

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

2018 - 2023





Contents

1. Introduction and Strategic Context	6	7. Specialist Provision and Independent Living	32
1.1 The Council Plan 2017-2022	6	7.1 Independent Living	33
1.2 Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-2027	7	7.2 The Scottish Health and Inequality Impact Assessment Network	34
1.3 Local Development Plan	7	7.3 Care Campus	34
1.4 Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-2019	8	7.4 Housing Contribution Statement	35
1.5 National Policy Framework	8	7.5 Care Homes and care at Home	35
1.6 Local Demographics	9	7.6 Integration of Health and Social Care	36
2. Equality Statement	10	7.7 Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group	36
3. Strategic Environmental Assessment	11	7.8 Housing First	37
4. Consultation and Engagement	12	7.9 Housing for Varying Needs	37
4.1 Consultation	12	7.10 Gypsy/Travellers	38
4.2 Strategic Housing Forum	13	7.11 Travelling Showpeople	39
4.3 D&G LGBT Plus Research Report	14	7.12 Better Lives, Better Futures	39
4.4 Supporting Plans and Strategies Engagement	14	8. Private Rented Sector	41
5. Supply of Housing and Place-Making	15	8.1 Local and National context	42
5.1 Housing Need and Demand Assessment	16	8.2 Houses of Multiple Occupation	43
5.2 Housing Supply Target	18	8.3 Landlord Registration	43
5.3 Access to housing	20	8.4 Private Rented Property Standards	44
5.4 Tackling low demand affordable housing	22	9. Fuel Poverty and Climate Change	45
5.5 Kirkconnel Flood Study	22	9.1 Fuel Poverty	46
5.6 Place-making and Sustainable Places	22	9.2 HEEPS:ABS	46
5.7 Town Centre Living	23	9.3 Lemon Aid	47
5.8 National Town Centre Fund	24	9.4 Home Help for Fuel Poor Households Project	48
5.9 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund	25	9.5 Climate Change	48
5.8 Midsteeple Quarter	24	9.6 Fuel poverty Bill	49
5.9 Strategic Housing Investment Plan	25	10. Scheme of Assistance	51
5.10 Midsteeple Quarter	26	10.1 Scheme of Assistance	51
5.11 Strategic Housing Investment Plan	26	10.2 Promotional Activities	51
5.12 Built Form	28	10.3 Care and Repair	52
5.13 Rural Housing Fund	28	10.4 Support to Live Independently	52
5.14 Scottish Land Fund		10.5 Dementia Friendly Design	52
5.15 Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust	28	10.6 Below Tolerable Standard	53
5.16 Affordable Rural housing	29	10.7 Trusted Trader	53
5.17 Self-build housing	29	Glossary	54
5.18 Empty Homes	29	Action Plan	56
6. Preventing and Addressing Homelessness	31	Objective 1	57
		Objective 2	60
		Objective 3	63
		Objective 4	64
		Objective 5	66

Foreword

Welcome to this Local Housing Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway which covers the period from 2018 to 2023. I hope it clearly sets out the challenges and opportunities facing housing and related services in our region. It has



an ambitious strategic vision that helps deliver the fourkey priorities agreed through the Council Plan to:

- Build the local economy
- Provide the best start in life for all our children
- Protect our most vulnerable people
- Be an inclusive Council.

Dumfries and Galloway has an ageing population which means that the housing sector needs to work very closely with colleagues in Adult Health and Social Care to deliver innovative housing models for people with additional needs. It is particularly important that we are able to maximise our joint resources as a way of addressing the financial pressures facing the public sector. I am aware there is already work in progress and an enthusiasm to further strengthen these relationships going forward.

We are committed to tackling poverty in all its forms and being an inclusive Council. The rural nature of our region means that fuel poverty has a disproportionate impact in comparison with the rest of Scotland. There are a number of ways that this can be addressed and we have been particularly successful locally in delivering our area based programme to improve energy efficiency in the private housing sector. We are also doing what we can at a local level to support our partner organisations in their work with vulnerable people.

Housing plays a key role in supporting the broader sustainability of both our rural communities and our town centres. A thriving community depends on retaining services and facilities such as schools, shops, cultural venues, medical facilities and good transport links. This strategy outlines how the Council will support this sustainability by a number of means including the delivery of the £1million Town Centre Living Fund and working with the Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust to deliver community led housing in rural areas. I am proud of the huge progress that has been made in improving outcomes for Homeless people in our region since I became Chair of Communities Committee. This is a key priority area for Council and our Homelessness Strategy will ensure that appropriate resources are focussed on this issue at a local level.

I am grateful for the support we have received to develop this strategy from a very wide range of people, groups and organisations. Housing is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of our local communities and every resident of Dumfries and Galloway has a stake in this strategy and in the future of the region. The strategy produced contains a wide range of actions that reflect the unique character and diversity of our region. I hope that by the end of the strategy period we will collectively have met a range of housing needs, reduced inequalities and improved wellbeing for a broad range of our residents.

Councillor Andy Ferguson

Chair of the Communities Committee
Dumfries and Galloway Council



The Purpose of the Local Housing Strategy

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the vision of Dumfries and Galloway Council and our partners for the future of housing across all tenures. It takes account of national priorities as well as local needs. The main purpose of the strategy is to:

- Set out a shared understanding of the need and demand for all types of housing - and for related services;
- Set out actions and targets to improve the standard and condition of housing;
- Provide clear strategic direction for housing investment;
- Focus on the outcomes required to achieve the vision

The strategy must:

- Contribute to national priorities
- Provide clear links to local strategies and plans
- Set out the approach to meeting our legal duties
- Reflect the views & contributions of stakeholders

The LHS also sets out the Council's approach to meeting its statutory responsibilities including tackling fuel poverty, supporting the integration of health and social care and improving house conditions across all sectors. In addition, this document details our strategic response to local priorities such as town centre living, reducing carbon emissions, improving place-making and design standards and supporting the development of sustainable communities.

Vision

Dumfries and Galloway Council's strategic vision for housing is:

'Everyone in our region will have access to a high quality affordable home that is warm, safe, provides good access to services and meets their needs at every stage of life.'



1. Introduction and Strategic Context

1.1 The Council Plan 2017-2022 (Council Plan)

Dumfries and Galloway has a population of around 149,000 people who live in a mix of rural and urban areas. The Council Plan has the following vision:

‘Dedicated to creating opportunity for all, we’ll support ambition, promote prosperity and establish Dumfries and Galloway as the best place to live, work and learn.’

The Council Plan sets out the following priorities and commitments:

Build the local economy

- Improve the level of skills within our communities and workforce
- Invest in our key infrastructure
- Support our small and medium sized businesses to be established and to grow
- Provide an attractive location to do business.

Provide the best start in life for all our children

- Ensure early intervention, in particular to keep our region’s most vulnerable children safe

- Invest in creating schools fit for the 21st Century, which are at the heart of our communities
- Raise ambition and attainment, in particular to address inequalities
- Support children to be healthy and active.

Protect our most vulnerable people

- Tackle the causes and effects of inequality and poverty
- Help older or vulnerable people to live healthy and independent lives
- Ensure our older or vulnerable people receive the care and support they need
- Keep our communities safe.

Be an inclusive Council

- Ensure that local people and communities are at the heart of our decision making
- Empower our communities to make the most of our assets
- Increase equality of opportunity.

To keep our communities up to date on the progress of this Plan, the Council will produce an annual public report on the Plan and provide clear information to help people find out about the performance against each commitment.

1.2 Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-2027(LOIP)

Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board is made up of a range of agencies and organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors that have an interest in Dumfries and Galloway. The CPP has developed a LOIP which aims to tackle inequalities which result from socio-economic disadvantage. An individual's socio-economic status is a person's social and economic position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation. The purpose of the CPP Board is:

'To work together to create an ambitious, prosperous and confident Dumfries and Galloway where people achieve their potential'.

A number of principles have been identified as important to guide partners to achieve the Vision:

Best Value - providing the right services in the right place, at the right time and at the right price.

Engagement - listening to, speaking and consulting with individuals and communities, following national standards and guidance where involving the public and ensuring participation are key elements.

Diversity - treating people equally and respecting others irrespective of social or cultural differences.

Sustainability - ensuring long-term economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

Working Together - finding ways of planning and delivering services in a better way that makes a real difference to people's lives.

The LOIP identifies that delivery of these principles is supported through the following eight strategies:

- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Children's Services Plan
- Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Community Learning and Development Partners Strategic Plan
- Health and Social Care Strategic Plan
- Local Housing Strategy
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Transport Strategy

The LOIP outcome below has particular relevance to the LHS:

'Prevent homelessness and support younger adults (especially care leavers), veterans, prison leavers, those leaving hospital after a long stay and single adult households in securing tenancies and living independently. Houses across our region should be warm, efficient and in good condition. We will provide support to householders, especially older, single people in rural areas, including through Registered Social and Private Landlords to secure this and particularly to address fuel poverty'.

These issues are considered in greater detail throughout this LHS and the Homeless Strategy.

1.3 Local Development Plan (Development Plan)

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, Dumfries and Galloway Council (the Council) is required to produce a Development Plan every five years. It supports the Council's vision for future development of Dumfries and Galloway. It seeks to promote long-term growth by building on the special qualities of the region that make it an attractive place to live and do business.

The Development Plan must take account of a range of national, regional and local documents produced by the Scottish Government and other partner's organisations. The following have a key role: National Planning Framework 3, Scottish Planning Policy, the Dumfries and Galloway LOIP, the Council's Regional Economic Strategy and LHS.

Local Authorities, as both the statutory housing and planning authority, are responsible for assessing housing requirements, ensuring a generous supply of development land. The Council's Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) provided the evidence base for the Housing Supply Targets (HST) included in the Development Plan. It contains a sufficient housing land allocation to address the requirement for 6,339 units for the period 2017-29.

1.4 Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-2019 (Strategic Plan)

There is a new legal framework for integrating health and social care in Scotland. Legislation requires each Health Board and Local Authority to work closer together by creating Health and Social Care Partnerships. This creates a single system for local planning and delivery of health and social care services, offering an unprecedented opportunity to work innovatively. In Dumfries and Galloway, there is projected to be an increasing number of older people with a fewer number of younger, working age people to support them. This means that we need to develop sustainable housing solutions that help ensure our citizens are able to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible.

The key principles for our region are listed below:

- Integration must focus on improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local people; quality of care and the needs of the individual are central to how we plan and provide services
- Self-determination and a commitment to a person-centred approach to care are central in our considerations and decisions
- All adult health and social care services, including acute services, will be included from the outset; opportunities to extend integration across other service areas will be actively explored
- Services will be provided at community or locality level wherever possible and we will avoid unnecessary hospital admissions and duplication of professional input
- Local GPs must be at the heart of our community and locality services
- Clear and robust decision-making structures will fully reflect the unique and different roles of the NHS and the Local Authority, retaining the respective accountability for resources, outcomes and performance and quality of services through a continuing commissioning approach
- The Integration Joint Board (IJB) will have oversight of the delivery of all commissioned services
- Health and social care services in each locality will be accountable to their local community through the Area Committees and to the IJB

- Clear and robust structures will provide for full delegation and empowered decision-making
- Professional leadership, oversight and practice development remains with senior professional officers in each organisation

This new policy agenda offers new opportunities to strengthen the connections between housing and health and social care. To enable this, a Housing Contribution Statement has been included as an appendix to the Strategic Plan.

1.5 National Policy Framework

The vision of the Scottish Government for housing to 2020 is that:

'all people in Scotland live in high quality sustainable homes that they can afford and that meet their needs'

This vision, and the actions to realise them, are set out in the policy document 'Homes Fit for the 21st Century'. The Scottish Government considers that having more quality homes that meet people's needs is critical to building a sustainable, fair and more prosperous Scotland. To encourage housing development, a commitment of over £3 billion has been given over a five-year period to fund the delivery of 50,000 affordable homes. In the national context, this will support approximately 14,000 full-time equivalent jobs a year in the construction industry as well as generating around £1.8 billion of economic activity annually.

In addition, the Scottish Government's Programme for 2017-18 'A Nation with Ambition' sets out the following key priorities:

- Introduce a Fuel Poverty Bill to set a statutory fuel poverty target
- Introduce new energy efficiency standards for the private rented sector
- Set out a clear national objective to eradicate rough sleeping
- Create an 'Ending Homelessness Together' fund to support homeless prevention initiatives and pilot solutions to drive faster change

Housing issues are therefore a key feature of the national policy agenda.

1.6 Local Demographics

This section provides an overview of the current demographic profile (including population change and migration data, as well as changes in household types and sizes) across Dumfries and Galloway. By plotting changes over time, it is possible to identify which household types have grown or declined and give an indication of what likely future trends may be.

The National Record of Statistics shows that in 2013, the population of Dumfries and Galloway was 150,270. Over 50% live in the nine larger settlements of over 3,000 people, with the majority living in Dumfries (39,850). These larger settlements also include Stranraer (10,510), Annan (8,920), Lockerbie (4,290) Dalbeattie (4,260) Castle Douglas (4,070), Newton Stewart (4,010), Gretna (3,445) and Kirkcudbright (3,390). The remaining area is characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern of small towns, villages and individual or small groups of houses in the countryside.

The distribution of the D&G population by age shows a greater proportion of older people than the national average. Nearly a quarter of the population being over 65, compared to the Scottish figure of just under 18% in this age bracket. 9.6% of the population is aged 16-24 compared with 11.7% nationally. 20.8% of the population is aged 25-44, over 5% lower than the national figure of 25.9%.

The overall population of the region increased slightly by 1.6% between 2003 and 2013. This is lower than the whole of Scotland which grew by 5.1%. The biggest increases in population were in the 65-79 age group (17.8% increase) and the 80+ group with an increase of 24%, both higher than the national averages. The biggest decreases in population between 2003 and 2013 were amongst children aged 0-15 (9.4% decrease) and those aged 25-44 (16.1% decrease).

By 2035, the overall population is projected to decline by 4.6%, against the national trend which is projected to see an increase of 7.3%. Other regional trends which run counter to the national picture are in the 0-15 and 25-44 age groups. These are both set to decline locally by 4.5% and 4.7% respectively, compared to increases of 6.5% and 2.2% in these

age groups nationally. The number of people aged between 65 and 79 is expected to increase by 13.7% and those over 80 by 81.2%.

Households of only one person have been the most common type in Scotland since 2010. Locally, this is not the case with one adult households making up 33.5% of the total and two adults with no children being 35.3%. These two household types account for nearly 69% of the regions homes and this is likely to grow based on the ageing demography of Dumfries and Galloway. Projections indicate that there will be an increase in demand for smaller accommodation types which is likely to be exacerbated by the mismatch between the region's current housing stock profile and changing family composition. The National Records of Statistics household projections for Dumfries and Galloway suggest that there will be an increase of 3,545 either one or two adult households with no children by 2035.

In comparison to similar regions across Scotland and the national average Dumfries and Galloway has much lower levels of income across all percentiles and can therefore be classified as a low-income region. For the years that national data is available, house prices as a whole have remained below the national average. However, the area as a whole tends to have high price to income ratios, particularly for the lower quartiles, meaning that affordability is an issue across the region. Analysis shows that those on lower incomes will have to pay around half of their monthly income to rent a lower quartile 2 or 3 bedroom property and almost 60% of their monthly income to rent a 4-bedroom property. This would appear to indicate that for many, the private sector may not be an affordable option and they might have to look to the social rented sector.

2. EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and Civil-Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

The main types of discrimination are direct, in-direct, harassment and victimisation. The Equality Act says public authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty. The duty aims to make sure Local Authorities think about discrimination and the needs of people who are disadvantaged, or suffer inequality, when they make decisions about how they provide their services and implement policies. This LHS has ensured the Equality Act was fully considered throughout its development and as we implement the wide range of actions that will deliver the strategic vision.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been completed for the final LHS 2018-23. This found that the LHS will have predominantly positive impacts for the residents of Dumfries and Galloway with no negative impacts. This process followed the Impact Assessment Toolkit developed by the Council. This method considers impacts on areas such as Diversity, Health, Environment, and Social and Economic Sustainability.

