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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Local Housing Strategy 2022 - 2027

West Dunbartonshire COUNCIL

Foreword by Councillor Diane Docherty



Councillor Diane Docherty,
Convenor of Housing and Communities Committee

I am delighted to introduce West Dunbartonshire's new Local Housing Strategy, which sets out our vision for Housing and Housing Support services across West Dunbartonshire for the period 2022 – 2027.

The aim of this strategy is to focus on the five key themes of Housing Need and Demand; Promoting Good Quality Homes; Homelessness and Housing Options; Place and Community; and Supported, Specialist and Particular Needs Housing.

We know that good quality housing is an essential feature of any thriving community and as a Council, we are committed to ensuring that our residents have housing which not only meets their needs, but is safe, secure and desirable.

This strategy will allow us to build upon the existing work the Council has already undertaken to improve Housing provision across West Dunbartonshire, with renewed focus on our new build housing programme

More Homes West Dunbartonshire; maximising energy efficiency in all our homes; encouraging locally-focused lifestyles; and promoting and sustaining equality and inclusion.

Furthermore, the strategy demonstrates our commitment to continue to make progress with enhancements to housing provision locally, while also supporting national efforts. I look forward to joining forces with our communities and partners to see our plans progress.



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Introduction

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how West Dunbartonshire Council and its partners plan to address the housing, and housing related opportunities and challenges, over the next five year period 2022/2023 – 2026/2027.

This new plan aims to build on the significant progress made on the issues identified in the previous LHS 2017-2022 and to address newly arising housing matters particularly in response to the Covid crisis.

The **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001** ('the 2001 Act') places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a LHS that sets out its strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services.

It should demonstrate the local authority's strategic approach to dealing with key housing related issues such as:

- **Delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures.**
- **Setting out its contribution to the effective integration of health and social care.**
- **Showing how the LHS is supporting the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Targets, whilst reflecting the needs and priorities of the local authority area.**

The 2001 Act requires the LHS to be supported by an assessment of housing provision including the need and demand for housing and related services, that it must be submitted to Scottish Ministers, and that local authorities must keep their LHS under review. Local authorities are encouraged to report on progress annually as part of the monitoring process, employing an Outcome Action Plan to gauge progress.

The Scottish Government issued **guidance** in September 2019 to assist local authorities in the preparation of their strategies.

The Scottish Government expects the LHS to be developed in collaboration with stakeholders, including residents and tenants with equality issues embedded throughout including in housing advice, homelessness, procurement, new build and refurbishment, specialist housing services, housing management services, allocations and private sector housing.

The LHS is a corporate document, agreed and supported by all relevant local authority departments with the Housing Development team of the Council's Housing Services leading on its development. The development of the LHS has been taken forward in association with colleagues from the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, demonstrating the vital role housing has to play in the integration of health and social care services.

This plan builds on the success of its predecessor, the **More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022**, and seeks to address emerging housing challenges.

West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership

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The Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba

West Dunbartonshire Council

Strategic Framework

The Local Housing Strategy is set within, and contributes to, a wider strategic policy framework both local and national. While this strategy is being written at a particularly fluid period in terms of strategic planning, it notes the key policy documents influencing our direction over the next five years.

The LHS will be influenced by and help to deliver on the following principal background policy documents:

Housing to 2040:

Housing to 2040 sets out a Vision for Housing in Scotland to 2040 and a Route Map to get there. It aims to deliver the Scottish Government's ambition for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be.

Housing to 2040 is the culmination of an extensive consultation with stakeholders carried out by the Scottish Government, which included the publication of a discussion paper in 2018 and a draft vision in 2019. It sets out the drivers of change that will impact the housing system over the next twenty years, including population and health (noting an ageing population across the country and depopulation in some rural areas), technology, energy and climate change. It outlines the route map to take housing policy forward.

The key ambitions detailed in Housing to 2040 align with those of West Dunbartonshire Council and the paper will help inform our housing policies and delivery plans as contained in this LHS. The route map is presented in four parts:

More homes at the heart of great places:
Sets a target to deliver an additional 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, with at least 70% of these to be for social rent and of a higher standard, especially in terms of energy efficiency, connectivity and outdoor space.



target to deliver an additional **110,000** affordable homes by **2032**

Placemaking and community involvement, including around town centres, is promoted, with the Planning system encouraging the idea of 20-minute neighbourhoods to encourage well-being.

Affordability and choice:
Here the Scottish Government outlines its commitment to delivering equality in housing around themes such as ending homelessness, improving accessibility, and ensuring the housing system operates fairly across all tenures including the private rented sector.

Affordable warmth and zero emission homes:
All new social housing is to be zero emissions by 2026. The energy efficiency and de-carbonisation agenda will also apply to existing homes. The value of modernising construction methods, building up supply chains and growing the skills required to deliver on these ambitions is emphasised.

Improving the quality of all homes:
No matter what tenure, everyone who wants to is enabled to live independently in comfort in their own home. Standards will be tenure neutral and the importance of connectivity recognised.

West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022:

This plan outlines the vision for the delivery of integrated health and social care services across West Dunbartonshire. It contains a Housing Contribution Statement which sets out the role and contribution of the local Housing Sector – through West Dunbartonshire Council in its role as a strategic housing authority - in meeting the outcomes and priorities identified within the Strategic Plan.

