

# **PE2147/B: Create more women-only homeless accommodation that protects and meets the specific needs of women**

## **Scottish Government written submission, 4 June 2025**

Thank you for your letter dated 7 May 2025, in relation to the above public petition, seeking clarification on the following:

- the funding it has provided through the Delivering Equally Safe Fund or the local government settlement, and what specific contribution this has made to the provision of women-only homelessness services, and efforts to ensure a consistent, gendered approach is taken to allocation and supply of temporary accommodation;
- when it expects the Temporary Accommodation Standards Framework to become legally enforceable.

We note the committee members' concerns outlined in the letter and would like to provide further information.

Delivering Equally Safe funding delivers women only support, including a signposting service for appropriate support/services as well as advocacy (including children's work) to women's aid and other organisations tackling domestic abuse. The appropriate service will include advice and support to help with tenancy sustainment to prevent women from becoming homeless in the first place.

The 2025-26 budget provides local government in Scotland with record funding of over £15.1 billion, a real terms increase of 5.5% and this follows on from the real terms increase of 2.5% provided in 2024-25. However, the Scottish Government's policy towards local authorities' spending is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently.

As such, the vast majority of funding is provided through the local government finance settlement by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them, including on women-only homelessness services, on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

As we indicated in our previous response, temporary accommodation is an important safety net. Our long term strategy is to reduce the time that people spend in temporary accommodation. Since 2019, we have committed £70.5 million to support local authorities to implement their rapid rehousing transition plans (RRTPs), which aim to provide a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible with time spent in temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum. The impact of RRTP funding is evaluated annually through local authority returns.

In addition, eighty per cent of our £80 million capital funding for voids and acquisitions over 2024-25 and 2025-26 has been targeted to areas with the most sustained temporary accommodation pressures to increase the supply of social and affordable homes through acquisitions and, where appropriate, to bring long term

empty social homes back into use. This policy is designed to reduce long periods in temporary accommodation, especially for families with children.

Work is underway with the Scottish Housing Regulator to develop the measurement indicators for the temporary accommodation standards framework. This will require consultation and a review of the Scottish Social Housing Charter to include reference to the framework. Our planning assumption is that the revised charter will be in place around April 2027.

In recognition of the issues outlined in the petition, we will work with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO) to fully understand any barriers to safeguarding and providing temporary accommodation that meets the needs of women in their area.

Better Homes Division