A link can be found at [EQIA](#)



3. Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic method of considering the effects on the environment of a plan or programme with the aim of helping to reduce or avoid environmental impacts. A SEA is a requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The objective is to provide a high level of protection for the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development. Given the LHS and the Development Plan are aligned, a pre-screening

notification is required to be submitted to the SEA Gateway. This states that the LHS is not required to undergo SEA. This is because decisions relating to HSTs and, associated land allocations, have already been considered through the Development Plan. The Development Plan has been the subject of SEA and it concluded it does not contain policy options, or proposals, that will have a significant adverse environmental impact. A link to the LDP SEA is available on the Council's website at SEA.



4. Consultation and Engagement

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 9: All households will live in tolerant and supportive communities.

During the lifetime of the LHS, a range of policies have been put in place to help ensure this outcome is delivered. For example, the LGBT Plus Network commissioned a study to understand the housing needs of their community and to make recommendations for future policy development. A range of sustainable developments have also been delivered through the Council's SHIP to ensure households with a wide range of characteristics are able to live as a cohesive community. Specialist housing projects have been put in place to provide accommodation for victims of domestic abuse, adults with learning disabilities and older people with physical disabilities.

A key priority in the Council Plan is to 'Be an inclusive Council':

'The Council is passionate about the importance of working with local people, our communities, our businesses, our staff and other organisations in our region. We all have a shared interest in making the most of the talents, vision and commitment of the people who live and work in Dumfries and Galloway.'

This LHS has been produced, and delivered, in partnership with key stakeholders. It sets out how housing can make a contribution to a wide range of policy objectives such as tackling fuel poverty. Successful outcomes can only be delivered through strong partnership working, and this is demonstrated throughout the LHS.

4.1 Consultation

A number of approaches have been used to help shape the content of this LHS and to ensure that the principles of a co-production approach were taken in its development. These included meetings before and during the development of the LHS with particular groups such as the Tackling Poverty Reference Group, D&G LGBT Plus and LGBT Youth, DG Voice (representing disabled people in Dumfries and Galloway), the Third Sector, Tenant Representatives and the Poverty Alliance. The Council is also supporting the work of the Crichton Trust who are seeking to develop an innovative Care Campus for the region. The intention of this project is to create an intergenerational community where older people can play an active role in their community. They have consulted extensively with individuals, community groups and organisations throughout the region and nationally. Their aspiration is to make Dumfries and Galloway 'a great place to grow old'. The Crichton Trust's representation on the Strategic Housing Forum and in a number of the consultation events has helped to ensure that the voice of the older population is reflected in the final LHS.

The draft LHS was placed on the Council's website and members of the public were invited to provide a consultation response through an online survey. Of particular importance was our discussion with representatives of the Gypsy/Traveller community because of the adverse life outcomes that this often discriminated against minority group experience. The Strategic Housing Forum provided strategic oversight and direction through the strategy development process. A Members seminar has taken place to allow our Elected Representatives to have early input into the draft. The content of the LHS has continually evolved as a result of stakeholder engagement and following the consultation responses being received. It now represents a broad consensus view of the major housing issues that will impact in our region over the next 5 years. All Elected Members of the Council have been involved in the production of the LHS and political leadership was provided in a number of ways, including chairing meetings of the Strategic Housing Forum.

This process resulted in invaluable feedback and delivered a strategy document that is easy to read and understand. It has also ensured that this LHS reflects the opinions and experiences of a range of people, including the public, service users, RSL tenants and professionals.

4.2 Strategic Housing Forum

The Council facilitates meetings of the Strategic Housing Forum. Elected Members agreed this method of consultation with partner organisations at the 11 October 2016 meeting of the Housing Sub Committee. Membership includes Elected Members, a range of Council services, our Community Planning Partners, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), the Private Rented Sector and representatives of Private Housing Developers.

The broad terms of reference for the Strategic Housing Forum are to:

- Implement an inclusive approach to the development of the forthcoming LHS
- Provide opportunities for partner organisations and key stakeholders to identify local housing priorities
- Ensure links are made with the other key strategies, policies and sectors through the development of a shared vision

- Allow the opportunity to develop a shared “Dumfries and Galloway” response to key national housing policy issues
- Maximise opportunities to attract inward investment by to deliver new housing by working together

Carry out public engagement to ensure the housing needs of our local communities are met.

The work of the Strategic Housing Forum was focussed around the key themes published in the latest LHS guidance by the Scottish Government in 2014. A series of facilitated workshops were held throughout the development of the LHS. The purpose of this work was to identify our strategic priorities and agree an approach through an options appraisal. This has helped to ensure that the final strategy is the result of a process of co-production that emphasises the importance of achieving broad agreement on strategic housing issues in Dumfries and Galloway. Going forward, the Strategic Housing Forum will retain oversight for ensuring the LHS is delivered by the Council and its partners..



4.3 D&G LGBT Plus Research Report

The D&G LGBT Plus Network commissioned a study to investigate the care and housing needs of Dumfries and Galloway LGBT adults both now and in the future. The findings of this study were published in October 2017. The LGBT population do not always have the opportunity to be heard on matters that affect them as they age. This is especially true for people in rural areas. There is scarce research in Scotland into the ageing LGBT population. This piece of work also considered related issues such as long term medical conditions and mental health issues faced by LGBT people, their carers and families. It provides an important insight that can be used to support this community and help shape the services they receive. The research methods adopted included visits to housing projects, surveys, one to one interviews and focus groups.

The analysis of participants' responses resulted in the following key findings:

- 10% suffer from depression and anxiety
 - 17% are currently receiving care
 - 72% said they would prefer care, support and housing from organisations that have provided adequate LGBT training to staff and also have specific LGBT affirming training/policies in place for people who use their service
 - 32% have a disability
 - 78% stated cost is a factor in their future care and housing needs
 - 72% said being cared for at home is important
 - 89% stated continuity of care was important to them
 - 76% would not, or are unsure if they would, be able to express themselves freely in a supported living environment
 - 37% opted to live in LGBT exclusive housing
- 63% would like more information about Personalisation/Self Directed Support
 - 47% would like more information/training about Living Wills
 - 61% would like more information/training about Guardianship
 - 80% would like more information/training about Power of Attorney
 - 52% would like more information/training about the financial and legal procedures when going into a care setting

The research concluded that LGBT people feel marginalised and this work identified specific housing needs that this LHS has taken into account.

4.4 Supporting Plans and Strategies Engagement

Engagement was also undertaken in the preparation of the supporting Council strategies referenced in this document. Each contains a detailed explanation of the consultation carried out in their own policy development process. They are listed below:

- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Children's Services Plan
- Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Community Learning and Development Partners' Strategic Plan
- Health and Social Care Strategic Plan
- Local Development Plan
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Transport Strategy

In many cases Strategic Housing also actively participated in their production to ensure a consistent approach to housing policy issues is developed in our region.



5. Supply of Housing and Place-Making

Strategic Objective 1

Ensure that the available housing stock in our region is fully utilised and new housing development supports the sustainability of our towns, settlements and villages.

Council Plan 2017-22

This Strategic Objective and the following actions contribute to the Council priorities to 'Build the local economy', 'Provide the best start in life for all our children', 'Protect our most vulnerable people' and 'Be an inclusive Council'.

Actions

- Ensure the Strategic Housing Forum meets on a regular basis to review the implementation of this LHS
- Deliver the Council's annual £1million Town Centre Living Fund to maximise the impact of wider regeneration initiatives
- Support the community led Midsteeples Quarter project in Dumfries Town Centre
- Ensure the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) maximises investment in new affordable housing supply and helps create attractive places that support a broad range of services
- Seek opportunities to develop brownfield sites and empty buildings across our region for new housing
- Continue to support the work of the Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust (DGSCHT) as a key strategic partner
- Encourage private developers, with the aid of subsidy, to put in place innovative methods of delivering affordable housing in our smaller rural communities
- Address concentrations of low demand housing by demolition and re-building new housing in its place where refurbishment is not a feasible option.
- Support local RSLs to buy-back former local authority homes so that they can tackle the problem of low demand in some blocks of flats
- RSL partners have allocations policies with agreed lettings targets that meet the needs of key strategic groups such as people leaving the armed forces and those referred by the Council as a result of being as homeless
- Ensure that young people who are care experienced are offered appropriate housing solutions to meet their needs as identified in their Care Pathway Plans
- Reduce the number of Empty Homes in our region by providing advice to owners and local communities
- Consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring back into use empty properties where purchase on the open market has not been successful
- Participate in the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP), hosted by Shelter Scotland
- Apply the additional 100% Council Tax levy to long term empty homes
- RSLs deliver Equality Act training to their staff and ensure their policies tackle discrimination against people with protected characteristics
- Consider a range of housing options to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
- Seek opportunities to support the delivery of town centre housing developments through the utilisation of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund
- Enable the regeneration of town centre properties by making application to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for projects with a housing element.

5.1 Housing Need and Demand Assessment

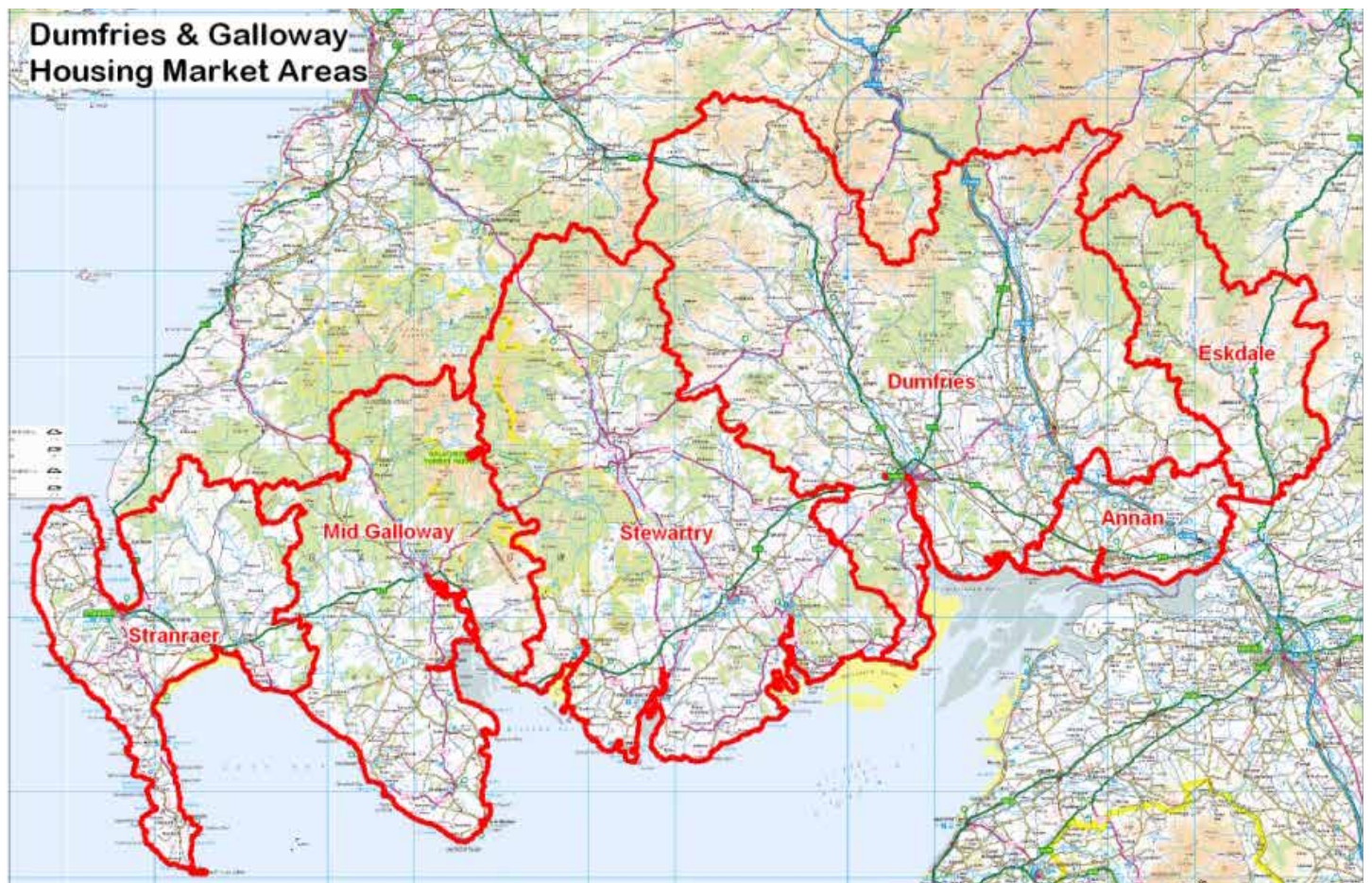
The purpose of a HNDA is to analyse key housing market drivers, past and present, in order to estimate future housing need and demand. It also captures information on the operation of the housing system to assist the Council to develop policies within the LDP and LHS on new housing supply, management of existing stock and the provision of housing-related services. The LDP and LHS should be informed by a robust HNDA, prepared in line with the Scottish Government Centre for Housing Market Analysis HNDA Guidance. Scottish Government guidance requires member authorities to establish a core Housing Market Partnership (HMP) in order to progress the HNDA. The Dumfries and Galloway HMP comprised members from Dumfries & Galloway Council's Development Planning, Development Management and Housing Services, as well as NHS officers involved in the Integration of Health and

Social Care. The HNDA provides evidence of existing housing need experienced by households at this time and estimates future housing need for those yet to form. Future need is mainly driven by household formation which, by its very nature, has to be met through the provision of additional housing units. Most additional housing units will be provided through new build, but delivery should also be considered through changes in housing stock, such as conversions and bringing empty properties back into use.

Existing need is driven by several factors such as homelessness, overcrowding, care and support needs. Some existing need can be met by adapting houses, maximising the use of the existing housing stock and re-modelling existing homes where possible. However, a proportion of existing need must be met through additional units where in-situ solutions cannot be found, for example to tackle homelessness.



The HNDA identified 6 different functional Housing Market Areas (HMAs) in our region. They were identified using the methodology published by the Scottish Government, which outlined the process for defining and updating housing market boundaries. An HMA is defined as a geographical area within which people will search for housing and they are willing to move whilst maintaining their economic and social relationships. All six are contained entirely within the Dumfries and Galloway local authority area and are identified on the map below:



Annan HMA - including the larger towns of Annan, Eaglesfield, Eastriggs, Ecclefechan and Gretna

Dumfries HMA - as well as Dumfries itself, this HMA also includes Kirkconnel / Kelloholm, Lochmaben, Lockerbie, Moffat, Moniaive, Sanquhar and Thornhill

Eskdale HMA - including Canonbie and Langholm

Mid Galloway HMA - including Creetown, Glenluce, Newton Stewart, Port William, Whithorn and Wigtown

Stewartry HMA - including Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie, Gatehouse of Fleet and Kirkcudbright

Stranraer HMA - including Portpatrick and Stranraer itself

HNDA's are intended to give a broad, long range estimate of future housing need, rather than precise projections. These estimates are then considered when setting the Housing Supply Target (HST) through the Development Plan.



5.2 Housing Supply Targets

The published guidance to support the development of the LHS recommends that timescales are linked to the Development Plan, with joint working between housing and planning officers recommended. This ensures the LHS will not need to be modified at a later date as a result of changes to the LDP. The HSTs have been agreed through the Council's Development Plan. This is large enough to ensure RSLs have access to enough land to build new affordable housing.

The HST is the Council's final assessment of the number of new homes to be built in the period covered by the Development Plan and is broken down by HMA. This covers the period 2017-2029 whereas this LHS covers a 5 year period from 2018-2023. These strategies will be reviewed after 5 years and the targets can be amended if our local circumstances have changed significantly. The HST has also taken into account the wider strategic, economic, social and environmental factors. These targets are set out as follows:

Housing Market Area	Number of units required 2017-29 (Affordable / Market)
Annan	665 (211 / 454)
Dumfries	3,358 (797 / 2,561)
Eskdale	92 (50 / 42)
Mid Galloway	661 (218 / 443)
Stewartry	952 (275 / 677)
Stranraer	611 (214 / 397)
Dumfries and Galloway	6,339 (1,765 / 4,574)

The majority of the overall HST identified has been allocated to the Dumfries HMA. Across the HMAs, the LDP targets new housing development at the region's larger settlements where there are concentrations of facilities, employment opportunities and transport options. In addition, it is projected that 20% of the total HST will be delivered in villages and the countryside. This approach will support and sustain our rural communities. The LDP spatial strategy allocates the majority of future development to those settlements with a good range of services and facilities, employment opportunities and which have the physical ability to grow and for the surrounding landscape to absorb the proposed development. In villages and throughout the rural area, the policy framework provides opportunities for people to live and work locally and reduce car dependency.

