also enabled us to reach out to the wider third sector to collect views and opinions on the work they are doing to prevent homelessness, outwith the initial remit for this study.



In total, we received:

- 16 local authority responses; and
- 8 third sector and 'other' provider responses.

It should, however, be noted that not all respondents chose to answer every question, therefore totals vary throughout.

Overall, we engaged with 20 local authorities across surveys and interviews.

## 2.3 Building the costing model

We developed an excel-based costing model to consider options for an adequate budget. This enabled us to make assumptions on expenditure and alter variables on demand for services. This is provided as a separate file.

There are several issues with the homelessness data in Scotland. Homelessness statistics data reported to Scottish Government is inconsistent. For example, some local authorities that deal with large numbers of homelessness applications have lots of 'not offered', while others have very small numbers or none at all. The Scottish Government report that while there could be some genuine differences in local provision and/or practice between areas that naturally lead to large variations in the numbers of 'not offered', there could also be different ways of recording and reporting the information between local authorities. It is also possible that the definitions are not being used consistently (eg some could include all types of presentations and others include only some).

The Scottish Government also report inconsistencies between HL2<sup>1</sup> and HL3<sup>2</sup> and a concern that differences between the HL2 and HL3 returns have become considerably larger in the last year. For example, additional types of accommodation being reported in HL3 claims, that are not included in HL2 claims, suggesting that there are different definitions or sets of accommodation being reported across returns.

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<sup>1</sup> Number of households in temporary accommodation, the number of those in unsuitable accommodation as defined by the Order, and the number of those in accommodation which breaches the Order

<sup>2</sup> Placement level information on temporary accommodation



## 3. Research Materials

This section is an appendix of the main report which provides the exact materials that were used as part of this research.

### 3.1 Local Authority interview topic guides

#### Introduction

The Salvation Army have commissioned Rocket Science to conduct research to support them in understanding the homelessness services landscape in Scotland. They are interested in understanding how funding allocated to homelessness is redistributed, whether this is sufficient and adequate to support provision, and whether there are gaps in provision in order to influence the Scottish Government and hopefully help ensure the sustainability of services. In order to achieve this understanding, The Salvation Army wishes to work with Local Authorities to establish the budgets they need to be able to meet demand for services in their areas.

- We are not scrutinising budgets; but rather want to understand their budget process and identify the opportunities and challenges so that we can develop a budget that fits the needs of LAs across Scotland which the SA will present to the SG.

#### How homeless funding is currently being spent

1. Please could you give me a brief overview of the homelessness services provided by your council?
  - a. What was the rationale for choosing these services?
  - b. How do you commission these services?
  - c. Who delivers these services?
2. How are these services funded?
  - a. How do you allocate the funding received?
  - b. What changes have there been over the last 3 – 5 years?
  - c. What are the biggest challenges you face?
3. Where is your highest demand for the services you provide current (ie up to the end of February 2020)?



## Ending Homelessness

4. What are your views on the Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan?
5. What are your views on the need for rapid rehousing transition plans?
  - i. *How confident were you about achieving your rapid rehousing plan pre-COVID-19?*
  - ii. *How confident are you about achieving your rapid rehousing transition plan following the outbreak of COVID-19?*
6. In trying to end homelessness, what do you feel has worked well?
  - a. And what has worked less well?
7. To what extent do you feel that there are sufficient resources available for you to end homelessness? Is this a strategic priority?
  - a. What do your own LA estimates look like?
  - b. What are the key assumptions?

## Impact of the Covid-19 emergency

8. What do you feel the main impacts have been on your services as a result of Covid?
9. How have you responded to homelessness as a result of Covid?
  - a. What have the costs associated with that been? How have you funded this?
10. Where do you feel your highest demand for the services you provide will be over the next few months? And what about over the next 3 years?
11. What impact has the Covid-19 emergency had on the homelessness budget for your council during the initial response (ie lockdown)? Have these been one-off costs?
12. What long-term impact do you expect the Covid-19 emergency to have on the homelessness budget and service provision?

## What does an adequate budget look like?

13. If you were able to put your ideal homelessness budget together, what would it look like?
  - i. Prompt for % increases
14. What are the main challenges that you see for the next budget process?
15. What is the minimum to provide a good service (dignity, respect No One Left Behind)?
  - b. What would you say are the three main things that hinder you is being able to provide a good service, meet targets, stay within budget etc.