As such, the Housing Contribution Statement acts as the 'bridge' between the Local Housing Strategy and the Strategic Plan for West Dunbartonshire. Chapter 5 Particular Housing below provides more detail on our plans for the role of housing in the integration of health and care.

A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Delivery Plan 2016 - 2021:

The aim of this plan is to remove the barriers that isolate, exclude and so disable the individual and instead promote an independent living model in which all disabled people are able and supported to live their lives with freedom, choice, control and dignity, participating equally alongside other citizens in their families, communities, workplaces and wider society.





Race Equality Framework and Action Plan 2016 - 2030:

The Scottish Government is determined to show leadership in advancing race equality, tackling racism and addressing the barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic communities from realising their potential. The Race Equality Framework for Scotland sets out how the Scottish Government aims to progress this ambition over a 15-year period from 2016 to 2030.

Getting It Right For Every Child:

Tackling GIRFEC is the Scottish Government's policy supporting families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

Tackling Child Poverty Action Plan 2018 - 2022:

This plan details the measures being taken to eradicate child poverty in Scotland through partnership working. Housing has a vital role to play in its delivery.

Health Inequalities Reform Programme 2018:

To improve Scotland's health and wellbeing we need to work together to shift our focus towards preventing ill health, reducing inequalities and working more effectively in partnership. This will require a different way of working that supports everybody as part of a whole system to move towards a shared vision for public health. Success will be judged against the major public health challenges facing Scotland:

- **Scotland's relatively poor health.**
- **The significant and persistent health inequalities.**
- **Unsustainable pressures on health and social care services.**

The Scottish Government and COSLA agreed six Public Health Priorities in June 2018. These are intended to support national and local partners across Scotland to work together to improve healthy life expectancy and reduce health inequalities in our communities.

- **A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities.**
- **A Scotland where we flourish in our early years.**
- **A Scotland where we have good mental wellbeing.**
- **A Scotland where we reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.**
- **A Scotland where we have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all.**
- **A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active.**

The Scottish Government's Autism Strategy 2011:

Autism is a national priority. Given the importance we all attach to this agenda, the development and creation of a new Scottish Strategy for Autism is vital to ensure that progress is made across Scotland in delivering quality services.

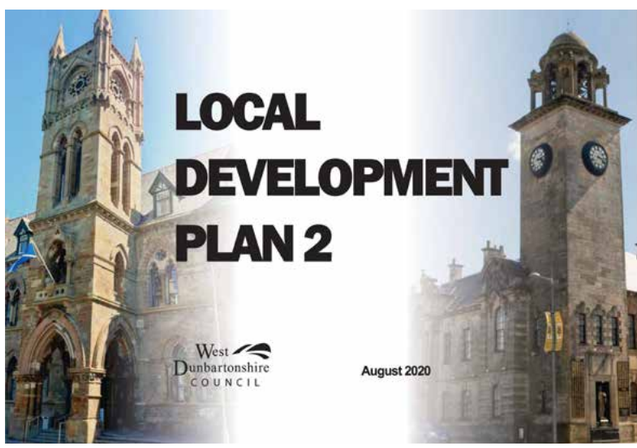
Good Mental Health for All – NHS Scotland 2016:

'Good Mental Health for All' is an initiative developed by Public Health Scotland and endorsed by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities which sets out a vision to improve mental health and wellbeing. It links to the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy and encourages action at national, local and community levels. Housing is recognised as an important factor influencing a person's mental health.

Proposed Local Development Plan 2:

West Dunbartonshire Council's proposed Local Development Plan 2 provides the strategic spatial framework for this Local Housing Strategy and puts green infrastructure at the core of good places.





Consultation process

We consulted as widely as possible on the draft Local Housing Strategy in order to gather as many different opinions and perspectives as possible. The pandemic made this more challenging than in previous years when in-person events and sessions could be held. Nevertheless we have taken a multi-pronged approach using a survey to allow people to engage at a time and date that suits them and workshops to allow for more detailed discussion on key topics. We offered some groups such as WDTRO and Housing Solutions Partnership their own workshop to discuss the local housing strategy and the potential challenges and opportunities from their perspectives.

Survey

In a change from previous years where we have had two surveys, one detailed and one high level, we ran a single survey this year. The survey was mid-level of detail and designed to allow us to gain an understanding of our resident's thoughts and priorities for housing over the next five years.

The survey was available on West Dunbartonshire Council's website consultation page and in addition to this the survey was shared through the Citizen's Panel, social media platforms, Tenants and Residents Organisation mailing lists and various mailing lists of interested people.

We received 130 responses to the survey which exceeds previous years' responses and many responders took the time to leave comments and thoughts which has given us good qualitative insight into their thoughts.



Workshops

We hosted a number of thematic workshops to discuss the key topics in the Local Housing Strategy which allowed us to delve into these topics in a more detailed way than the survey allows.

The workshops were open to anyone who wished to attend and promoted as part of the wider consultation with people able to sign up via Eventbrite. The workshops provided a number of good discussions in particular around homelessness, the private rented sector and particular needs housing.