The HNDA provides an estimate of the additional housing units required in the future to meet the housing need over the period 2016-2029 across all housing tenures. Scottish Planning Policy states that the HST should take into account the HNDA as well as wider policy considerations and planning authorities must provide compelling evidence to support the agreed target. Issues of capacity, resource and deliverability, in determining an appropriate scale and distribution of the HST have also been factored into this process. The HNDA utilised the “High Variant Scenario” which best reflects the Council’s ambitions for Dumfries & Galloway as set out in the Regional Economic Strategy 2016. To ensure that the housing supply target can be met, a 20% generosity allowance has been added to the Housing Supply Target. A 20% generosity allowance will help the Council achieve its number one priority which is to grow the local economy. It will also ensure there is flexibility should the market improve during the period of the LHS or LDP.

The delivery of affordable housing is a national policy priority for the current Scottish Government. In the previous term of parliament 33,490 affordable homes were delivered and the current administration is committed to delivering 50,000 additional new affordable homes by March 2021. This would see an

increase in affordable housing supply by 67%, backed by over £3 billion of investment. This is accompanied by the Rural Housing Fund to increase the supply of affordable rural housing, building on successful innovative initiatives. These extra homes are expected to support, on average, around 14,000 jobs per year across Scotland and generate around £1.8 billion for the economy, on average, over the life of the five-year programme.

The ‘More Homes’ policy promotes a higher rate of new affordable house building over the first 5 years of the plan. A typical first time buyer purchasing a house in the lower quartile price range would need to spend nearly 7 times their annual income. This would appear to suggest that it is likely that there will be an increased demand in the region for social rented and private rented housing. The HNDA provides an approved methodology for estimating the existing need for additional housing units known as the Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation Pressure (HaTAP) method. The HaTAP method is an indicator of homelessness and temporary accommodation pressure for which additional housing will need to be supplied. The expectation of this method is that all existing need will be met by social housing.



5.3 Access to housing

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 3: Affordable housing will be easier to access with improved choices in areas where people wish to live. Households will be able to live independently longer.

Armed Forces Personnel are given priority to access affordable housing through RSLs allocations policies. This means that people leaving the Forces can re-establish themselves in our communities by being offered accommodation that meets their needs. In addition, the Council's Town Centre Living Fund is making a significant contribution to town centre regeneration by bringing empty properties back into use. The Scottish Government has abolished the Right to Buy for tenants in the social rented sector in Scotland in response to growing concern that significant elements of the affordable housing stock were being lost. This removed the need for the Council to make application for Pressured Area Status to preserve the affordable housing stock in our region. The Council, in partnership with Robertson Homes and the Scottish Futures Trust, delivered 69 units for Mid-Market Rent through the Scottish Governments National Housing Trust initiative. The provision of sheltered housing in the region is currently being reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and continues to meet the needs of its tenants.

The Council is a key partner in the Common Housing Register (CHR), known as Homes 4 D&G. These partnership arrangements have been developed to ensure the allocation of houses continues to meet the needs of prospective tenants, the Council and Registered Social Landlords. It is important that due regard is given to people with protected characteristics under the terms of the Equality Act and that policies to allocate affordable housing and deliver tenancy management services fully comply with our public sector duty. This means compliance with the legislation alongside a wider responsibility to implement best practice in this area.



The CHR in Dumfries and Galloway was originally a partnership between the Council, Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership (DGHP), Loreburn Housing Association (LHA), Home Scotland and Irvine Housing Association. The CHR and Common Allocations Policy were launched in June 2014. Since then, LHA has implemented a Choice Based Lettings system which took effect in October 2017. This is designed to offer customers a different way to access LHA's housing stock across the region. It enables applicants to bid for individual properties following the completion of an online registration form. LHA is also in discussion with the IJB to develop Choice Based Lettings to meet the needs of specific groups of vulnerable people with the aim of increasing choice and empowering individual applicants.

It is recognised by the Council, and our partner RSLs, that there are a number of categories of housing need that require to be given priority through their housing allocations policies. This is as a result of the applicant's specific vulnerabilities and is described below:

Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme

- In November 2015, the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Partnership responded to the humanitarian crisis in Syria by agreeing to participate in the UK Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. Since then Dumfries and Galloway has agreed to welcome 20 families to the region over a 5 year period. Successful outcomes are delivered through strong partnership arrangements that take a holistic approach to meeting the needs of refugees. Key to this is the participation of local RSLs (DGHP and LHA) who have provided high quality housing that meet the identified needs of each family.

Homeless - If the Council finds that you are 'unintentionally homeless', it means that you are homeless through no fault of your own. You will be offered accommodation by one of the RSLs. This is because they have a statutory duty to provide permanent housing to people referred by the Council. There is more detailed consideration of Homelessness issues in section 6 of this LHS and the Council's Homeless Strategy. The Homeless service will agree operational protocols with the RSLs to ensure that good outcomes are achieved for homeless people and our approach to partnership working is strong.

Looked After & Accommodated Children - It is important to ensure that young people leaving care do not become homeless. The Dumfries and Galloway Looked After Children and Care Leavers' Champions' Board leads Corporate Parenting in the region by influencing and informing planning at the highest level both within Children's Services and the delivery of services across the Community Planning Partnership. In doing so it includes the active participation of children and young people who are or have been looked after. RSLs work with the Council to ensure that when a young person is ready to manage their own accommodation, they are able to access an appropriate property that will help deliver the best possible outcomes for that individual. This helps ensure that the Council carries out its role as Corporate Parent by securing long term sustainable accommodation.

Domestic Abuse – We will work to ensure that assistance with re-housing is provided by our RSLs for people experiencing domestic abuse:

- whether male or female
- any age
- whether or not they have children
- whether already living in Dumfries and Galloway, or are seeking to move or return to the area to escape the abuse

This is to ensure that the safety of the household isn't jeopardised. The aim is to identify housing options that consider their best interests including access to support networks.

Serious Harassment – This may include attacks, damage to property, or hate crimes where a person may be subject to harm or abuse because of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability or other personal factors.

Armed Forces Personnel – To assist people who have recently left, or who are due to leave, the armed forces.

Witness protection - This safeguards the wellbeing of a threatened person providing evidence through the criminal justice system. This priority is normally given on the advice of Police Scotland where a witness may require protection.

The delivery of housing services to these groups of potentially vulnerable people will be considered through the Strategic Housing Forum which will have overall responsibility for ensuring the actions agreed through the LHS are implemented.



5.4 Tackling low demand affordable housing

There is an emerging pattern of low demand facing the social rented sector in a small number of areas in our region. However, overall the evidence demonstrates there continues to be a very high level of unmet housing need. Low demand is related to the unpopularity of particular house types in specific letting areas. Empty properties can cause blight, attract anti-social behaviour and reduce community cohesion in the areas where they are located. It is therefore a localised problem that requires individual solutions on a case by case basis. In some circumstances RSLs may consider demolition and re-provision to ensure their business plans remain robust. The success of this approach has been demonstrated in areas of North West Dumfries and Central Stranraer. The areas where this is a particular problem include parts of Lochside in Dumfries, Upper Nithsdale, Central Annan, Ecclefechan and the Machars. Before intervention is made, RSLs will undertake an options appraisal that includes consultation with those communities likely to be affected. Following this, the Council may then consider including projects of this nature in its SHIP.

5.5 Kirkconnel Flood Study

A Kirkconnel Flood Study was commissioned by the Council during 2016. This was in response to flooding in 2013 that impacted on approximately 50 properties. A detailed hydrological assessment of the River Nith and Polbower Burn was undertaken to derive flow inputs into a hydraulic model of the river through Kirkconnel. The study estimated that 93 properties would be affected during a 200 year flood, the majority of which are residential. A number of potential solutions were considered including property level protection, direct defences via flood walls and embankments, the removal of the Old Road Bridge and the re-location of the at-risk community. A large number of these properties are owned by DGHP and they are required to consider the long term viability of this location as a residential area. In determining the most appropriate way to deal with this problem, it is vital that the views of the residents and local community are given full consideration.

5.6 Place-making and Sustainable Places

Place-making is a collaborative process that includes the design, development, renewal or regeneration of an area. The outcome of this process should be places that are sustainable, well designed and provides homes that meet people's needs by utilising the local services. Sustainable communities promote interaction, integration and create positive, diverse

neighbourhoods. Well designed places play a key role in ensuring wellbeing, delivering good health outcomes, creating social connections and providing easy access to services. As we re-think the use of our town centre buildings, it will be important to consider the housing needs of people that either do, or aspire to, work from home. To achieve this, our regeneration initiatives need to consider the creation of live/work space that is combined rather than separating these mixed uses. This will create vibrant communities and also support the local economy. The Council's Development Plan sets out the following vision of what Dumfries and Galloway may look like in 20 years' time:

'It will be a thriving region with a sustainable economy built on sustainable principles that safeguard the landscape, natural and historic environment, promote growth, maximise the use of existing infrastructure and enhance connectivity. It will have maximised its location to attract investment and create employment. This will in turn attract people of working age to the region. Dumfries will have consolidated its position as the Regional Capital; Stranraer waterfront will have been transformed into a sustainable extension of the town centre; new jobs will have been created within the Gretna, Lockerbie, Annan regeneration corridor; and the other towns across the region will occupy niche positions making the most of their geographical locations. There will be opportunities in the rural area for economic development, housing and recreation. There will also be more opportunities for people to access affordable housing.'

New housing plays a critical role in delivering these objectives by helping to create, and maintain, strong communities. This LHS supports the establishment of more diverse, attractive and mixed-use residential communities by mixing owner occupation and social rent in the same location. As far as possible, there should be consistency with regards to design, quality and appearance. By adopting this approach this will result in the delivery of low cost housing options targeted at people on low incomes.

5.7 Town Centre Living

The Council has made an annual commitment through the Council Plan to invest £1million a year in a Town Centre Living Fund. It has adopted a policy of increasing the availability of affordable residential accommodation in these locations by seeking to bring empty properties back into use. The Council's Development Plan recognises the changing economic climate may result in commercial and office buildings becoming available which would provide opportunities for re-use. Adapting and finding new uses for buildings will be supported in principle through the planning process. This will help the creation of high quality places that consider the unique characteristics and diversity of our region. It is recognised that the delivery of new housing on its own will not achieve the regeneration of our towns. The Council will therefore also explore opportunities to re-think our retail offer and to find ways of supporting our local businesses.

Town centres are a key element of the economic, social and environmental fabric of our towns. They are at the core of community and economic life, offering spaces in which to live, meet, do business and use facilities and services. The Council puts the health of town centres at the heart of decision making and seeks to deliver the best local outcomes for investment decisions. This includes targeting of available resources to town centre sites, alignment of related policies and encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity.

A key component of town centre regeneration is bringing empty properties back into use as housing. The Council will lobby the Scottish Government to re-open bids to the national Town Centre Empty Homes Fund. This budget was intended to create affordable homes for sale and rent by converting disused commercial premises. It also targeted long-term empty homes needing renovation to make them habitable.

There is a clear network of centres within Dumfries and Galloway which takes the form of a hierarchy. The network comprises the following centres:

Regional Centre	Dumfries
Larger Town Centres	Stranraer, Annan, Castle Douglas, Newton Stewart
Town Centres	Dalbeattie, Gretna, Kirkconnel/Kelloholm, Kirkcudbright, Langholm, Lochmaben, Lockerbie, Moffat, Sanquhar, Thornhill, Whithorn, Wigtown.

There are a diverse range of towns across the region, some of which have created their own unique identity to re-enforce their significant role supporting the local economy. As the main shopping centre for the region, Dumfries has a number of national and independent retailers and is also the focus for commercial interest and cultural activity in the area. Stranraer is the main shopping centre for the west of the region and is mainly served by independent retailers. In addition, there have been a number of long-term projects that have sought collaboration between the business and the public sector. Castle Douglas Food Town is based around 50 or so local businesses which produce or sell food and drink. Kirkcudbright is Scotland's Artists Town. Like Castle Douglas, it built on an existing strength. The town has long been home to artists such as Hornel and the Glasgow Boys. More recently, national exhibitions have come to town, all contributing to an increase in the number of year-round local galleries and studios in in the town centre. Wigtown has been awarded the role of Scotland's National Book Town, which has attracted European and Lottery funding. There are eighteen book businesses attracting people from all over the world. The changing pattern of retail has resulted in increasing numbers of empty properties within our town centres that present opportunities to increase town centre living by repurposing these spaces. These locations can provide enhanced access to services and amenities by creating sustainable places that holistically meet the needs of local people.

5.8 National Town Centre Fund

In March 2019, the Scottish Government announced that it had established a national £50million Town Centre Fund to help boost town centres. The aim of the fund is to ensure town centres are more diverse, sustainable and successful in the face of evolving retail patterns. Dumfries and Galloway Council were allocated £1,529,000 to be allocated to projects that support the themes of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Action Plan:

- **town centre living** – footfall is key to achieving thriving, successful towns centres and, the best footfall is residential for people who will use shops, services, and will care for its safety and security in the evenings.
- **vibrant local economies** – creating a supportive business environment including the involvement of Business Improvement Districts and other local partnerships.
- **enterprising communities** – social enterprise, services, arts and events and, community empowerment and community-based activities which increase the health, wealth and wellbeing of town centres.
- **accessible public services** – creating and accessing public facilities and services, supported by economic, service and transport hubs.
- **digital towns** – exploiting digital technology and promoting Wi-Fi infrastructure to enable access to information, data analytics, marketing opportunities, branding, and communication with the wider world.
- **proactive planning** – land reform and supporting the creation of sustainable, low carbon and connected places which promote natural and cultural assets, designed in partnership with local communities and key stakeholders

The liveliest town centres offer a mix of uses and attractions such as music, markets, theatre, sport, exhibitions, festivals and all sorts of other activities for young and old alike. They have public buildings that attract people and generate footfall, like colleges, clinics, schools and public services and they have a choice of housing so that people can enjoy the benefits of living centrally, including:

- **convenience** - proximity and access to services, amenities, greenspace and culture
- **affordability and inclusion** - being part of a community with everything on your doorstep reducing the need for travel
- **sustainability** – linked with opportunity around existing infrastructure and utilities supporting towns to become low carbon.

Creating more good quality homes in town centres, close to shops and facilities, is an excellent way of bringing life back into town centres, particularly in the evenings and at weekends. A growing residential community also supports local shops and businesses. Conversion of empty properties to residential use is often the most appropriate long-term use, although Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that due to significant market failure, investors may need financial incentives to make it commercially viable.

5.9 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund

The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund is a national initiative that aims to support locally developed regeneration projects that involve local communities, helping to support and create jobs and improve sustainability. Regeneration of our regions most disadvantaged areas and strengthening local communities are key priorities for Dumfries and Galloway Council. The Council Plan 2017-22 sets out our commitment to provide an attractive place to do business by developing town centre masterplans and the intention to implement a derelict property strategy to make town centre regeneration a priority. An example of this approach that is currently being taken forward is the Dumfries Midsteeple Quarter project that is seeking to deliver a community led housing project and is described in more detail below.



5.10 Midsteeples Quarter

The Midsteeples Quarter is an innovative community led initiative facilitated by the Stove Network in Dumfries. It received a funding award through the Council's Town Centre Living Fund to help bring a group of empty buildings on Dumfries High Street back into use. This will result in a community run mixed development that re-imagines the use of this space. The Council's funding is intended to allow Dumfries High Street Limited (community ownership organisation) to seek additional finance from a range of external sources. A key first stage was to acquire a prominent publicly owned building under the terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This was achieved following the submission of a detailed business plan to the Council. This innovative initiative has a national profile because it is piloting a new approach to town centre regeneration. The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership have also supported this area of work, re-affirming the importance of housing in these locations. The learning from this work could result in similar projects being taken forward across our region and nationally.

Activity of this kind could stimulate a whole chain of inward investment, supportive behaviours, business growth, added vitality and increased civic confidence. This will help make public places more welcoming, and support new fledgling attractions and enterprises.