## 3.2 Local authority and third sector survey scripts

### Introduction

The Salvation Army have commissioned Rocket Science to conduct research to support them in understanding the homelessness services landscape in Scotland. This includes understanding the demand for homelessness services across different areas, the structure of provision, and the level of expenditure by all services involved in providing homelessness support.

The Salvation Army are interested in understanding how funding allocated to homelessness is redistributed, whether this is sufficient and adequate to support provision, and whether there are gaps in provision in order to influence the Scottish Government and hopefully help ensure the sustainability of services.


The survey will help us gain an overview of these issues for your organisation, and will be asking questions around the current picture of homelessness in your area, existing funding and infrastructure, your views on the impact of Covid-19, and any other challenges and opportunities you have identified.

### GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation came into effect on the 25th of May 2018. In accordance with this regulation, Rocket Science UK Ltd and The Salvation Army are committed to the protection of your data and processing it with the required legal bases. All survey submissions will be sent straight to Rocket Science and will not be seen by The Salvation Army upon submission.

We are asking you to provide data by completing this survey and by completing it you consent (under Articles 6 and 9) to the use of this data (by Rocket Science) to provide an overview of the funding landscape in Scotland. for Rocket Science to process your data. This data will be analysed by Rocket Science and used to produce a report that will be publicly available. All analysis and reporting will maintain the anonymity of your submission. You are free to withdraw at any time throughout this process. Should you wish to withdraw once your response has been submitted please provide your organisation's name so that we can identify your response and remove it from our data.





If at any point during the completion of this questionnaire you do not wish to continue, just exit the browser. Once you exit the browser you won't be able to come back to the questionnaire – if you need to come back to the questionnaire at another time please leave the browser open, the survey will not time out.

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact Shannon Anderson: [shannon.anderson@rocketsciencelab.co.uk](mailto:shannon.anderson@rocketsciencelab.co.uk) or 0131 226 4949.

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## Organisation profile

1. Please select if you are responding as one of the following:
  - Local Authority
  - Third sector provider of homelessness services (REROUTED)
  - Other (please specify) (same as third sector)
2. What is the name of your organisation? (This is just so we can check if there are multiple responses from organisations. This information will not be used for any other purposes).
  - Open text

## Local Authorities

### Overview of homelessness provision

3. Please select what type of homelessness support services your organisation delivers or commissions. Please select all relevant options.
  - Housing options
  - Floating support
  - Emergency accommodation for the purposes of housing people during COVID-19
  - Temporary accommodation
  - Supported accommodation
  - Housing First
  - Rapid rehousing
  - Other (please specify)



4. How would you describe the match between demand and capacity for homelessness support **in your area**?
- **Low demand and adequate capacity** (homelessness is not widespread and current provision meets local demand)
  - **Low demand and low capacity** (homelessness is not widespread but current provision does not meet local demand)
  - **Moderate demand and adequate capacity** (homelessness is moderately widespread and current service provision meets local demand)
  - **Moderate demand and low capacity** (homelessness is moderately widespread but current service provision does not meet local demand)
  - **High demand and adequate capacity** (homelessness is widespread and service provision meets local demand)
  - **High demand and low capacity** (homelessness is widespread and current service provision does not meet local demand)
  
  - If you would like to add any feedback or explanations to your answer, please use the open text box below:
    - Open text
    - If you have any links to local data sources, please insert here
5. Please tell us whether there have been changes to demand for homelessness support within your organisation over the last 3 years?
- Sliding scale: goes from small increase, large increase, stayed the same, small decrease, large decrease
  
  - Why is this?:
    - Open text
6. Please tell us whether there have been changes to capacity (ie size of team, resources, etc) to provide support within your organisation over the last 3 years?
- Sliding scale: goes from small increase, large increase, stayed the same, small decrease, large decrease
  
  - Why is this?: Open text



7. In your area, do you think demand has increased for homelessness support over the last 3 years for any particular groups of people?