How our consultation has shaped the strategy

We have woven the findings of the survey into our strategy and particularly into our actions ensuring that are focusing on the area's our respondents identified as priorities. For example respondents to our survey made it clear that new homes were important to them and they should be designed to cater for a variety of needs. There was also strong support throughout our consultation responses for both energy efficiency measures for both new and existing homes and survey respondents would like more information on how to ensure their property is energy efficient.

Connected to this survey respondents were very supportive of twenty minute neighbourhoods and the majority thought this improved their neighbourhood and over 50% thought it would encourage them to walk or wheel places more. Finally, support for specialist, supported or particular needs housing was strong and survey respondents recognised the vital role this type of housing can play.

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Equalities

West Dunbartonshire Council's approach to impact assessment already goes beyond the statutory minimum and has done for a number of years. For this Local Housing Strategy our approach to our equalities monitoring has utilised a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment model. This brings a number of benefits because it takes a cross cutting approach to think about inequalities and allows us to consider our duties across a number of key areas.

What is a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (HIIA)?

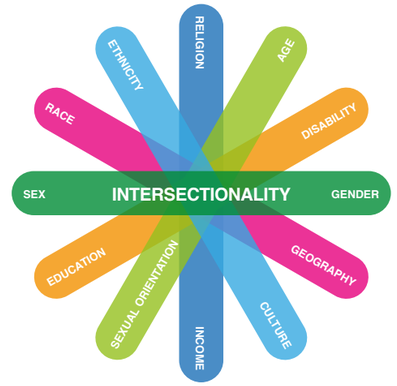
Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (HIIA) is a tool to assess the impact on people of applying a proposed, new or revised policy or practice. HIIA goes beyond the public sector's **legal duty of the Equality Act 2010** to assess impact (EQIA) by assessing the impact of the strategy:

- **On health inequalities**
- **With regard to protected characteristics**
- **On human rights**
- **On socioeconomic circumstances.**

In April 2018 legislation came into force called the **Fairer Scotland Duty**. It asks public bodies to 'pay due regard' to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage. The Scottish Government guidance is still in the interim stage of a three year implementation period. However, we believe the HIIA considers potential financial and social impacts to meet this 'due regard.'

The HIIA prompts thinking about potential differential impacts based on income, employment, social and cultural status.

For more information see the Equality and Human Rights Commission Guide



How are we carrying out our HIIA?

Prior to consultation, we carried out HIIA scoping sessions on each of our chapters using guidance from Public Health Scotland and in collaboration with colleagues from HSCP, the Health and Social Care Partnership.

During this scoping exercise we sought to identify if there was an impact, whether the impact was positive or negative and the discussions which took place and these helped to inform the survey questions and workshop areas.

In our appendices you will find an accompanying report which combines a summary of the discussions we had in the scoping workshops with the findings of the survey to demonstrate that we have considered the impact of the Housing Strategy, maximising the positive impacts and seeking to mitigate the negative ones whilst acknowledging that some of the biggest impacts could occur due to lack of action.

How has our HIIA shaped the strategy?

As noted we carried out a HIIA on each of the chapters in this strategy, this was important to ensure that we dealt with each topic in a manageable way but it also gave us an opportunity to delve into the potential impact of this strategy in a more detailed way.

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Our strugg but we are

Audre Lorde

Whilst some of the discussion were very specific to the chapter we have identified five key findings which came up throughout the process and these have had the biggest impact of shaping the strategy as a whole. These are set out below and along with how these findings involved out strategy:

1.
High quality homes benefit everyone:
this helped to reinforce the importance of making sure that all homes in West Dunbartonshire are the best they can be for example investing in our social homes and helping our owner occupiers and private landlords to do the same. It also highlighted that we need to mitigate against some of the structural challenges which make it harder for people to access high quality housing suitable to their needs e.g. young people just starting out.

2.
New homes offer an opportunity:
compared to existing homes which can be challenging to retrofit or adapt new homes offer an opportunity to ensure that all new homes added to our housing stock are energy efficient and designed to suit a variety of needs and in particular cater to those with specialist or particular needs e.g. wheelchair or dementia friendly homes. This is reflected in our design standard and ambitions for homes of all tenures in West Dunbartonshire.

3.
Places need to be many things to many people:
Our homes sit within places and communities and it is important that these contribute to health and wellbeing and the recent Covid-19 pandemic has shown how important these local amenities such as greenspaces are. The HIIA demonstrated the importance of taking an inclusive approach to our places and reinforcing the need for and feeling of safety for everyone.

4.
Conscious about our communication:
Our HIIA process identified that communication processes such as engaging residents about new developments, or when organising repairs to tenant's homes or dealing with people on a day to day basis is an area where there is always room for improvement. The HIIA process identified in particular the importance of easy to complete forms to help people access housing, support or information should be prioritised. This also means we must practice listening and as such opportunities for tenant and resident engagement are vital.

Therefore we have taken an action which covers all of the local housing strategy to review our approaches to communicating with our tenants and residents intending to take feedback to reflect how they want to be communicated with.

Action:
Review our communications e.g. forms, processes, documents to ensure they are inclusive, supportive and reflect how our tenants want to be communicated with. This will in the first instance include a review of our housing webpages to ensure they provide clear and accessible information

5.
Develop information, raise awareness and offer training:
Our HIIA process identified that there are a number of areas where we do not have information or we would like to increase our own and our team's awareness and understanding.