This concept provides a new opportunity to help re-establish our town centres as community spaces where a broader range of people choose to live in close proximity to facilities, schools and existing transport infrastructure. This initiative will be taken forward in the context of an over-arching vision for the whole town centre which embraces the range of regeneration activity which is currently taking place or is planned for the future.

5.11 Strategic Housing Investment Plan

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 1: There will be more new affordable housing to meet the needs of our communities.

During the Strategic Planning period, the Council has incrementally increased the money available to support the development of new affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. This has resulted in many new developments being delivered across our region to meet the housing needs of our local communities. The Council's SHIP agrees the local priorities for investment. For example, in 2016/17, £8.1 million was invested in new affordable housing which resulted in 53 site starts and 123 unit completions.





Delivering high quality new affordable housing to address unmet need is a key policy aspiration for the Council and its partner organisations. The SHIP sets out the key priorities for affordable housing development within the local authority area over a 5 year period. This Strategy sets out the broad principle that where opportunities arise, new affordable housing investment should be targeted at locations that help deliver wider regeneration objectives. The SHIP is a working document that sets out how investment decisions will be delivered and identifies the resources required through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. It is flexible and subject to regular review as a result of the complex nature of housing development and is also required to reflect changes in policy, and funding, at a national level over time.

The Council has been allocated the following Resource Planning Assumptions by the Scottish Government to deliver new affordable housing in our region:

2018/19	£19.279m
2019/20	£20.930m
2020/21	£23.264m
3 year total =	£64.473m

The Council transferred its housing stock to DGHP in 2003 and, as a result, requires strong working relationships with key strategic partners to deliver the SHIP. To facilitate this, the Council established a Development Forum whose membership includes:

- Strategic Housing
- The Investment Division of the Scottish Government
- The Homelessness and Housing Options Service
- Education Services
- Developing RSLs
- Planning and Regulatory Services
- Health and Adult Social Care partnership
- The NHS

This is the core membership and sub groups are also put in place to resolve particular challenges. New development can often be influenced by a range of complex factors including listed buildings, contaminated land, flood risk, compliance with planning regulations, multiple funding streams, infrastructure constraints and other unforeseen events. On their own, or in combination, these issues can slow down, stall or even result in the development process being abandoned. The existence of the Development Forum helps mitigate these risks and highlights issues that require further consideration by the Council at a political level.

5.12 Built Form

It is expected that the majority of homes delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme will be new build units that are delivered directly by RSLs or through 'off the shelf' purchases from developers. However, where it can be demonstrated that the use of grant to acquire 'second hand' stock that is for sale on the open market is the most appropriate method of meeting housing need in a particular area subsidy may be available to fund this. Funding may also be made available by the Scottish Government to remodel/ rehabilitate existing properties.

5.13 Rural Housing Fund

The Council's Development Plan supports housing proposals in the countryside. A £25 million Rural Housing Fund has been created at a national level. It aims to increase the supply of affordable housing of all tenures in rural Scotland and contribute towards the target to deliver 50,000 affordable homes by 2021.

The RHF has two parts:

- A main fund that offers capital support (grants and loans) for direct provision of new affordable housing, and refurbishment of existing empty properties
- A smaller budget that contributes to feasibility studies

It is open to a wide range of applicants including community organisations, development trusts, private landowners, private developers and traditional housing providers. Eligible projects must have a specific site or properties identified, be in a defined rural area, demonstrate evidence of housing pressure in the location identified, have the support of the relevant local authority and demonstrate effective levels of community engagement. Many of the bids to the RHF in our region have been focussed on the refurbishment of existing properties in our villages. Examples include the Old Bank in Wigtown and a premises in Moniaive, where local groups are being supported by the DGSCHT to develop community-led housing.

5.14 Scottish Land Fund

The Scottish Land Fund (SLF) is a £10million programme which will run to 2020. It is targeted at helping communities across Scotland become more resilient and sustainable through land ownership and to develop their own assets. The SLF was launched in 2012 as a Scottish Government program delivered in partnership with Big Lottery Fund Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. It was established to provide the financial means for rural communities to sustainably acquire land and land assets. However, it was further expanded in 2016 to include urban areas. It aims to support the resilience and sustainability of urban and rural communities through four stated outcomes:

- Increase sustainable economic, social and environmental development through the experience of acquiring, owning and managing land and land assets.
- Communities are more empowered and have a greater capacity to lead and control their own development so that they can generate sustainable income.
- People have increased opportunities to participate effectively in community-led development, including volunteering.
- Communities are more resilient through the development and provision of community-led essential local services.

Although not specifically focussed on housing, bids to the SLF contribute to the sustainability of rural and urban communities. There may be opportunities in the future to support bids to the SLF that enable the delivery of community led residential accommodation across our region.

5.15 Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust

Locally, the Council supports the work of the DGSCHT whose principle aim is to work directly with communities. Their aim is to identify and address housing needs and demands as part of wider rural regeneration and to promote community led housing in the region. The DGSCHT is a member of the Rural Housing Partnership along with Rural Housing Scotland and the Highlands Small Communities

Housing Trust. This allows these organisations to share best practice in relation to rural housing issues and community housing solutions. The Council works strategically and supports bids to the RHF and SLF in Dumfries and Galloway. The DGSCHT is currently supporting multiple projects with applications to both funds at various stages of project development. In addition, they are working with Loreburn Housing Association to find new ways to deliver affordable housing in small rural communities. This will also help deliver new affordable housing that private developers are required to deliver as a condition of their planning application.

5.16 Affordable Rural Housing

Recent developments through the SHIP have been predominately delivered on larger sites in and around the region's towns and settlements. However, there are a number of villages where there continues to be unmet housing need and local services are at risk as a result of our regions ageing population. The campaign, 'Rural Homes, Rural Lives', states that rural housing is the key to unlocking rural economic potential. It calls on the Scottish Government, local authorities, community organisations, housing associations, landowners and employers to work together to ensure rural equity in housing provision. In particular it highlights the negative impact that lack of rural housing has on businesses trying to invest, grow and recruit staff.

This strategy will therefore encourage our development partners to put in place contracts that will allow new affordable housing development in a number of rural locations simultaneously. A similar approach has been implemented in the past and resulted in new housing supply in areas that had been previously assessed as not financially viable to take forward.

5.17 Self-build Housing

The DGSCHT has committed to support the development of self-build housing in our region. The Council is working with the Trust to locate appropriate development sites that may be suitable for the delivery of this scheme. In addition, we will work with the Scottish Government to ensure the available funding is maximised in our region. A new £4 million

self-build loan fund to encourage the establishment of new scheme will be rolled out nationwide from autumn 2018 following the success of the pilot Highland Self Build Loan Fund scheme. This was launched in April 2016 and was taken forward by the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust. The Highland pilot saw self-builders finance their projects through the fund, before accessing a traditional mortgage. It is open to part and full home owners and allows families to borrow up to £150,000.

The benefits of self and custom build are numerous, they are often cheaper to build than buying an equivalent existing home, they allow potential home owners to tailor their homes to meet their needs and they support community empowerment and development. The Council's LDP recognises these benefits and supports this type of affordable housing. The supplementary guidance for affordable housing includes discounted serviced plots for self-build as a route for developers to deliver section 75 planning obligations.

5.18 Empty Homes

Empty homes can have a negative impact on the local economy and our communities. Bringing empty properties back into use helps to reverse these negative effects. The benefits to the Council include an increased supply of affordable housing, supporting our communities, a revitalised property market, increased revenue through collection of council tax, reduced requirement for legal action and less intervention required by Council officials. Although the number varies over time, there are currently 1128 long term empty properties in our region (June 2019). When the opportunity arises, empty home owners who intend to let their properties will be encouraged to consider making them available to the Council's Homelessness Service. Empty homes are an unutilised resource that can often have the following negative impacts:

- Provide a focus for anti-social behaviour
- Cause blight in neighbourhoods if the property condition is neglected
- Undermine wider regeneration activity
- Reduce the size of the effective housing stock in the region
- Value of neighbouring properties can be impacted

The Local Government Finance (Unoccupied Properties etc.) (Scotland) Act 2012 allowed the Council to introduce a levy that took effect in December 2013. This means the owner is charged 200% Council Tax if their property has been empty for 12 months or more. There are a number of specific exemptions to the application of this levy, for example if evidence can be provided that it is being actively marketed for sale or is being renovated. The core purpose of this policy is to act as an incentive for owners to bring their property back into use. The Council has also agreed to fund a post from the additional income generated to help bring empty homes back into use through a range of support methods targeted at property owners.

Bringing empty homes back into use is also better for the environment because this can cut carbon emissions by approximately a third when compared to the impact of building a new home. These properties can create good quality affordable homes in both rural and urban locations. It can bring a valuable boost to the local economy by generating income for owner's as well as the local businesses that re-furbish them. Empty homes also have a significant economic impact on local services. Figures obtained from the Office for National Statistics show the average amount spent by a household in their community is £13,000. Re-using existing properties prevents the deterioration of our local buildings and contributes to the regeneration of our towns by creating safe sustainable communities.



6. Preventing and Addressing Homelessness

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 5: More households will receive appropriate housing options to prevent homelessness and fewer households will become homeless.

Outcome 6: Homeless households and those threatened with homelessness will develop the skills to allow them to sustain their housing choices and be able to live independently.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is fully engaged in the Ayrshire and South Housing Options Hub. This has resulted in the sharing of best practice by bringing together neighbouring Councils to promote, develop and share information on Housing Options and Homeless Prevention. A multi-agency Homeless Forum was established in July 2017 to aid partners in shaping their collective priorities together at a local level. The Homeless Forum provides an opportunity for key stakeholders to participate fully in the development of new services to those at risk of homelessness. The Homeless Strategy is supported by a dedicated Action Plan that will ensure high quality outcomes are achieved, and measured, for homeless people. Key outcomes will be centred on the 4 main themes of: access, prevention, temporary accommodation and service user outcomes. Local RSLs are also ensuring individuals referred to them by the Council are allocated permanent housing that meets their needs as soon as possible.

To support the delivery of this LHS and to recognise the significant impact homelessness has on people's lives, our Council has developed a Homeless Strategy that fully considers a wide range of issues under the following themes:

- Access to Homeless and Housing Options Services
- Preventing Homelessness
- Temporary accommodation provision
- Outcomes for service users.

The Homeless Strategy is an appendix to this LHS.

Scotland has among the strongest rights in Europe for people facing homelessness. Reducing homelessness also plays a vital role in tackling poverty. The Scottish Government is supporting Local Authorities to reduce and address this problem by:

- Helping Councils develop and improve homeless prevention activities through **Housing Options Hubs**
- Creating a **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group** to lead change and identify the actions, services and legislative changes required to end rough sleeping and transform the use of temporary accommodation.
- Providing **guidance for Councils and other organisations** to ensure consistent service delivery
- Collecting mandatory **data on the use of temporary accommodation** to improve the quality of information we hold and help shape future policy
- Monitoring progress on prevention activity and examining the barriers faced by those with the most complex needs through the **Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group**
- Working with social and health care services to understand the wider context that leads to homelessness through the **Health and Homelessness cross sector group**
- Supporting homeowners with mortgage difficulties through the **Home Owners' Support Fund** and providing financial support to organisations helping homeless and vulnerable people find homes through the **Housing Voluntary Grant Scheme**

7. Specialist Provision and Independent Living

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 7: People with particular needs will be able to live independently and fulfil their potential.

A number of new projects have been developed through the Council's SHIP for people with particular needs. These include services for people with learning disabilities at Castle Douglas and Beeswing. New Women's Aid refuge accommodation has been provided in Dumfries and Stranraer and housing suitable for the needs of older people has been developed at Swan's Vennel, Dumfries. Fully accessible amenity housing has also been developed to meet the needs of older people.

The Health and Social Care Partnership have created the permanent post of Housing Lead Officer to identify further opportunities to identify new opportunities to deliver projects for people with particular needs through the SHIP. This will continue to strengthen the strong links between health, social care and housing outcomes. There is widespread local recognition that future service delivery will take place in local communities rather than acute settings such as hospitals. Our local RSLs have a key role to play in this work which is being taken forward locally through the Particular Needs Housing Strategy Group



Strategic Objective 2

We will work together with a range of stakeholders including the Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure solutions are delivered that enable people to live as independently as possible in community settings.

Council Plan 2017-22

This Strategic Objective and the following actions contribute to the Council priorities to 'Build the local economy', 'Provide the best start in life for all our children', 'Protect our most vulnerable people' and 'Be an inclusive Council'.

Actions

- A proportion of new housing development delivered through the SHIP will be two-bedroom bungalows to help meet the demands of local population demographics
- Maximise the use of assistive technology to allow people to continue to live independently in their own communities by ensuring the existing and new housing stock has the required infrastructure to support this
- Develop innovative housing models in partnership with key stakeholders for people with particular needs to be delivered through the SHIP
- Provide strategic support to the Crichton Trust who are examining the feasibility of a Care Campus/ Inter-Generational Community in our region
- Consider allocating funding to the IJB for delivery of Care and Repair, Food Train Extra and HandyVan services targeted at private sector homeowners
- Build bespoke homes through the SHIP for people whose housing need cannot be met from the existing housing stock
- Facilitate the delivery of actions identified in the Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy through the delivery of SHIP projects that meet the priorities identified by the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership
- Contribute to the work of the Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group to strengthen existing relationships and create new opportunities for collaborative working
- Make full use of the skills and experience made available through third sector partners in the design and delivery of new housing models



- Identify the funding across the housing, health and social care partnership to develop housing for people with complex needs.
- Identify and deliver solutions that ensure the Council owned Gypsy/Traveller sites meet the minimum site standards put in place by the Scottish Government
- Undertake an annual satisfaction survey of Gypsy/ Traveller site residents to ensure regulatory standards are met
- Fully engage with Torthorwald Community Council and Old Luce Community Council to ensure positive relationships are achieved between the Gypsy/ Traveller and settled communities
- Hold regular meetings of the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Group
- Continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments of Gypsy/Travellers for the purpose of assessing the need for a transit site within the region
- Ensure travelling show people have the right to occupy sites throughout Dumfries and Galloway when they visit our region
- Seek opportunities to implement the housing recommendations contained in the report “Better Lives, Better Futures – a study of housing and support needs of young people with autism spectrum disorder in Dumfries and Galloway
- Deliver 8 units per year of accessible homes through the Council’s SHIP for people requiring wheelchairs.
- Review and update the Housing Contribution Statement in the Adult Health and Social Care Strategic Plan.

7.1 Independent Living

Good housing is an essential pre-requisite for wellbeing and is central to addressing some of the most pressing health challenges in Scotland. These include poverty, inequality, an ageing population and climate change. Our ageing population has increasingly complex health and social care needs that need to be addressed in future service provision. Emerging policy is to support people to live at home, or in a homely setting, for as long as possible, as independently as possible. Housing is therefore central to addressing this challenge. For example, Loreburn Housing Association are currently working with the Council and the IJB to develop innovative housing models in Stranraer, Langholm and Moffat. The Stranraer development is an inter-generational project which combines a foyer learning centre for young people and dementia friendly accommodation for older people. The aims of this project are to provide training, employment and health care with the support of Alzheimer Scotland and other external partners. The learning from this project will be taken forward through future housing developments. This approach is a central aspect of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 which aims to:

‘Ensure that more people are cared for and supported at home or in a homely setting’.

Under the terms of this Act some housing related functions must be delegated to Health and Social Care Partnerships. Locally this includes Care and Repair, HandyVan and Food Train Extra. The Act clearly states the need for coordination between health, social care and housing services, in order to:

‘Jointly drive forward the housing contribution to better health and wellbeing among the population’

To bring together the disciplines of housing, health and social work, the Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group has been established.

7.2 The Scottish Health and Inequality Impact Assessment Network

The Scottish Health and Inequality Impact Assessment Network carried out a scoping exercise on the impact of the Scottish Government's target to deliver 50,000 affordable homes by 2021. It identified that greater availability of affordable homes should enable more people to access housing that is built to high standards, suitable for their needs, and has security of tenure. This would have positive impacts on their health and wellbeing. There are a number of ways in which the internal and external fabric of a house can affect health. The most notable health benefits arise from improvements in:

- Size and usable space;
- Design;
- Thermal comfort;
- Costs (including fuel and rent);
- Housing satisfaction and control over living environment;
- Relationship with housing provider; and
- Neighbourhood environment.