<input type="radio"/> Young people
<input type="radio"/> Care leavers
<input type="radio"/> Single parents
<input type="radio"/> Women
<input type="radio"/> Domestic abuse survivors
<input type="radio"/> People with mental health conditions
<input type="radio"/> People with addictions
<input type="radio"/> Rough sleepers
<input type="radio"/> People with disabilities
<input type="radio"/> Refugee/asylum seekers
<input type="radio"/> Prison leavers
<input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)

- Do you know why this is?:
  - Open text question

8. In your area, in the last 3 years has the provision of following services increased or decreased?

	Increase	No change	Decrease
Housing Options			
Floating support			
Emergency accommodation			
Supported accommodation			
Housing First and Rapid Rehousing			

- Please could you provide details?:
  - Open text question



## Current funding

9. Please could you indicate the overall (or estimated) yearly budget for homelessness services in your organisation

Housing options	
Floating support	
Emergency accommodation for the purposes of housing people during Covid-19	
Temporary accommodation	
Supported accommodation	
Housing First	
Rapid rehousing	
Other (please specify)	

10. To what extent has your budget for homelessness services changed over the last 3 year(s)?

- Significant decrease (>30%)
- Moderate decrease (up to 30%)
- No change
- Moderate increase (up to 30%)
- Significant increase (>30%)

11. How is this funding sourced? Please select all that apply.

- Direct from the Scottish Government
- Reserves
- Other public body funding (please specify)
- Other funding (please specify)
- Income gained from new or extended services (e.g. increases in rental income)

12. Does the level of expenditure match the allocated budget for homelessness support services?

- Expenditure is much lower than the allocated budget (>30%)
- Expenditure is slightly lower than the allocated budget (up to 30%)
- Expenditure matches the allocated budget
- Expenditure is slightly higher than the allocated budget (up to 30%)
- Expenditure is much higher than the allocated budget (>30%)
  
- If you would like to add any feedback or explanations to your answer, please use the open text box below:
  - Open text



13. How much would your Local Authority need to spend on homelessness each year to properly address the issue in your area?
- Open text
14. Do you collect monitoring data on spending on homelessness support services for your organisation?
- Yes – Q15
  - No – jump to Q17
15. IF YES – Would you be happy to be contacted to share this data with us for the purpose of this research?
- Yes – Q16
  - No - jump to Q17
16. IF YES – Please provide your name and email and/or contact number
- Name
  - Email
  - Contact number

## **Impact of Covid-19**

17. Has your organisation experienced an increase in demand for homelessness support services as a result of Covid-19?
- Yes, high increase (>30%)
  - Yes, moderate increase (11% - 30%)
  - Yes, slight increase (up to 10%)
  - No increase
  - Other (please specify)



18. Which groups have seen the biggest increase? Please tick all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> Young people
<input type="checkbox"/> Care leavers
<input type="checkbox"/> Single parents
<input type="checkbox"/> Women
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic abuse survivors
<input type="checkbox"/> People with mental health conditions
<input type="checkbox"/> People with addictions
<input type="checkbox"/> Rough sleepers
<input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Refugee/asylum seekers
<input type="checkbox"/> Prison leavers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

19. Have additional emergency measures for homelessness support been put in place by your organisation to respond to Covid-19?

- Yes
- No
  
- Please could you tell us what these measures are?
  - Open text

20. Has your organisation experienced an increase in costs for homelessness support services as a result of Covid-19?

- Yes, high increase
- Yes, moderate increase
- Yes, slight increase
- No increase – jump to Q21
  
- If YES - Please you could tell us the areas where your costs have increased?
  - Open text

21. IF YES– Has the increase in costs been matched by additional funding?

- Yes, it has been fully matched
  - Yes, it has been partially matched
  - No it has not been matched
- Open text – If yes, please could you indicate where the increase in costs has come from?



## Challenges and opportunities

22. Please tell us to what extent you agree that the Ending Homelessness Together Strategy, including the need to for local authorities' to implement a rapid rehousing transition plan (?), will be effective at addressing homelessness in Scotland from your organisation's perspective
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- If you would like to add any feedback or explanations to your answer, please use the open text box below:
- Open text
23. Do you feel confident that your organisation has the adequate capacity and resources to provide homelessness support to clients in the next 3 years? Please select from the following values where 1 is 'I do not feel confident at all' and 10 is 'I feel very confident'
- Sliding Scale of 1 to 10
- If you would like to add any feedback or explanations to your answer, please use the open text box below:
- Open text
24. Are there any areas of concern for you currently with regard to capacity and resources for homelessness?
25. What could support your organisation to meet these challenges?
- Open text
26. What do you think will be the most important considerations for the next round of Scottish Government Budget allocations?
- Open text

## Project Team

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