Therefore there are a number of areas highlighted throughout the strategy where we would like more information and intend to gather this or carry out research. We have also identified a need for training for example around mental health, autism and LGBTQI+ communities and may identify more during the lifetime of this strategy.

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Housing Need and Demand

1



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About West Dunbartonshire

West Dunbartonshire Council is a Local Authority in the West of Scotland, sitting between Glasgow and the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park. It is one of eight local authorities which form Greater Glasgow City Region, Scotland's largest conurbation of 1.8 million people.

Yet, West Dunbartonshire is a small Council both in terms of population and land coverage; the population was 88,930 in 2020 and it covers an area of 159 square kilometres (NRS, 2019).

There were 45,357 dwellings in West Dunbartonshire in 2020 and these can primarily be found in the three urban areas; Clydebank, Dumbarton and Vale of Leven and within each, are smaller communities and neighbourhoods.

Urban areas account for approximately 16% of land in West Dunbartonshire with the remaining classified as accessible rural, reflecting the wealth of green spaces, moorland, and woodland the local authority enjoys including the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

Housing need and demand assessment

This section considers the projected housing need and demand for West Dunbartonshire over the next five years, the lifetime of this strategy.

The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is the tool we use and it defines the housing supply base for the Local Housing Strategy and the Housing Land Allocation for the strategic and local development plans.

The HNDA provides estimates of the amount, and likely tenure, of additional housing required to meet existing and future demand. The HNDA analyses the need for social rented housing (including Below Market Rent) at a local authority level. Meanwhile, the demand for private sector (owner-occupation and private rented) houses were considered within a framework of housing market areas which reflect the way the private market operates across administrative boundaries.

An HNDA was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan and completed in 2015. It was prepared by the eight local authorities in the Housing Market Partnership (HMP) area. The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley HMP prepared the assessment of housing need and demand based on the 2014 HNDA guidance and using the new HNDA Tool produced by the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA).

The Tool, which was populated with national data, allowed the quick and easy testing of a range of different scenarios and assumptions. The results from the revised HNDA were confirmed as being robust and credible by the CHMA in May 2015.

The outcome is a shared and agreed evidence base for housing need and demand across both the City Region and West Dunbartonshire. It provides the basis for the Housing Supply Targets for both the Local Housing Strategy and the Local Development Plan.

Clydebank falls within the Greater Glasgow North and West housing sub-market area, and private housing supply and demand are considered within this wider area, whereas Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven is considered to be a discrete housing market area.

West Dunbartonshire is unusual in that the planning function is split between the Council and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. For practical reasons, the results from the HNDA cover the whole of West Dunbartonshire Council, although some data has been extracted for the area within the National Park.

Housing Estimates

The first stage of the 2015 HNDA produced Housing Estimates, split by tenure, at local authority level. These comprise the net increase in housing numbers by tenure, taken from the CHMA Tool, plus internal estimates of existing need. Households were only assessed as being in existing need if they generate a requirement for an additional dwelling but not if the need can be addressed using in-situ housing management solutions.

A range of assumptions in terms of future household formation, income, and house prices were considered within the Tool, before an agreed set of initial Housing Estimates under the Planning Scenario were produced for the periods 2012-2024 and 2024-29, reflecting the number of additional houses required by tenure.

Figure 1
Table showing initial Housing Estimates (new homes required) in West Dunbartonshire 2022-2027

	2012-2024	2024-2029
Private	557	-32
SR/BMR	748	-21
Total	1,305	-53

Source: Fig 5.4 HNDA[2]

[2] These figures have been extrapolated from the HNDA period 2012-2024 and 2024-2029 by annualising the total figure for the period and multiplying by the years of the LHS.

Over the city region as a whole, the 2015 HNDA estimates suggest more muted growth in the private sector and more significant growth in the Social Rented/Below Market Rent sector compared with the previous HNDA.

The initial estimates for the private sector required to be adjusted to reflect demand and supply across the housing market framework, by apportioning an element of mobile demand and comparing all demand with all stock. This has resulted in a significant increase in the private housing estimates, as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2
Table showing adjusted Housing Estimates for West Dunbartonshire 2012-2029

	2012-2024	2024-2029
Private	1,229	321
SR/BMR	748	-21
Total	1,977	300

Source: Fig 5.13 HNDA[3]

[3] These figures have been extrapolated from the HNDA period 2012-2024 and 2024-2029 by annualising the total figure for the period and multiplying by the years of the LHS.

Housing Supply Targets and their workings

The Adjusted Housing Estimates are used as a starting point for the development of the Housing Supply Targets (HSTs). These are a policy view of the number of homes the authority has agreed will be delivered.

The factors taken into consideration to do this were:

- **Environmental factors**
- **Social factors**
- **Economic factors**
- **Capacity within the construction industry**
- **Inter-dependency between delivery of market and affordable housing**
- **Availability of resources**
- **Likely pace and scale of delivery based on completion rates**
- **Recent development levels**
- **Planned demolitions**
- **Housing brought back into effective use.**

The availability of resources, likely pace of development and recent development levels were considered the most relevant of these factors for West Dunbartonshire. Taking these into consideration, the following HSTs have been set, and agreed, by the Council in August 2015. For both sectors, they have increased from the adjusted housing estimates produced by the 2015 HNDA. They are considered to be both realistic and deliverable.