The impacts also depend on the characteristics of residents. For example, people with pre-existing medical conditions benefit from better health outcomes, particularly those suffering from mental health problems. For the wider population, good quality housing is a determinant, alongside income, employment and education, that shapes health and wellbeing. The scoping exercise noted that:

'Social housing providers face a heightened challenge as they experience a higher portion of the problem given the strong correlation between their tenants and higher instances of poor health'.

The need for specialist and adapted housing is likely to increase as the population ages and people are looked after for longer at home.

To further enhance this approach, Loreburn Housing Association has an aspiration to incorporate no, or low, cost Wifi in all its homes. This is currently being tested through a pilot project to enable home working and the provision of assistive technology.

This will support new ways of delivering healthcare that allow longer periods of independent living for our older generation. Loreburn Housing Association is leading the way as a social housing provider with a commitment to provide free internet connectivity at this time.

7.3 Care Campus

The idea of a Care Campus for Dumfries and Galloway has been under discussion across several organisations since 2014. Consideration has been given to the possibility of building a physical development on, or around, the Crichton Estate with links to the academic institutes on site. This development would take advantage of the assets of the Crichton Estate to introduce new and innovative housing, covering a whole spectrum of needs, as well as having the potential for intergenerational working and a teaching care home/ nursery on site. Although Care Campus may become a physical development on the Crichton Estate, the project is also looking to identify ways that the project can benefit the whole region.

The Crichton Trust has recruited a team to develop a 'proof of concept' around the Care Campus. This project is funded by LEADER, Scottish Enterprise, The Crichton Foundation, The Crichton Trust, Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway. It has the aim of assessing the feasibility of developing opportunities for a new rural care model across Dumfries and Galloway. The team is engaging with stakeholders and the public to identify wider housing and care needs, and some of the challenges that we face in delivering these in our region. It is exploring 'Care Campus' as both a 'place' and an 'idea' – with the potential to significantly re-imagine innovative approaches to housing, care and wellbeing in our area.



7.4 Housing Contribution Statement

Housing Contribution Statements (HCS) were introduced by the Scottish Government in 2013 to provide a link between the strategic planning process in housing at a regional level and that of health and social care. With the establishment of Integration Authorities, Housing Contribution Statements now become an integral part of the Strategic Commissioning Plan and need to be expanded and strengthened accordingly. As a minimum they must set out the arrangements for carrying out the housing functions delegated to the Integration Authority. The expectation is that they will also set out an overarching strategic statement of how they intend to work with housing services to deliver its outcomes.

Following the development of the Integration Joint Boards Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy, the current HCS will be amended and consulted upon ahead of its inclusion in the Strategic Plan. The LHS sets out a number of actions that will be taken over its lifetime to deliver a wide range of sustainable housing solutions that ensures people are able to live as independently as possible.

Housing options will continue to be important in meeting the needs of older people throughout the region. This will have implications for housing supply, repairs and maintenance, care & repair services, the provision of care at home, responder services, care homes and sheltered housing. People with dementia may need care home placement, other supported accommodation with adaptations, various Telecare equipment, warden, 24 hr monitoring, night-time support, care at home, or other help and support. As well as identifying innovative ways to use technology that supports independent living, digital health and care builds on existing systems such as telecare, telehealth and ehealth:

- **Telecare** – provides support and assistance using remote monitoring and emergency alarms to enable vulnerable people to live independently
- **Telehealth** – use technology to share information between a person at home and health professionals to support health monitoring. This is predominately used to support people with long term conditions for example diabetes, asthma or stroke

- **Ehealth** - uses technology to join health systems together. This enables health professionals to access real time, relevant information about people's health and care to support a person-centred approach.

7.5 Care Homes and Care at Home

There is ongoing project management work around older people's services, and in particular the care at home market, further development of a sustainable reablement model, and work related to older people's residential care provision. The Programme has evolved into two distinct projects, Care at Home and Care Homes. These projects are expected to develop a planned approach to future residential and home care provision within the region. This work is being taken forward by the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership which is part of the Integration Joint Board .

The number of registered care homes in Dumfries and Galloway fell from 37 in 2007 to 29 in 2017. The number of registered places reduced by 8% overall from 1,171 in 2007 to 1,075 in 2017. At the same time the number of residents varied from year to year but remained relatively stable, resulting in higher occupancy rates. The Care Homes Census shows that there were 1,007 long stay residents aged 65 and over in care homes March 2014. Using future population estimates, by 2020 there may be a need for 1,137 care home spaces and 1,380 by 2035. Using future population estimates in 2020 the estimated number of free personal & nursing care clients in care homes in D&G will be 443 and the number of free personal care clients receiving care at home will be 1,685. By 2035 the estimated number of free personal and nursing care clients in care homes in D&G will be 537 and the number of free personal care clients receiving care at home will be 2,043.

7.6 Integration of Health and Social Care

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 3: Affordable housing will be easier to access with improved choices in areas where people wish to live. Households will be able to live independently longer.

A Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group has been put in place to provide a platform for strategic discussion and decision making in partnership with NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Adult Social Work Services. Membership of this group includes RSLs. The aim is to deliver new housing developments for people with particular needs and to investigate new models of service delivery that support independent living.

The Dumfries and Galloway Integration Authority came into existence in April 2016. Their role is to ensure that integrated health and social care budgets are used effectively to shift the balance of care from institutional to community based services. The housing sector makes a significant contribution to the national outcomes for health and wellbeing by:

- Providing information and advice on housing options
- Facilitating or directly providing “fit for purpose” housing that gives people choice and a suitable home environment
- Providing low level, preventative services
- Building capacity in local communities
- Undertaking effective strategic housing planning, including through the identification of particular needs projects through the SHIP
- Coordinating appropriate allocations through the CHR

Housing is critical to the success and continued sustainability of health and social care. For example, our acute services can only provide medical care to those who need it most if there are community based intermediate approaches that can prevent unnecessary hospital admissions. These allow people to manage long term health conditions in the security of their own homes. Loreburn Housing Association

has worked in partnership with a care management technology company, Edinburgh Napier University and the IJB to pilot wearable devices that anticipate health issues before they arise. This pilot demonstrates how modern technology can play a significant role in ensuring positive health outcomes for our older people.

7.7 Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group

The Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group’s role is to identify and prioritise new housing with care projects to be developed in partnership with RSLs. Recommendations will be made to the IJB following the development of detailed business cases. There is increasing recognition that there are a small number of people in our region who are not effectively engaged with our services. They often find themselves in crisis that can result in high cost interventions such as presentation to accident and emergency services. There is therefore a need to consider the development of new services to meet the needs of this group.

The work of the Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy Group also considers the impact of wider determinants of poor health such as inequality, environmental factors, culture and individual influences. By creating robust and effective professional relationships between the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership and the RSL sector, a new approach to effective joint planning has been put in place. This is a particular strength in Dumfries and Galloway. This group provides a clear and unified leadership regarding housing matters that will be presented to the IJB. The work of this group is supported by the permanent post of Housing Lead Officer within the Adult Health Social Care Partnership.

7.8 Housing First

The Council's Homelessness Strategy has committed to review the range of accommodation options available to Homeless people, particularly those with complex needs. Of particular interest is Housing First. This is a ground breaking way of preventing people becoming long term homeless. This type of service helps people that have a number of care/support needs and possibly long term health conditions. It was first tried out in the United States and delivered clear success in terms of preventing vulnerable people sleeping rough. In Scotland, it was first attempted in Glasgow and was based on the principle of housing being a basic human right. The focus is very much on the person and they are not required to have addressed their other needs before being offered a long-term home. Having been given the security of stable accommodation, a high level of support is required to help ensure the service user is able to maintain their tenancy.

In Dumfries and Galloway there are a number of people who regularly access services when they are at the point of crisis. This means that often an emergency response is provided but the underlying problems are not addressed. This type of intervention is expensive and does not help the person in the long-term. If partner organisations agreed to try this new approach in our region it is likely it will result in reduced use of accident and emergency services, alleviate the significant strain on the social care and criminal justice systems as well as reducing rough sleeping. It does this by improving health and wellbeing, encouraging greater stability and creating the right environment to provide help when it is requested.

7.9 Housing for Varying Needs

Housing in its design and form should provide for people's different needs and circumstances. People have various housing needs and these will almost certainly change through a lifetime. The built form of all housing should be flexible enough to accommodate a range of these needs. Over recent years the concept of designing homes to accommodate the needs of less able people has become widely accepted as an essential part of the provision of housing for the majority of older and disabled people. In Scotland this has become known as 'barrier free' design and is defined as housing and its environment that is designed to meet the needs of:

- people with temporary or permanent impaired mobility due to accident, illness or old age and who may use a wheelchair for some of the time;
- people who have difficulty with steps, bending down or reaching or who lack dexterity;
- people with impaired sight or hearing;
- people with impaired memory, learning or reasoning;
- people pushing and manoeuvring prams

Such design is more convenient for everyone, it prevents people having to move because their abilities have changed and it is more economically adapted to suit specific needs if this becomes necessary. The Scottish Government expect that new build homes delivered as part of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme should meet these design criteria.

The HNDA has identified there is a need to provide additional social rented wheelchair accessible properties through SHIP developments. Physical features of these homes would include low level appliances, wider door openings, barrier free bathrooms and ramped access. The need for these can be identified via waiting list information and also in the public consultation phase prior to project delivery. In light of the expected demographic changes the need for wheelchair adapted social housing properties is a total of 125 units by 2035. To deliver this, a target of building 8 new wheelchair accessible units on an annual basis has been set for the region. Where private developments require to provide an affordable housing contribution, this type of property will be requested to ensure there is a contribution towards this target made by the private sector.

7.10 Gypsy/Travellers

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 8: The Gypsy/Traveller community will have opportunities to access appropriate short and long term accommodation to meet their needs.

The Council is currently in the process of determining the costs of carrying out improvements to our Gypsy/Traveller sites at Collin and Glenluce to meet the minimum site standards published by the Scottish Government. In addition, a Gypsy/Traveller liaison group has been established to ensure a multi-agency approach is adopted to meet the needs of this minority community. A dedicated post of Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been created to act as a single point of contact for the Council owned sites and unauthorised encampments. The Council has also agreed an Improvement Plan that will deliver a wide range of activity aimed at ensuring the Council fully embraces its duties under the terms of the Equality Act.

Gypsy/Traveller is the broad term for people in Scotland who might refer to themselves as Travellers, Scottish Travellers, Gypsy/Travellers and Gypsy/Traveller people. As a generic term, it also encompasses English Gypsies, Irish Travellers and European Roma. It is important to remember that despite sharing many aspects of common heritage, these groups may also identify some clear differences between themselves. Gypsy/Travellers regard 'travelling' as an important aspect of their ethnic/cultural identity, although they might not literally be 'on the road' all of the time. Gypsy/Travellers as an ethnic group are protected by equalities legislation.

A Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Group has been established to consider operational issues, future developments and services provided to this community. This multi-agency group has the following membership:

- Site residents
- Strategic Housing
- Social Work
- Community Safety
- Police Scotland
- NHS
- Education
- Policy Unit

The Council operates two Gypsy/Traveller sites at Collin (near Dumfries) and Barlockhart (near Glenluce). The Scottish Government has put in place a robust framework so that the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers are properly assessed, and effectively met, at a local level. The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards, and outcomes, required to be met on Gypsy/Traveller sites. These include equalities, communication, participation, value for money and rents/service charges. Accommodation is one of the most important issues faced by this community and has an impact on a wide range of other issues. Works are scheduled to commence on the Barlockhart site that will conclude during 2020 with the purpose of renovating the site to achieve the minimum site standards. In addition, the Collin site suffers from poor ground conditions and a ground condition survey has been undertaken. Further design work is required to ensure that the most suitable option is identified that allows the Council to consider the most appropriate method to achieve the minimum site standards.

The ability to utilise sites assists Gypsy/Travellers to gain equal access to a range of services including health, education and employment opportunities. Gypsy/Travellers have some of the worst health outcomes in the country, meaning shorter, less healthy lives.

The Scottish Government published 'Improving Gypsy/Traveller Sites - Guidance on Minimum Gypsy/Traveller Site Standards and Tenants Core Rights and Responsibilities' in May 2015. All sites have met the minimum standards and provided tenancy agreements that reflect tenants core rights and responsibilities, by June 2018. The minimum standards cover two broad areas, the physical facilities and the quality of services provided by the site provider. The Council has put in place an Improvement Plan to ensure the required standards are met.

Strategic Housing continues to engage with the local communities where our sites are located. The aim is to help foster good relations that can increase the integration of the Gypsy/Travellers with the settled community. The post of Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has specifically been created to ensure our services meet the required standards, the voices of the Gypsy/Traveller community are heard and to act as a focal point for this area of work.

The geographical location of Dumfries and Galloway means that it is situated on the major vehicular routes for many people travelling south towards England, North into Scotland and also to the ferry terminal at Stranraer on route to Ireland. For the period 2018-19, Dumfries and Galloway Council recorded 26 unauthorised encampments by Gypsy/Travellers in the region. These were predominantly short term with only 3 resulting in legal action being taken. Dumfries and Galloway Council has utilised the Scottish Government's guidance for Local Authorities on Managing Unauthorised Camping by Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland to create their own procedures. These include an unauthorised encampment procedure that has been agreed by the members of the Gypsy/ Traveller Liaison Group setting out the roles of the different partners and a code of conduct detailing any unacceptable locations or behaviour.

The HNDA reported an occupancy rate of the two Council owned sites at 69% indicating that the area is well equipped in terms of pitches and sites available and there are no plans to increase their number at this time.

7.11 Travelling Showpeople

Travelling Showpeople bring funfairs, amusements and fairground rides to urban and rural settings across the UK, traditionally over the summer months. They have permanent accommodation bases for the winter months with many families living in their own homes. Showpeople identity is built on their tradition of bringing entertainment to local communities and they do not identify themselves as Gypsy/Travellers. Across the UK, community members actively seek official recognition of their distinctive identity.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has long standing lease arrangements in place to provide appropriate sites for Showpeople to stay over the spring and autumn fair season. These arrangements ensure that their accommodation needs are fully addressed within Dumfries and Galloway. The HMP contacted the Scottish Section of the Showmen's Guild in June 2016. The Guild responded saying that they were "not aware of any need within the Guild for housing or a yard within the Dumfries and Galloway area."

7.12 Better Lives, Better Futures

The Better Lives Partnership was established in 2016 with the explicit aim of supporting young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Dumfries and Galloway. As a registered Scottish charity, they have developed a number of innovative services and projects that have made a real difference to the lives of the young people and their families. They have recently completed research that sought to establish the current provision and future need for specialist housing provision and support for young people with ASD and related disabilities. The report published on the back of the research made a number of recommendations in relation to the provision of housing including the following:

- There should be priority given within the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for new social housing to provide for the needs of people with ASD. The new homes should have a minimum of 2 bedrooms and the design and lay-out of the properties should be innovative, flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals.
- The new homes should be in locations that sustain close links to family and community and provide pathways to social, educational and employment opportunities.
- Due to the geographic spread of settlements across Dumfries and Galloway, it is sensible to look at providing suitable new autism friendly designed social rented homes for people with ASD in or around urban settlements
- Given the specialist nature of supported housing facilities, it would be appropriate to look for suitable locations for these facilities in Dumfries and Newton Stewart. This would be accessible for households in both the east and west of the region.

There is also a need to routinely develop designated autism-friendly housing as part of wider general needs schemes where relatively 'light touch' design features will make a significant difference to the living environment for those with high functioning ASD. This approach would also meet other care and support needs for vulnerable adults. The key is to adopt a personalised approach to ensure individual needs are met.



8. PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 4: Households in the private sector will live in well-maintained properties that meet their needs. There will be a private rented sector that offers good quality, well-managed accommodation that provides real choice and improved affordability.

The Council operates the Landlord Registration and Houses in Multiple Occupation system. Our experience has shown that the vast majority of private sector landlords operate responsibly and provide quality accommodation to people who choose to live in that sector. However, a minority of unscrupulous landlords have been the focus of enforcement action initiated by the Council. This has resulted in criminal prosecutions, landlords being removed from the register and third party reports to the First Tier Housing Tribunal. Dumfries and Galloway Council was one of the first Local Authorities to make full use of this new power. Rent Penalty Notices are also served where landlords fail to register their properties with the Council.

Strategic Objective 3

We will ensure that households who live in the Private Rented Sector have a home that is safe, warm and achieves the required standards

Council Plan 2017-22

This Strategic Objective and the following actions contribute to the Council priorities to 'Build the local economy', 'Provide the best start in life for all our children', 'Protect our most vulnerable people' and 'Be an inclusive Council'.

Actions

- Implement the national scheme for Landlord Registration under the terms of the Anti-Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004
- Assess applications for Licensing Houses in Multiple Occupation under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to ensure the safety and wellbeing of tenants
- Take enforcement action against Private Landlords who fail to comply with the Repairing Standard
- Establish a Private Sector Landlord Forum to ensure positive and effective engagement with this sector
- Ensure there is a range of publicly accessible information about the Private Rented Housing Sector on the Council's website
- Take forward the proposal to introduce energy efficiency standards in the Private Rented Sector while ensuring that any new measures take account of the traditional nature of many of our buildings
- Encourage private sector landlords to make their accommodation available to a wide range of people as a realistic housing option.

8.1 Local and National context

The private rented sector should provide good quality homes alongside high management standards.

For example, all tenants should be given a private residential tenancy agreement prior to moving into a property. In order to achieve this, the Scottish Government have identified three strategic aims:

- To improve the quality of property conditions and management
- To meet the needs of landlords and of tenants living in this sector
- To support private landlords to invest in their housing stock to ensure this sector makes an effective contribution to housing supply.

To enable the delivery of these aims, there will be positive engagement with private landlords, their representatives and a range of partner organisations. This will ensure the policy and legislative frameworks create the right environment to allow private renting to be a high-quality housing choice for those that choose to live in this sector. Private sector rents in our

region are below the national average and they often reflect the published Local Housing Allowance rate which means that this sector is affordable to people on low incomes or benefits.

It is a national priority to improve the energy efficiency of the Scottish housing stock. Minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector will support efforts to meet its climate change, energy efficiency and fuel poverty targets.

Furthermore, improvements in the energy efficiency of houses will help to achieve broader objectives, which include supporting economic growth and jobs in the green construction industry, alleviating fuel poverty and improving public health. As these improvements to the stock are delivered it is also important to consider the long term maintenance of the properties.

In both Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland, the number of properties registered, and the number of approved registrations is rising year on year. The rise could be in part due to the lack of affordability of



owner-occupied properties/houses by those on low and median incomes. For some, entering the private sector can be a lifestyle choice that reflects their working situation.

The Eskdale HMA has the largest proportion of private rented stock, making up 23.1% of all dwellings, while the Annan HMA has only 10.5%. The age of a property can be an indication of the quality of the accommodation with older properties potentially requiring more care and maintenance and/or improvement to bring them up to modern standards, for example in relation to energy efficiency. The SHCS 2011-13 indicates that roughly a third (35%) of the housing stock in D&G was built before 1945, compared to the national figure of 32%. A large majority of homes built before 1945, 57%, are in the private rented sector.

8.2 Houses of Multiple Occupation

Dumfries and Galloway has a relatively small number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) when compared to other Local Authority areas, where there are larger urban centres with a greater prevalence of these premises. This can often be associated with the presence of a large university, hospital or migrant population. The number can vary over time, but the average is in the region of 110 on an annual basis. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 states that living accommodation is classified as an HMO if the following criteria are met:

- The living accommodation is occupied by three or more persons from three or more families
- The living accommodation is the only/main residence of the occupiers
- The house/premises/group of premises is owned by the same person with shared basic amenities
- This legislation covers all forms of HMO's including ordinary houses, flats, bedsits, student halls of residence and hostels.

A license is required for an HMO to ensure that the accommodation is well managed, of good quality and is safe for occupation. The license is granted by the local authority in which the accommodation is situated. Certain physical, safety and quality standards must be met by the owner/manager of the HMO. They must also pass a 'fit and proper' person test in order to secure a license. This test ensures that the owner/manager has nothing in their background that could pose a risk to tenants, for example, criminal convictions for acts of violence.

8.3 Landlord Registration

In 2017 there were around 7,209 approved registrations. These registrations include 11,148 private rented properties in our region. The total number of Landlord Registrations and Private Rented Properties in Dumfries and Galloway are set out in the table below.

These figures show that the Private Rented Sector plays a crucial role in the provision of housing to meet the needs of people in our region. The size of this sector is growing throughout Scotland as a result of the high cost of owner occupation and the additional flexibility offered to tenants. Private renting can be attractive to many households who are seeking the ability to move house in response to their changing personal and professional circumstances.

Where Landlords fail to meet the Repairing Standard, the Council will initially engage with the owner to provide support to ensure property repairs are carried out. In the minority of circumstances where a negotiated solution is not achieved, the Council will use its powers to make a third party referral to the Housing and Property Chamber. If the landlord doesn't comply with the recommendations made by the Chamber, then the Council will consider prohibiting the owner from collecting rent and removing them from the register of private sector landlords.

Year	Approved Registration	Approved Property	Total Applications	Total Properties
2014	6,964	10,615	7,030	10,699
2015	7,257	10,963	7,303	11,011
2016	7,274	11,038	7,322	11,124
2017	7,209	10,958	7,318	11,148

8.4 Private Rented Property Standards

Dumfries and Galloway Council adopts a pro-active approach to ensuring that properties in the private rented sector meet the Repairing Standard as set out in Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. The Repairing Standard is a basic level of repair that private rented properties must meet. It is a landlord's duty to make sure the property they're renting out meets the Repairing Standard, whose requirements include:

- the property being wind and watertight;
- the installations for water, gas, electricity, sanitation and heating being in a reasonable state of repair and working order;
- any furnishings provided by the landlord being safely usable for the purpose they were designed.

According to the Scottish Household Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2011-13, 2% of housing stock in D&G is "Below the Tolerable Standard" (BTS)

which is below the national average of 3%. Owner occupied properties adjudged to be BTS was 2% while 3% of private rented properties were BTS and 0% of social housing properties were BTS. These tenures in Dumfries and Galloway all came in below the national averages of 3%, 5% and 2% respectively. Where required, we take early enforcement action where we find that improvements to properties are required. This includes making referrals to the Housing and Property Chamber, of which this region makes up a higher than average number of their annual caseload. Below Tolerable Standard grants have been made available for privately rented properties in urban and rural locations to assist landlords to meet the costs of refurbishments required to resolve issues such as dampness and structural issues.



9. Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

LHS 2011-16: HOW DID WE DO?

Outcome 2: There will be 20% fewer people living in fuel poverty in Dumfries and Galloway by 2016

The latest Scottish House Condition Survey report has shown that the overall level of fuel poverty in Dumfries and Galloway has decreased from 41% in 2011 to 36% in 2016. Fuel poverty has increased in Scotland as a whole during the same period from 28% to 31%. The rate of increase in Dumfries and Galloway has therefore been slower than nationally. The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a review of their approach to fuel poverty and this includes the proposal to change the current definition. It is widely considered that the current definition doesn't provide an accurate measure of the problem. Some of the factors that contribute to fuel poverty are out with the control of the Council. For example, it is well documented that fuel prices have consistently increased by a disproportionate amount in comparison to consumer commodities and income levels.

Strategic Objective 4

"We will help everyone in our region to live in warm, affordable, energy efficient homes"

Council Plan 2017-22

This Strategic Objective and the following actions contribute to the Council priorities to 'Provide the best start in life for all our children' and 'Protect our most vulnerable people'.

Actions

- Support the delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategic Action Plan by improving the energy efficiency of housing in our region
- Encourage RSLs and Private Developers to construct new homes to Passivhaus standards where the opportunity arises
- Maximise the use of funding to deliver energy efficiency measures to homes in the private sector including working in partnership with RSLs to deliver schemes to mixed tenure blocks
- Monitor the progress being made by RSLs within our region to achieve the 'Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing' by 2020.
- Continue to provide strategic support for organisations applying for funding to tackle fuel poverty, such as the Dumfries and Galloway Lemon Aid Fuel Poverty project
- Support national proposals to establish a publicly owned, not for profit energy company
- All developments agreed through the SHIP should support sustainability, including the reduction of carbon and other greenhouse gases to ensure they have a positive impact on climate change
- Work with local Registered Social Landlords to enable the delivery of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficient Standard for Social Housing targets by supporting works in mixed tenure locations
- Contribute towards the delivery of a carbon neutral region.
- Ensure that where enquiries in relation to fuel poverty and energy efficiency are received, customers are referred to the Energy Savings Trust for expert advice, signposting and potential funding assistance from a range of initiatives.



9.1 Fuel Poverty

Under the terms of the current definition, a household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, it would be required to spend more than 10% of its income on all household fuel use.

However, this definition allows many higher income households to be considered “fuel poor” although they may not suffer from the wider negative impacts that can result from being in poverty more generally. Around 31% of Scottish households were in fuel poverty in 2015 and in Dumfries and Galloway the percentage was significantly higher at 42%. These figures are taken from the Scottish House Condition Survey and confirm the prevalence of fuel poverty is a disproportionate problem in Scotland’s rural areas. Many residential properties in Dumfries and Galloway do not have a connection to the gas grid and utility companies do not take a pro-active approach to this as it requires significant capital investment. Both the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force concluded that a review of the current fuel poverty definition is required due to concerns that the current definition is too broad and impedes targeting on those most in need. Fuel poverty is influenced by 4 principal factors:

- Fuel prices: higher fuel prices and resultant bills lead to higher levels of fuel poverty
- Income: low incomes contribute to higher levels of fuel poverty
- Energy Efficiency: improvements in energy efficiency reduce fuel poverty by lowering household fuel bills
- Energy usage: how people use heat controls in their property impacts on household fuel bills.

The Scottish Government has recently launched a new consultation on a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Scotland, which will lead to a Fuel Poverty Bill. A core element of this is the proposed adoption of a new definition of households who are in fuel poverty:

- They need to spend more than 10% of their after housing cost (AHC) income on heating and electricity in order to maintain a healthy indoor environment that is commensurate with their vulnerability status; and

- If these housing and fuel costs were deducted, they would have less than 90% of Scotland’s minimum income standard (MIS) as their residual income from which to pay for all the other core necessities commensurate with a decent standard of living.

There are a number of initiatives ongoing throughout our region to improve the energy efficiency of homes and to ensure that all properties in the social rented sector meet the ‘Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing’. DGHP have installed Air Source Heating systems in rural properties where there is no connection to the mains gas network. Loreburn Housing Association have made a commitment to build homes to Passivhaus standard and to take a ‘whole cost’ approach, including energy bills, to poverty when setting rents. These examples illustrate the innovative methods being deployed to tackle fuel poverty in our region.

The intention is to ensure that resources can be better targeted at households that are most likely to be experiencing adverse outcomes as a result of fuel poverty. The new definition will also lead to a shift in the demographic profile of those considered to be fuel poor, including a shift towards families with higher housing costs compared to their income, primarily in the social rented and private sectors. People in fuel poverty may not only suffer directly from living in cold houses but also may restrict the use of the rooms in their homes as they cannot afford to heat them. This is a particular issue for older people and families with young children, as these are the groups that spend most time in the home.

9.2 HEEPS: ABS

The Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland: Area Based Scheme (HEEPS:ABS) aims to assist property owners, as well as people living in the private rented sector, and has the following objectives;

- To reduce fuel poverty
- To reduce carbon emissions
- To attract Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) funding (ECO Funding is a UK Government scheme to obligate large utility companies to deliver energy efficiency measures to domestic properties in Britain).

The Council works in partnership with the Energy Agency to develop and deliver the HEEPS: ABS programme, building on the strong relationships established over previous years. This partnership allows the Council to benefit from the expertise required to maximise the effectiveness of this project and to build on the successful outcomes delivered so far. The Energy Agency also operate the Home Energy Scotland helpline for the South West of Scotland, ensuring that households are able to receive the highest standards of service available through a cross referral approach. This scheme is promoted through a range of publicity methods such as a mailing to all registered private landlords, presentations to Community Councils and press releases.

The use of innovative technologies will be considered where the fabric of the building, or a listed building status, means that it would be unsuitable for the installation of solid wall insulation. The schemes follow an area-based approach with initial focus on the most deprived areas, drawing on a range of data including indices of multiple deprivation, child poverty, the Scottish House Condition Survey and heat mapping. While the number of measures delivered is based on the annual funding allocation made by the Scottish government, current delivery indicates that this scheme will be able to deliver solid wall insulation in around 200 homes per year. The use of this funding also helps to tackle properties that fail to meet the Tolerable Standard in terms of energy efficiency while the whole street approach in Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas also delivers wider regeneration outcomes.

As a stock transfer authority, Dumfries and Galloway Council does not hold any housing stock. As such, there was no requirement to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard targets by 2015 or the Energy Efficient Standard for Social Housing target by 2020. However, where opportunities arise to assist in the delivery of these targets by partner organisations, the Council works pro-actively to support large scale works. We are currently working in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership to install solid wall insulation in mixed tenure locations throughout Dumfries and this approach can be replicated further throughout the region as required. To date, all local RSLs are advising that they have met, or are on track, to meet these targets.

9.3 Lemon Aid

Cunninghame Housing Association (CHA) has been operating its Lemon Aid service in Ayrshire since 2013. It has been successful in helping vulnerable people suffering from fuel poverty and wider financial inclusion issues. In 2015 they won the Chartered Institute of Housing's Excellence in Environmental Sustainability. Service users report feeling better with an improved ability to deal with their financial and personal matters independently as a result of increased confidence and reduction of social isolation. CHA has established the Lemon Aid Fuel Poverty Energy Carer Service in Dumfries and Galloway following a successful bid to the European Social Funds Aspiring Communities budget. This service is targeted at tenants in the social housing sector. This initial funding is for a period of 18 months and will provide support to enable the service to become established in the region. A staff team of 5 Lemon Aid Advisors will deliver the following services:

- Home visits to vulnerable residents experiencing or at risk of fuel poverty, providing them with home energy advice
- A hand holding fuel switching service which aims to break through the fear of switching that many vulnerable and fuel poor tenants have. It secures cheaper tariffs and genuine financial savings for fuel poor households
- Advocacy services for those experiencing fuel poverty, negotiating with energy suppliers and other agencies to write off debts and secure grants and other resources to maximise disposable income.

By helping to bring communities together to address the particular difficulties faced by our region, this project will act as a catalyst to tackle fuel poverty based on a community empowerment model.

9.4 Home Help for Fuel Poor Households Project

The Council's Tackling Poverty funding has been utilised to setup the 'Home Help for Fuel Poor Households Project'. This service assists fuel poor households living in the private sector throughout Dumfries and Galloway with in-home advice, referrals for energy saving measures and income maximisation. In addition, there is a budget for small works to assist the reduction of energy in the home where conventional national schemes are unavailable. The Energy Agency coordinates the Project. Referrals to the service will come from various routes including the health, social work and housing sectors. Where appropriate, a Project Officer will visit the householder to identify improvements that could be made and provide advice. The combination of energy advice and income maximisation will help tackle fuel poverty. The project will deliver the following:

- 200 householders will benefit from the service over the two years and will continue to benefit from the advice and measures for their lifetime
- 120 measures installed to improve the energy efficiency of the homes, will continue saving energy and carbon year on year for 15-36 years (depending on the measures installed)
- The income maximisation service provided to 200 householders, along with the savings made in fuel bills, will help remove families from fuel poverty.
- Homes will be warmer and occupants healthier for years to come
- A warmer and more comfortable home can help reduce hospital admissions for those vulnerable clients in our communities, and reduce hospital stay periods.
- It can also reduce hospital re-admission rates by ensuring the client is not returning to a cold and draughty home.

By working with a wide range of partner organisations to deliver a holistic service, the project presents a valuable addition to existing projects to tackle fuel poverty in our region.

9.5 Climate Change

The need to tackle climate change, and in particular reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases that contribute to it, is a principal challenge to sustainable economic growth. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act (2009) and other recent legislation and associated regulation provides a broader background to factors such as the design and operation of buildings, river basin management, sustainable flood management, conservation of biodiversity, renewable energy development, promotion of active travel and so on.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has declared a Climate Emergency as the first step in seeking to galvanise support for the climate change agenda and set a clear target for the region to become carbon neutral. To ensure the delivery of the target, a clear 12 point action plan has been produced to identify, monitor and implement options to achieve its objectives. This builds on the Council's Environmental Framework Policy by creating opportunities to support delivery of renewable energy sources and reductions in fuel poverty. It is estimated that households are responsible for around 15% of all carbon emissions and therefore has a key role to play in supporting the Council achieve its aspiration to become a carbon neutral region by 2025.