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It is assumed that the social rented housing supply target will be split equally between the housing sub-areas of Greater Glasgow North and West and Dumbarton/Vale of Leven. The private sector target is 150 units p.a., whilst the social rented target is 80 units p.a.

Figure 3
Table showing Housing Supply Targets for West Dunbartonshire 2012-2029

	2012-2024 total	2024-2029 total	2012-2029 per annum average
Private	1,800	750	150
SR/BMR	960	400	80
Total	2,760	1,150	230

Source: Clydeplan Schedule 7

Factors which may impact on the delivery of the Housing Supply Targets:

The Capacity of the Construction Industry:
The delivery of housing does not rely solely on the allocation of appropriate land in the development plan and Councils are advised to take into consideration the capacity of the building industry and the functioning of the housing market. The slowdown in the construction industry over Covid may have a knock-on effect and there remains a risk that operative or material issues, in part as a result of Brexit, will be a feature of the programme going forward.

Wider Strategic, Economic, Social and Environmental Policy Objectives:
Increasing the number of new affordable houses and a growing economy are strategic priorities for West Dunbartonshire as set out in the Council Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

Representations to Local Development Plan 2:
There was a general recognition in the responses that the current economic climate was having an impact on the deliverability of new housing. Some respondents questioned the effectiveness of the housing land supply and promoted new locations for housing development.

Funding Availability:
The availability of support funding is the key determinant of the number of new affordable housing being produced. As noted above, the changes to funding arrangements will be a major determinant of the supply of new housing.

Aspirations for Growth:
The Council supports the Scottish Government's goal of increasing the housing supply to 2040. Also the relocation of staff to Faslane and the expansion of the Golden Jubilee may increase demand for housing in West Dunbartonshire.

Affordable Housing Policy

Local Development Plan 2 does not contain an affordable housing quota policy. Instead, the Local Development Plan seeks to balance the future tenure requirements by specifically identifying sites for either affordable or private housing. It is intended however that flexibility will be applied regarding these housing opportunities.

West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan

The West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (LDP2) will seek to ensure the Housing Supply Target is achieved by identifying sufficient land for housing development. To ensure this, the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan, in line with Scottish Planning Policy, sets a Housing Land Requirement, which equates to the Housing Supply Target plus a 15% generosity allowance, and requires Local Development Plans to make provision for this.

Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and National Planning Framework 4

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduces changes to how housing land is calculated. The National Planning Framework (NPF4) will set minimum all tenure housing land requirements for all planning authorities, including West Dunbartonshire.



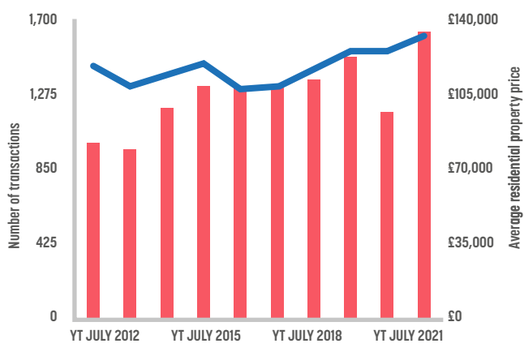
Local demand analysis

For sale market

The average transaction price in West Dunbartonshire has been increasing and averaged £131,922 during the 12 months to July 2021, this is 5% higher than the same period the previous year. The number of transactions has also been increasing over the years and during the 12 months to July 2021 there were 1,635 transactions, a ten year high.

The price increase is being driven by the price of detached, semi-detached, and terraced homes which saw average prices increase 10% during the same period.

Figure 4
Chart showing the number of transactions and average property price in West Dunbartonshire over 10 years



Source: Registers of Scotland (July 2021)

This reflects a common trend of the recent Covid pandemic which has encouraged people who have the means to seek out larger homes and homes with outside space, which can typically, but not always be found with houses rather than flats, and this trend is set to continue.

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Many of our survey respondents expressed frustration that the private housing market was very competitive and they would like to see more affordable housing options available, particularly for younger people starting out. Therefore we propose to carry our research into alternative tenure options such as shared ownership to help consider whether this can help more people access the homes they want.

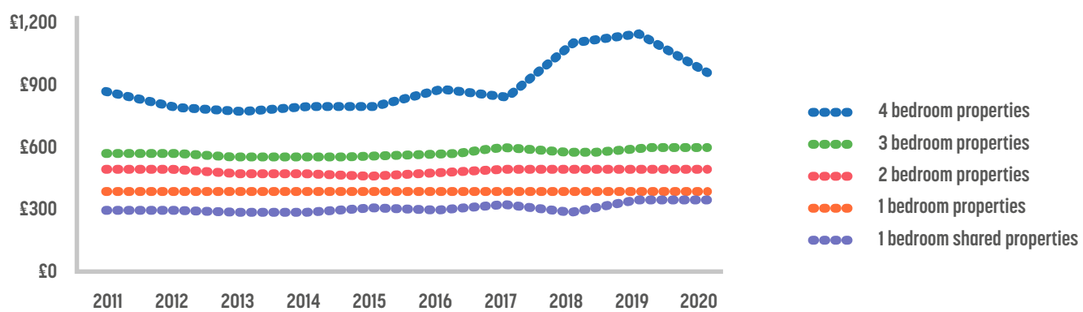
For private rent market

As the chart below shows the median rents in West Dunbartonshire have remained relatively stable over the past decade.