The overarching principle of the Council's Development Plan is that all development proposals should support sustainability, including the reduction of carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. This LHS re-affirms this policy commitment. The LDP highlights the importance of district heating systems in creating vibrant towns and villages, ensuring the success of Dumfries as the regional capital and promoting sustainability. In addition, it also sets out the broad principles that have been followed when identifying sites for development as follows:

- reduce over all flood risk by avoiding areas at risk of flooding and erosion
- where possible, avoid the use of prime quality agricultural land
- consider re-using brownfield, vacant and derelict land and buildings instead of greenfield land

- maximise the use of existing infrastructure including public transport
- consider opportunities to develop mixed communities.

The following broad principles should also be incorporated into all developments:

- maximise passive solar gain through design, layout and orientation of the building(s)
- use sustainable construction techniques
- sustainable urban drainage schemes
- maximise the use of existing infrastructure
- enhance the environment of, and protect access to, open space, green networks and recreational opportunities
- movement hierarchy as outlined in “Designing Streets” and maximise linkages with existing public transport and other sustainable transport options;
- consider future proofing development to accommodate any future changing requirements such as waste management regimes, technological advancement in telecommunications infrastructure etc.

Dumfries and Galloway has 1,028 kilometres of coastline and, although the majority is undeveloped, it is a major focus for economic activity, recreation and tourism. The sustainable development of coastal areas is an important contributor to sustainable economic growth. Planning policy must respond to rising sea levels and extreme weather conditions resulting from climate change.

9.6 Fuel Poverty Bill

The Fuel Poverty Bill enshrines in law the Scottish Government’s commitment to tackle the root causes of fuel poverty and transform homes to be warmer and more energy efficient. The Bill defines a household to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of its net income (after housing costs) is required to heat the home and pay for other fuel costs – with not enough money left for a decent standard of living. If more than 20% of net income is needed, the household is defined as being in extreme fuel poverty. The new law sets a target of no more than 5% of Scottish households in fuel poverty by 2040, and no more than 1% of households being in extreme fuel poverty. A new Fuel Poverty Strategy will be published a year after the relevant section of the Bill comes into force and this will be factored in to relevant future housing developments and fuel poverty projects.



10. Scheme of Assistance

Strategic Objective 5

Ensure that people who stay in privately owned property are able to live in homes that are of a high quality and good condition

Council Plan 2017-22

This Strategic Objective and the following actions contribute to the Council priorities to 'Build the local economy', 'Provide the best start in life for all our children', 'Protect our most vulnerable people' and 'Be an inclusive Council'.

Actions

- Put in place an annual Scheme of Assistance detailing how the Council will provide advice and support to people who live in the private sector
- Supplement the range of advice and assistance provided through the production of leaflets that offer information on property condition, adaptations and energy efficiency
- Recommend the annual transfer of funding to the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver the Small Repairs and Home Support Service and Food Train Extra to carry out practical jobs in homes where the occupants are no longer able to do so
- Further develop the Trusted Trader scheme to provide greater consumer confidence when selecting tradesmen to carry out works to their homes

Deliver the Below Tolerable Standard grants as part of the Council's Town Centre Living Fund to provide assistance to private property owners when carrying out works that improve the quality of accommodation.

10.1 Scheme of Assistance

Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 requires local authorities to develop a Scheme of Assistance that provides support to private property owners, and private tenants, when carrying out repair and improvement work to their homes. It sets out how the Council will improve the quality of private housing in Dumfries and Galloway. The aim is to ensure that private housing is kept in a decent state of repair by encouraging homeowners to take responsibility for the condition and maintenance of their homes. Home owners are primarily responsible for their own property under their title deeds. If an owner requires help to look after their home, the Scheme of Assistance allows local authorities broad discretionary powers to provide assistance. This assistance can be provided through advice and guidance, practical help or through financial assistance by way of grants. The Council also provides assistance for work to adapt homes to help meet the needs of disabled people.

There is a requirement to review the Scheme of Assistance on an annual basis in order to ensure the available resources are targeted effectively and in line with the Council's priorities and commitments.

Small interventions such as the installation of wet rooms, stairlifts or ramps can help people remain in their own home and prevent the need for higher cost interventions such as hospital admissions or residential care. Surveys carried out by Care and Repair consistently find high levels of customer satisfaction and successful outcomes for private sector householders.

10.2 Promotional Activities

To help support homeowners and landlords in the private sector to maintain their properties, the Council will produce a range of information leaflets that include the following areas:

- Maintaining your own property
- Organising repairs – getting help from a private contractor
- Paying for building repairs and maintenance
- Energy efficiency in your home
- Care and Repair
- Empty Homes

The leaflets will contain practical advice around small tasks that can be carried out by the homeowner to help extend the life of different property elements such as roofs, gutters, fascias, woodwork, windows etc. These will be accessible in a wide range of locations that are used by the public. This will include the Council's Libraries and Customer Service Centres, as well as premises operated by our Community Planning Partners. The leaflets will further supplement the service delivery of projects included in the Scheme of Assistance. In addition, the Council's website will regularly be updated and specific events will be arranged to ensure engagement with the private sector.

10.3 Care and Repair

Care and Repair services operate throughout Dumfries and Galloway to offer independent advice and assistance to help home-owners repair, improve or adapt their homes so that they can live in comfort and safety in their own community. They provide grants for mandatory, and discretionary, housing adaptations for older people or people with disabilities in the private housing sector. This helps maintain independence at home for as long as possible, as well as enabling participation and engagement of people in their communities.

On 1 April 2016 as part of Health & Social Care Integration required by the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 the management of Care & Repair moved from the Council's Housing Sub Committee to the newly formed **Health and Social Care Integrated Joint Board**. The day-to-day supervision of Care and Repair is carried out by the Service Manager for Community Occupational Therapy. To ensure the successful delivery of this service, there is a Steering Group in place that includes representatives from the Council, the IJB and the delivery partner.

10.4 Support to Live Independently

The Small Repairs and Home Support Services' known as the HandyVan is a region wide service for vulnerable people who meet the published referral criteria. The client is either:

- A homeowner; or
 - A tenant of a private landlord,
- and in addition must be either one or more of the following:
- Over 60
 - Disabled (no barrier on age)
 - Have learning difficulties or mental health problems (no barrier on age)
 - Victim of domestic abuse (no barrier on age).

While not exhaustive, the service provides practical assistance to all those eligible for home security, smoke alarms, small repairs, falls prevention, minor aids and adaptations, and portable appliance testing. The 'HandyVan' also obtain necessary authorisations for works, recruit, train and support volunteers and signpost other services.

Food Train Extra helps older people with small household jobs that do not require skilled tradesmen. This service delivers work such as smoke alarm checks, light bulb changing, home safety jobs, duvet changing and freezer defrosting. These services are directly funded by the Council to help protect our most vulnerable people.

10.5 Dementia Friendly Design

This service delivers small adaptations in local resident's homes to help those suffering with dementia. An example of the work carried out is replacing solid kitchen cupboard doors with glass doors, enabling the householder to see the contents rather than being required to rely on memory alone. There is significant demand for innovative services of this nature in our region that is likely to increase, due to the ageing demographic in Dumfries and Galloway. Simple changes to dementia sufferers living environment can prevent the need for much more costly placements in residential care.

10.6 Below Tolerable Standard

According to the Scottish Household Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2011-13, 2% of housing stock in D&G is Below the Tolerable Standard (BTS) which is below the national average of 3%. Owner occupied properties adjudged to be BTS was 2% while 3% of private rented properties were BTS and 0% of social housing properties were BTS. The Tolerable Standard is set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and consists of a set of criteria covering elements of a residential property. A house meets the Tolerable Standard if it:

- is structurally stable
- is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp
- has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating
- has satisfactory thermal insulation
- has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house
- has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house
- has a water closet or waterless closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house
- has a fixed bath or shower and a wash-hand basin, each provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house
- has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water
- in the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installations for the purposes of that supply
 - “the electrical installation” is the electrical wiring and associated components and fittings, but excludes equipment and appliances
 - “the relevant requirements” are that the electrical installation is adequate and safe to use
- has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house; and
- has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.

The Council Plan 2017-22 has committed to allocate £1 million to a Town Centre Living Fund that will help increase the availability and quality of housing in our region. However, almost half of this region’s population live in areas classified as rural where the prevalence of older housing construction types poses significant challenges in relation to delivering high quality accommodation. Where properties fail to meet the Tolerable Standard, assistance to carry out the required repairs is made available to homeowners. At this time, the Council has no plans to formally designate areas of the region as Housing Renewal Areas as set out in Section 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. This is because patterns of disrepair tend to occur on a disbursed basis throughout the region and there are currently no significant concentrations of BTS properties in Dumfries and Galloway.

10.7 Trusted Trader

Originally established in Dumfries and Galloway in 2014, the Trusted Trader scheme has continued to grow with 51 new members joining in 2017. At 31 December 2017 the total membership was 165 traders. The Trusted Trader scheme allows local contractors to join and become accredited and helps local residents choose suitable contractors for work to their homes. The scheme is currently aimed at home improvement traders. Traders are reviewed by customers as well as checked and monitored by the Council to make sure they’re trading legally.

Trusted Traders invite customers to give feedback which can be viewed online. There are on average 200 verified reviews on a quarterly basis, with an associated satisfaction rate of around 98%. More than half of the reviews are from customers over the age of 60 while a quarter are from people over the age of 70. As well as providing much needed protection to vulnerable consumer groups, Trusted Trader delivers economic benefits to local businesses. The customer reviews indicate that between 2014 and 2017, members have carried out work to the value of £4m.

Glossary

CHR - Common Housing Register

Corporate Parent - an organisation or person in power who has special responsibilities to care experienced and looked after children and young people

CPP – Community Planning Partnership

DGHP – Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership

DGSCHT – Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust

EESHS – Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing

HEEPS: ABS – Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Scheme

HMA –Housing Market Area

HNDA – Housing Need and Demand Assessment

HST – Housing Supply Target

IJB – Integration Joint Board

LGBT Plus – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexuals and others questioning or expressing their gender identity and sexuality.

LHA _ Loreburn Housing Association

LHS – Local Housing Strategy

LOIP – Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

Place-Making - the process of designing new developments that ensures they contribute to sustainable communities and support existing services

PRS – Private Rented Sector

RHF - Rural Housing Fund

RSL –Registered Social Landlord

SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEHP – Scottish Empty Homes Partnership

SHIP – Strategic Housing Investment Plan

SHQS – Scottish Housing Quality Standard

SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SLF – Scottish Land Fund

Strategic Plan - Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Sustainable – able to support themselves/itself in the long term



DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2018-23 ACTION PLAN

Five strategic priorities have been identified within this strategy, though they are connected, representing the complex nature of Dumfries and Galloway's housing system and the potential for a range of diverse and positive impacts. The actions to deliver these priorities do not represent every aspect of housing that we are working on with partners but cover those highlighted during the consultation process carried out in the documents production. Our strategic priorities are:

Ensure that the available housing stock in our region is fully utilised and new housing development supports the sustainability of our towns, settlements and villages.

We will work together with a range of stakeholders including the Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure solutions are delivered that enable people to live as independently as possible in community settings

We will ensure that households who live in the private rented sector have a home that is safe, warm and achieves the required standards

We will help everyone in our region to live in warm, affordable, energy efficient homes

Ensure that people who live in privately owned property are able to live in homes that are of a high quality and in good condition

It is a major challenge for the Council and its partners to deliver these strategic priorities within the constraints of limited resources. During consultation throughout the development of this Strategy, the Council's partners have expressed a willingness and commitment to work together collaboratively to achieve shared strategic priorities and to explore new ways of delivering positive outcomes for residents.

Strategic Objective 1

Ensure that the available housing stock in our region is fully utilised and new housing development supports the sustainability of our towns, settlements and villages.

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Ensure the Strategic Housing Forum meets on a regular basis to review the implementation of this LHS	By enabling shared stakeholder understanding of local housing priorities and the extent to which they have been delivered in our region	The Strategic Housing Forum will meet twice a year throughout the LHS Planning period of 2018-23	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Deliver the Council's annual £1million Town Centre Living Fund to maximise the impact of wider regeneration activities	Empty homes, buildings and sites are brought back into use to provide new affordable housing and mixed-use developments in our regions network of town centres	There is a commitment to deliver the Town Centre Living fund annually through the Council Plan 2017-2022	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Support the Community led Mid-steeple Quarter project in Dumfries Town Centre	Empty buildings in Dumfries town centre are brought back into mixed use to help create sustainable regeneration	Throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	Dumfries High Street Limited (Community ownership group)
Ensure the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) maximises investment in new affordable housing supply and helps create attractive places that support a broad range of services	New affordable housing developments are delivered by our Registered Social Landlord partners	Maximise the use of the annual Resource Planning Assumptions allocated to our region by the Scottish Government.	Registered Social Landlords/ Private Developers/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Seek opportunities to develop brownfield sites and empty buildings across our region for new housing	By working with development partners to identify suitable locations for the development of affordable housing to be delivered through the SHIP	This will be an ongoing process that will continue to be prioritised through the SHIP preparation for the period 2018-23	Dumfries and Galloway Council and its affordable housing development partners
Continue to support the work of the Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust (DGSCHT) as a key strategic partner	The DGSCHT continue to receive their core funding from the Scottish Government on an annual basis. Support for applications made by local communities to the Scottish Government that deliver the objectives of this Local Housing Strategy will be supported by our Council.	The DGSCHT work with local communities to facilitate the delivery of new affordable housing through applications to the Scottish Governments Rural Housing and Land Funds throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	DGSCHT/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Encourage private developers, with the aid of subsidy, to put in place innovative methods of delivering affordable housing in our smaller rural communities	By supporting applications to the Scottish Governments Partnership Support for Regeneration funding stream	Throughout the SHIP planning period 2017-22	The Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Address concentrations of low demand housing by demolition and re-building new housing in its place where refurbishment is not a feasible option	Stock rationalisation proposals are included in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan and funding allocated by the Scottish Government	Plans are in place by the end of the LHS Planning period 2018-23	RSLs/Scottish Government/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Support local RSLs to buy back former local authority homes so they can tackle the problem of low demand in some blocks of flats	Proposals will be included in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan. There are a number of mixed tenure blocks that require upgrading to ensure compliance with regulatory standards	Plans to modernise mixed tenure blocks of flats are in place to be delivered by the end of the LHS Planning Period 2018-23.	Local Registered Social Landlords/Scottish Government/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
RSL partners have allocations policies with agreed lettings targets that meet the needs of key strategic groups such as people leaving the armed forces and those referred by the Council as a result of being as homeless.	The Council will participate in the development of policies to ensure the housing needs of key priority groups are being met in Dumfries and Galloway	Allocations policies are reviewed on an annual basis throughout the Local Housing Strategy planning period 2018-23.	Homes 4 D and G (Common Housing Register)/Loreburn Housing Association/The Homelessness and Housing Options Service.
Ensure that young people who are care experienced are offered appropriate housing solutions to meet their needs as identified in their Care Pathway Plans	Care Pathway Plans include consideration of housing options to ensure care experienced young people do not become homeless	Housing options are considered in all Care Pathway Plans developed with young people before they move to more independent living	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Children's Services
Reduce the number of empty homes in our region by providing advice to owners and local communities	The Council will continue to provide support to owners of empty homes through the Strategic Housing Investment Service and produce information that is easily accessible to all in a variety of locations	This will be delivered on an ongoing basis and regularly reviewed through the annual development of the Council's Scheme of Assistance	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring empty properties back into use where purchase on the open market has not been successful	Where the need arises, the Council will seek to bring together the necessary stakeholders to ensure it is able to successfully conclude a Compulsory Purchase Order	Throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/Legal Services/internal and external stakeholders
Participate in the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP) hosted by Shelter Scotland	Best practice in bringing empty homes back into use is shared between Local Authorities and implemented in our region	Dumfries and Galloway Council send a representative to scheduled meetings throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Apply the additional 100% Council Tax levy to long term empty homes	To encourage owners to bring their properties back into use, the Local Government Finance (Unoccupied Properties etc.) (Scotland) Act 2012 allows Councils to increase the level of council tax payable on these properties.	Dumfries and Galloway Council have taken the decision to apply this levy.	Dumfries and Galloway Council
RSL's deliver Equality Act training to their staff and ensure their policies tackle discrimination against people with protected characteristics	A culture of equality is visibly embedded in the operational delivery and policy development of our local RSL's by delivering training to all their staff	All RSL policies and procedures are fully compliant with the terms of the Equality Act 2010 by the end of LHS planning period 2018-23	Registered Social Landlords operating in Dumfries and Galloway
Consider a range of housing options to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics under the terms of the Equality Act 2010	A range of new housing options will be delivered through the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Programme. For example, wheelchair accessible housing, autism friendly homes and accommodation for people with complex needs.	Dumfries and Galloway Council has been allocated annual Resource Planning Assumptions up to 2020/21 and it's SHIP is reviewed regularly and agreed on an annual basis	Registered Social Landlords/ Adult Health and Social Care Partnership/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/ Scottish Government.
Seek opportunities to support the delivery of town centre housing developments through the utilisation of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund	Work with partners to identify regeneration opportunities that support the Scottish Government's Town Centre Action Plan and ensure that a proportion of the funding allocated to the Council supports new housing	This funding is allocated to the Council by the Scottish Government. Housing is seen as a key component of town centre regeneration as it improves the footfall and security of these locations.	Council's Economic Development Service, Third Sector and Registered Social Landlords
Enable the regeneration of Town Centre properties by making applications to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for projects with a housing element	Dumfries and Galloway Council will support applications from partner organisations to this fund that meet the requirements of the Scottish Government's criteria by identifying suitable projects with a mix of domestic and non-domestic uses	The fund is open to application submissions to the Scottish Government on an annual basis	Council's Economic Development Service/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/Registered Social Landlords/Third Sector organisations

Strategic Objective 2

We will work together with a range of stakeholders including the Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure solutions are delivered that enable people to live as independently as possible in community settings

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
A proportion of new housing development in the SHIP will be two-bedroom bungalows to help meet the demands of local population demographics	Request our RSL development partners to consider the inclusion of this property type in new developments on a case by case basis where the need is identified. This will be through a process of both community engagement and waiting list analysis	The Scottish Government has allocated the Council annual Resource Planning Assumptions up to 2021 and the development of affordable housing is ongoing	Registered Social Landlords/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Maximise the use of assistive technology to allow people to continue to live independently in their own communities by ensuring the existing and new housing stock has the required infrastructure to support this	Work with the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership through their Particular Needs Housing Strategy Group and the Digital Health and Care Programme Board	Throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	The Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/Adult Health and Social Care Partnership/ Registered Social Landlords
Develop innovative housing models in partnership with key stakeholders for people with particular needs to be delivered through the SHIP	By participating in joint working arrangements between the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership and RSLs	The Scottish Government has allocated the Council annual Resource Planning Assumptions up to 2020/21	Health and Social Care Partnership/Registered Social Landlords/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Provide strategic support to the Crichton Trust who are examining the feasibility of a Care Campus/Inter-Generational Community in our region	Participate in the work of the Building the Case for a Care Campus Independent Reference Group which is chaired by the Crichton Trust	Throughout the LHS Planning Period 2018 -23	The Crichton Trust/University of the West of Scotland
Consider allocating funding to the IJB for delivery of Care and Repair, Food train Extra and Handy-van services targeted at private sector homeowners	Report presented to Elected members of Dumfries and Galloway Council to request the required funding is transferred to the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership for the delivery of these projects which aim to promote and enable independent living	The Scheme of Assistance is reviewed on an annual basis	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/ Adult Health and Social Care Partnership

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Facilitate the delivery of actions identified in the Care and Support Needs Housing Strategy through the delivery of SHIP projects that meet the needs identified by the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership	By participating in the meetings of the Particular Needs Housing Strategy Group to identify opportunities for developments included in the SHIP to meet the needs of vulnerable people living in this region.	This will be an ongoing process throughout the lifetime of this Local housing Strategy	Adult Health and Social Care Partnership/Registered Social Landlords/Scottish Government/ the Council's Strategic Housing Investment service.
Build bespoke homes through the SHIP for people whose housing need cannot be met from the existing housing stock	Identify unmet need through the Common Housing Register and request RSL development partners build the required property types through their development programme	Unmet housing need is a standing agenda item at meetings of the Homes 4 D and G Board that take place on a bi-monthly basis	Common Housing Register (Homes 4 D and G)/Registered Social Landlords/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Contribute to the work of the Particular Needs Housing Strategy Group to strengthen existing relationships and create new opportunities for collaborative working	Provide advice in relation to the opportunities presented via the delivery of the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan. We will also assist in raising the awareness of housing solutions with the IJB	Throughout the LHS planning period 2018-23	Health and Social Care Partnership/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/ Registered Social Landlords
Make full use of the skills and experience made available through third sector partners in the design and delivery of new housing models	Invite representatives of third sector organisations to meetings of the Strategic Housing Forum	Two meetings of the Strategic Housing Forum will be scheduled each year	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/Third Sector
Identify the funding across the housing, health and social care partnership to develop housing for people with complex needs.	A Business Case for the provision of this accommodation will be considered by the Adult Health and Social Care Senior Management Team	The target date for developing the business case and seeking agreement to take forward is 2020	Health and Social Care Partnership/The Homelessness and Housing Options Service/ Registered Social Landlords
Identify and deliver solutions that ensure the Council owned Gypsy/Traveller sites meet the minimum site standards put in place by the Scottish Government.	Capital funding has been allocated for 2019/20 to ensure the site at Glenluce meets the minimum site standards. In addition, funding has been allocated to carry of further site investigations at the Collin site to inform an options appraisal process regarding future service provision in the Dumfries area	The Gypsy Traveller site at Glenluce will meet the Scottish Governments minimum site standards by 2020. The Council will identify its preferred option for future service provision in the Dumfries area by 2020.	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Undertake an annual satisfaction survey of Gypsy/ Traveller site residents to ensure regulatory standards are met	Site residents are requested to complete the survey and support is offered to ensure we achieve the highest possible return rate. Feedback gathered is also acted upon to improve the current services provided.	The survey is undertaken annually to align with the Scottish Housing Regulator's reporting requirements	The Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Fully engage with Torthorwald Community Council and Old Luce Community Council to ensure positive relationships are achieved between the Gypsy/Traveller and settled communities	Attend meetings of the Community Council's when requested and invite their representatives to participate in the work of the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Group.	Attend meetings when requested	The Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer
Hold regular meetings of the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Group.	Invite all stakeholders to attend meetings to discuss the range of legislative, policy and operational practice issues that may have an impact on the services we deliver	Meetings scheduled every 6 months throughout the LHS Planning period 2018-23	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments of Gypsy/Travellers and this information will be used to assess the need for a transit site within the region.	The Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will be the first point of contact for all unauthorised encampments	Unauthorised encampments will be assessed throughout the year as they occur.	The Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer
Ensure travelling show people have the right to occupy sites throughout Dumfries and Galloway when they visit our region	By entering into occupancy agreements with travelling show people	Fairs take place during long established traditional dates during each year	Dumfries and Galloway Council Licensing Service
Seek opportunities to implement the housing recommendations contained in the report "Better Lives, Better Futures – a study of housing and support needs of young people with autism spectrum disorder in Dumfries and Galloway	The Better Lives Partnership, Adult Health and Social Care Partnership and Registered Social Landlords work together to test the feasibility of delivering the housing recommendations set out in this report via a SHIP project	A business case is developed by the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership for consideration by 2021	Adult Health and Social Care Partnership/Better Lives Partnership/Registered Social Landlords/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Deliver 8 units per year of accessible homes through the Council's SHIP for people requiring wheelchairs.	Unmet housing need is a standing agenda item at Homes for D and G Board meetings. (Loreburn Housing Association also attend to discuss matters of shared strategic importance)	Meetings are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year	Homes 4 D and G Board/ Registered Social Landlords/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Review and update the Housing Contribution Statement in the Adult Health and Social Care Strategic Plan	The Housing Contribution Statement will be amended to reflect current developments in joint working arrangements. This will then allow the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Plan to be updated taking account of current practices.	This work will be complete during 2020	Adult Health and Social Care Partnership/ Council Housing Investment Service

Strategic Objective 3

We will ensure that households who live in the private rented sector have a home that is safe, warm and achieves the required standards

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Implement the national scheme for landlord registration under the terms of the Anti-Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004	Refresh and update working processes when required to take account of changes in legislation/ policy at a national level. Ensuring the successful delivery of statutory functions will be the priority for this Council	Whenever required through the LHS planning period 2018-23	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Assess applications for Licensing Houses in Multiple Occupation under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to ensure the safety and wellbeing of tenants	Take reports to the Council's Licensing Panel for determination where there are concerns in relation to a landlord fit and proper person status. The Council will also ensure that target timescales for this process are achieved	Whenever required during the LHS planning period 2018-23	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Take enforcement action against private landlords who fail to comply with the Repairing Standard	Where attempts to achieve a resolution to issues identified occurs, the Council will exercise its right to make third party referrals to the Housing and Property Chamber	This will be an ongoing action that is utilised whenever required during the LHS planning period 2018-23	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Establish a Private Sector Landlord Forum to ensure positive and effective engagement with this sector	The national landlord registration data base will be used to invite private landlords operating in our region to the forum	The Forum will be established during 2020	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Ensure there is a range of publicly accessible information about the private rented housing sector on the Council's web site	Regularly review and update the information available	Whenever required during the LHS planning period 2018-23	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Implement the Scottish Government's proposals to introduce energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector	Landlords of privately rented homes will be required to ensure their properties achieve new minimum energy efficiency standards. The Council will take account of the legislation that is put in place and carry out its role as a priority to help support the aim to become a carbon neutral region and alleviate fuel poverty.	Private Landlords will be required to achieve EPC band E from 1 April 2020 at a change of tenancy and band D from 1 April 2022 at a change of tenancy. April 2020 and April 2022	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service
Encourage private sector landlords to make their accommodation available to a wide range of people as a realistic Housing option	This will be achieved through discussion at the Private Sector Landlord Forum	The Forum will be established during 2020	HMO Licensing and Landlord Registration Service/ The Homelessness and Housing Options Service

Strategic Objective 4

We will help everyone in our region to live in warm, affordable, energy efficient homes

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Support the delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategic Action Plan by improving the energy efficiency of homes in our region	The Council will continue to deliver the HEEPS: ABS projects providing solid wall insulation to homes of suitable construction type in the private sector. By working in partnership with RSLs to deliver mixed tenure projects, some of the least energy efficient homes in the social rented sector can also be improved and this will support the delivery of EESSH. In addition, the continued delivery of the SHIP programme will help to provide high quality energy efficient homes, some of which will meet the Passivhaus standard.	At the present time, funding allocations from the Scottish Government for the HEEPS: ABS projects are made on an annual basis. It is expected that this will continue until at least 2021. The SHIP covers the planning period 2017-22	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/ Scottish Government/ Registered Social Landlords/ Energy Agency
Encourage RSLs and private developers to construct new homes to Passivhaus standards where the opportunity arises	There are high levels of fuel poverty in Dumfries and Galloway and the Council has an aspiration to become a carbon neutral region. By including proposals for Passivhaus homes in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan we will support these objectives.	The SHIP covers the planning period 2017-22	Registered Social Landlords/ private developers/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Maximise the use of funding to deliver energy efficiency measures to homes in the private sector including working in partnership with RSLs to deliver schemes to mixed tenure blocks	Work with the Energy Agency who act as the Council's delivery partner for the Council's Energy Efficient Scotland Area Based Scheme	At present funding is allocated to the Council on an annual basis	Council Housing Investment Service/Energy Agency/ Registered Social Landlords
Monitor the progress being made by RSL's within our region to achieve the "Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing" by 2020	Review the Annual Returns on the Charter submitted by RSL's to the Scottish Housing Regulator. These returns evidence each RSL's performance towards achieving the Scottish Social Housing Charter	Annually	Registered Social Landlords/ Scottish Housing Regulator/ Council Housing Investment Service
Continue to provide strategic support for organisations applying for funding to tackle fuel poverty, such as the Dumfries and Galloway Lemon Aid Fuel Poverty project	Provide statements of support when requested that demonstrate alignment with the Strategic Objectives agreed through our Local Housing Strategy	When required throughout the lifetime of this Local Housing Strategy	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Support national proposals to establish a publicly owned, not for profit energy provider	By indicating support for this project through the Council's membership of COSLA	Where the Scottish Government progresses this aim and consultation responses are sought, this Council will support the principle of actions aimed at reducing the fuel costs for households in our region. Fuel costs are one of the key drivers in relation to fuel poverty	Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
All developments agreed through the SHIP should support sustainability, including the reduction of carbon and other greenhouse gases to ensure they have a positive impact on climate change	By creating well designed places where new homes are of high quality, fit well into the neighbourhood and are climate ready. Our development partners build high energy efficiency homes, including some that achieve Passivhaus standards.	Throughout the SHIP planning period 2017-22	Registered Social Landlords/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Work with local Registered Social Landlords to enable the delivery of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficient Standard for Social Housing targets by supporting work in mixed tenure locations			
Contribute towards the delivery of a carbon neutral region	Dumfries and Galloway Council aims to become a carbon neutral region and has recently developed a 12-point plan to identify, monitor and implement options that will support this aspiration. Through the delivery of housing and related services we will build energy efficient homes and improve the quality of existing stock to further reduce carbon emissions.	The Council Plan aims to achieve this by 31 March 2022 and the reduction of residential carbon emissions will be an ongoing objective throughout the lifetime of this Local Housing Strategy	Registered Social Landlords/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/The Energy Agency
Ensure that where enquiries in relation to fuel poverty and energy efficiency are received, customers are referred to the Energy Savings Trust for expert advice, signposting and potential funding assistance from a range of initiatives.	The Energy Savings Trust provide expert advice on behalf of the Scottish Government and are able to identify the range of initiatives that enquirers may be eligible for. Where enquiries of this nature are received, we will refer local residents on to this service.	This will be an ongoing referral pathway throughout the lifetime of this Local Housing Strategy	Energy Savings Trust/ Energy Agency/ Dumfries and Galloway Council/ the Lemon Aid project

Strategic Objective 5

Ensure that people who live in privately owned property are able to live in homes that are of a high quality and in good condition

We will	How will we do this?	When?	Who is responsible?
Put in place a Scheme of Assistance detailing how the Council will provide advice and support to people who live in the private sector	Seek Elected Member agreement to allocate the required budgets for delivery of projects including Care and Repair and the Town Centre Living Fund	Annually throughout the LHS planning period (2018-23)	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service/Adult Health and Social Care Partnership
Supplement the range of advice and assistance provided through the production of leaflets that offer information on property condition, adaptations and energy efficiency	Make the leaflets easily available throughout the Council's network of community facilities	Complete	Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Recommend the annual transfer of funding to the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver a Care and Repair service that provides adaptations in privately owned homes that help people to live independently for as long as possible	Care and Repair is a delegated function to the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership. It is responsible for the operational delivery and monitoring of the Care and Repair Service	Annually throughout the LHS planning period	Dumfries and Galloway Council/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Further develop the Trusted Trader Scheme to provide greater consumer confidence when selecting tradesmen to carry out works to their home	By seeking the agreement of Elected Members to allocated funding that supports the delivery of this service through the annual Scheme of Assistance report	Annually throughout the LHS planning period	Council's Environmental Standards Service/Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service
Deliver the Below Tolerable Standard grants as part of the Council's Town Centre Living Fund to provide assistance to private property owners when carrying out works that improve the quality of accommodation.	By seeking the agreement of Elected Members setting the funding priorities for the Town Centre Living Fund. A range of promotional material has also been produced and we will pro-actively seek projects that aim to support the delivery of the Councils aspiration to enable town centre regeneration and support sustainable communities throughout our region.	Annually throughout the Council Plan period 2017-22	Dumfries and Galloway Council/ Dumfries and Galloway Council's Strategic Housing Investment Service

**If you would like some help understanding this or need it
in another format please contact 030 33 33 3000**