However, four-bedroom homes have witnessed significant increases in rent values between 2017 and 2019 and have since fallen but remain 9% higher than the ten-year average. However, it should be noted that the sample size for four-bedroom properties was relatively small.

The other exception is one-bedroom shared properties reflecting the changes in Welfare Reform for under 35s covered in Chapter 3. Despite being relatively steady, rents for three-bedroom properties have been creeping upwards, particularly for those in the upper quartile suggesting that high-quality homes for rent are in demand and command a premium.

Figure 5
Chart showing median rental monthly statistics for West Dunbartonshire over the past ten years.



Source: The Scottish Government

Local Demand Conclusions

There is strong demand for housing for both sale and private rent within West Dunbartonshire. These statistics also demonstrate that demand for certain types of properties including larger properties, attractive for families, has been growing as people seek out extra space during the recent pandemic.

These statistics do not provide localised statistics and instead are high-level but we are aware that many different markets operate within West Dunbartonshire; Clydebank is heavily influenced by the market in Glasgow which is a significant employment hub and Scotland's largest city. Meanwhile Dumbarton and Leven Valley are considered more discretionary markets, located further away from Glasgow these areas are more influenced by local trends such as changes in local employment rather than region-wide trends.

Ultimately, within the West Dunbartonshire Council area there are a number of micro markets operating some of which are more desirable, and therefore command a premium, compared to other areas. The premium might be linked to the types of homes available for example houses with gardens or proximity to local amenities such as schools or transport links.

Tenures

Different tenures can fulfil different housing needs and aspirations and as the HNDA and HST have demonstrated there is a need for homes of all tenures within West Dunbartonshire. Different tenures result in differing housing costs and responsibilities, for example who needs to organise maintenance and repairs; owner-occupiers are liable for all repairs but that responsibility lies with landlords in the private and social rented tenures.

Owner Occupiers

Owner-occupiers are those who own their home, some own their property outright others own theirs with a mortgage. Just over 23,000 homes in West Dunbartonshire are owner-occupied, 53% of all households. This is lower than the Scottish figure of 62% of households.

50% of owner occupiers own their properties outright and the remaining half with a mortgage (SHS,2018). This is broadly similar to Scotland as a whole.

Those aged over 60 account for 40% of all owner-occupiers, just under 10,000 households, and this group primarily owns their properties outright and a third under occupy their home by three or more bedrooms. The second-largest group is those aged 45 to 59, with only a small number of owner-occupiers aged under 45.

This highlights that over the coming decades, as the population overall ages, the number of older owner-occupiers will also increase. Some households may find that their needs change, or their home may no longer be suitable. We have taken this into consideration in our housing strategy, see chapter 5 to see our support for remaining at home and our strategy for adaptations.

Having a high-quality owner-occupied sector is important and in Chapter 2 we discuss the quality of the owner-occupied sector including our strategy for reducing fuel poverty, improving energy efficiency, and supporting households to maintain their properties.

Private Rented Sector & Build to Rent

3,000 homes in West Dunbartonshire are privately rented (SHS, 2018). This equates to approximately 7% of all households. This is almost half the Scottish figure of 14% of households but the share of renting households in West Dunbartonshire has fluctuated significantly over the past decade reflecting the relatively small size of the sector and its ability to expand and contract based upon changing economic conditions.

The small size of the sector also means that we have limited details about the characteristics of this tenure, however, we do know that two-thirds of our renters are aged under 35, just under 2,000 households. A further 25% are aged between 35 and 59 (SHS, 2018).

Tenants in the private rented sector include a diverse range of households from single people, couples, families, and retirees. The recent changes to rental legislation under the Private Tenancies (Scotland) 2016 Act has provided tenants with more security and support but we appreciate that like any other households their needs may change and they may need support to stay at home, information about our housing support strategy is detailed in Chapter 5.

We recognise that private rented landlords are also a diverse group with some having just one property and others operating portfolios of homes. We will continue to work with landlords to help them maintain their properties, improve their energy efficiency and respond to changes in legislation, more details in Chapter 2.

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Social Rented Sector

39% of households in West Dunbartonshire live in the social rented sector, this includes those who live in West Dunbartonshire Council's housing and those who live in properties owned and managed by registered social landlords.

The number of households living in the social rented sector in West Dunbartonshire is significantly higher than in Scotland as a whole, where only 23% of households live in the social rented sector.

54% of social rented households are single-person households compared to 31% of owner-occupiers. However, it is notable that 29% of households in the social rented sector have children compared to 15% of owner-occupied households.

5,000 households in the social rented sector are headed by someone over the age of 60, approximately 40% of all households, 55% are aged between 35 and 59, the remaining 5% are aged under 35.

Living in the social rented sector brings many benefits including the security of tenure through Scottish Secure Tenancies (SST) which gives tenants certain rights such as information about rent setting and social landlords, including West Dunbartonshire Council and our Strategic Housing Partners, are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator. Through the regulator, tenants can access information about their landlord's performance including areas such as repairs and maintenance, time to respond to repairs, and other governance measures.

This level of security and accountability combined with affordable rents makes social rented properties highly attractive to a range of household types and we have approximately 5,000 households on our waiting lists.

The size of the social rented sector in West Dunbartonshire has grown in recent years reflecting the role new developments, alongside Empty Home and Buy Back strategies, have played in increasing supply to meet some of this demand.



New Development

There were 144 new build homes completed across all tenures in West Dunbartonshire during 2020, a decline of 55%, or 116 homes, on the previous year. This is demonstrated in the chart below which shows the number of completions over the past ten years. The significant decline reflects the shutdown of development sites during the first covid-19 lockdown which delayed both starts and completions.

However, you can see from the chart that local authority completions increased. The large number site starts made in 2019 start to appear as completions and we anticipate these will increase again when the 2021 statistics are available.

This means the decline in completions was driven by the private and housing association sectors but they did see starts increase and we anticipate that these will convert to completions during 2021/ 22.

Figure 6
Chart showing number of new homes completed by tenure



Source: The Scottish Government

We promote high quality design in all new homes built in West Dunbartonshire, in particular through our Design Panel and our WDC Design Standard for Affordable Housing, which requires an enhancement on building standards including high levels of energy efficiency and design features, such as home office and study spaces.

Build to Rent opportunity

Build to rent or BTR is a development model which initially emerged from investors buying portfolios of properties for rental or buying excess stock from developers but more recently they have moved towards purpose building properties for the rental market. Development has primarily taken place in London and other urban centres but in recent years there has been an increase in the development of suburban, family homes for rent which are catering to a significant share of the population which do not have the means or desire to buy, for example due to temporary employment in an area, relationship breakdown or lack of deposit.

Our rented sector is small when compared to other larger, often more urban local authorities but there may still be an opportunity to develop homes for rent and as a local authority keen to see housing need met across all tenures we would support this type of development should it deliver high quality, energy-efficient homes which are professionally managed and rent at reasonable levels.

Self-build Opportunities

The Scottish Government recognises the important role that self and custom build housing can play in providing homes, sustaining communities and supporting smaller building companies in both rural and urban areas.

West Dunbartonshire Council supports these ambitions but has thus far identified little interest for self-build within the area likely due to challenges which the wider development industry faces including decontamination costs for brownfield sites and in some areas viability concerns that constrain access to finance.

That said, there are some individual building plots with planning in the local authority area and these will form the beginnings of our self-build register, which will be available on our website going forward. The list will include the location and size of sites alongside information about available amenities and highlight any relevant planning guidance. We will also consider adding to this list with sites owned by the Council, where appropriate to do so.

Interested parties will be able to register their interest using an online form, this will allow us to gather information about the type and location of demand for a self-build plot which will inform how we support interested parties and landowners to deliver suitable plots.

We will ensure our list remains up to date by contacting interested parties periodically to confirm they wish to remain on the list and when sites become available, providing opt-in-out options. We will also develop supporting documents and advice which will be updated regularly.

Conclusions

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment demonstrates both a clear need and demand for housing in West Dunbartonshire. Demographics play an important part in these trends and this was supported by our survey responses and HIIA findings which show that young and older people, along with single adult households have particular challenges accessing housing which meets their needs and is affordable.

Action 1.1
We will continue to monitor the supply of new homes, both private and social sector against housing supply targets.

The growth in transactions, prices and rents, particularly for larger properties and the increasing number of households on our waiting list (5,000) suggests that new housing will be vital for West Dunbartonshire going forward. Our survey respondents (76.8%) voiced strong support for more affordable housing which was in the right location and suitable for occupant needs.

Action 1.2
We will continue to deliver new high quality, well designed and future proofed affordable housing and support our strategic housing partners to do the same, building upon the success of the More Homes Programme 2016-2021.

We know that many our residents aspire to own their own home. As such we have identified a need to explore alternative tenure options within West Dunbartonshire to meet the needs of two main groups; younger households trying to access their first home and for older households looking to ensure they have both have access to housing options which meet their needs and are attractive.

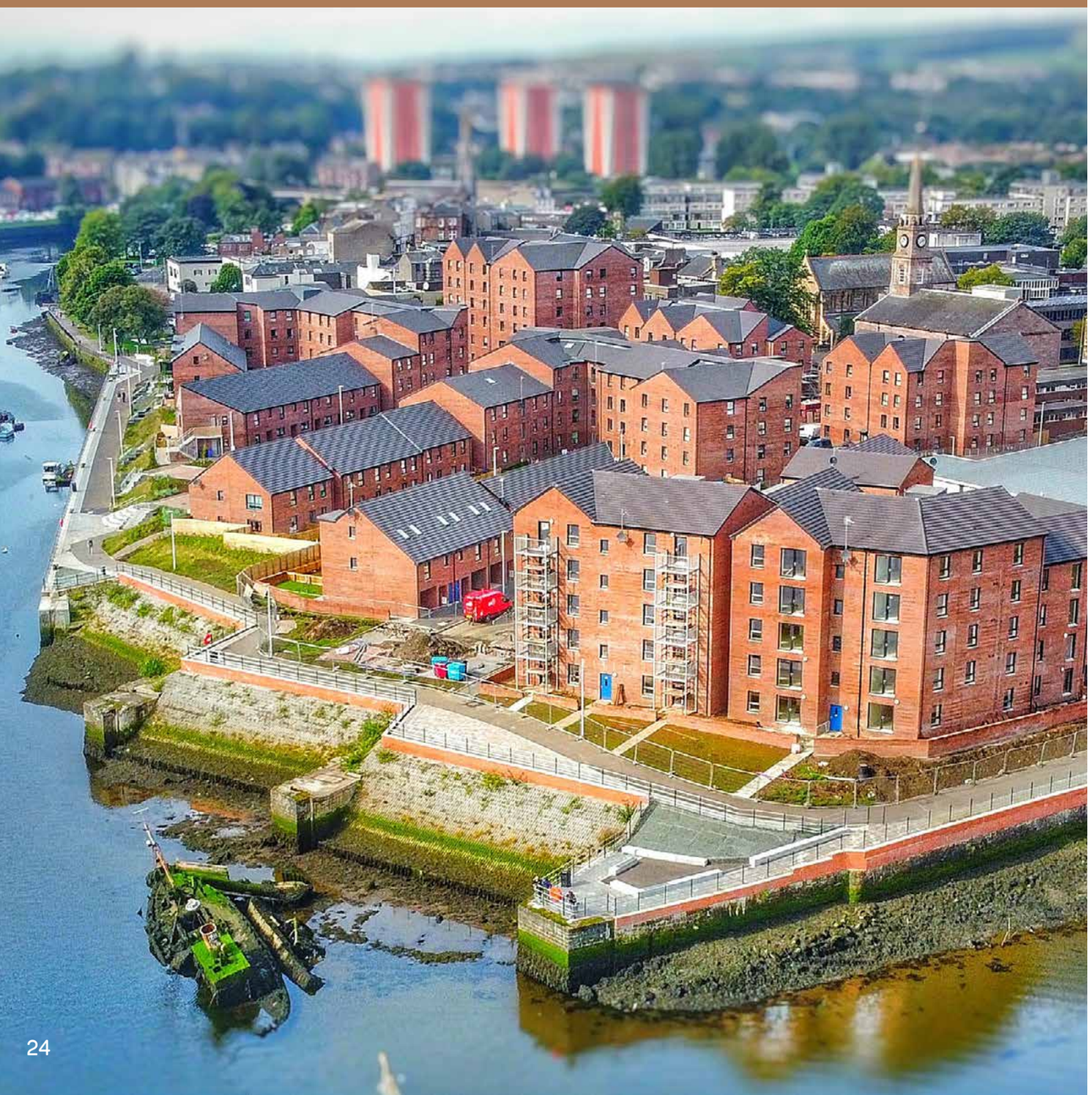
Action 1.3
Carry out research into alternative tenure options for both younger and older households to ensure they have housing options which meet their needs and are attractive.

For some people building their own home would be a very attractive proposition, particularly if they have specific needs or ambitions and as such we will support households to do this by the creation of self-build register of plots in West Dunbartonshire and make this available publicly. We will do this in partnership with our colleagues in planning (both West Dunbartonshire Council and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Action 1.4
We will establish the self-build webpage and register in the first year of the strategy and over the strategy's lifetime we will develop supporting information for interested parties, including how to register interest in self-build and commonly asked questions.

Promoting Quality Homes

2



WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL **LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2021 - 25**

The Scottish Government's vision set out in the Housing to 2040 strategy, is that all homes, regardless of tenure, age or location are well designed, easily maintained, and have low running costs.

There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating the negative impact of poor housing conditions on residents' health and well-being. Poor quality housing can cause accidents, respiratory problems and can impact the mental health of the people who live there. Therefore, quality housing for our residents continues to be an ambition for West Dunbartonshire Council and this chapter sets out how we intend to work towards achieving that.

Whilst we recognise that quality housing goes beyond the physical building this is the focus of this chapter. We will cover places in Chapter 4 and specialist housing in Chapter 5.

About our housing stock

There are around 45,804 homes within West Dunbartonshire and by 2050 these same homes will account for approximately 88% of homes we are living in, based upon development increasing the number of homes by 0.5% and removal of 0.05% of the stock (historic trend since 2000).

Therefore the homes we have now will be predominately the homes we will be living in 30 years' time and only 12% will have been built in the years in between.

Flats:
52% of all homes in West Dunbartonshire are flats

- **45% of flats were built between 1950 and 1983**
- **13% of flats were built before 1919**
- **50% of flats are owned by West Dunbartonshire Council and its Strategic Housing Providers (RSLs)**

Houses:
48% of all homes in West Dunbartonshire are houses

- **54% of houses were built between 1950 and 1983**
- **6% of houses were built prior to 1919**
- **81% are owned by owner occupiers and private landlords.**

Climate change

Responding to the Climate emergency is a top priority for the whole housing sector. The recent **Climate Change Strategy** and action plan demonstrates that our climate has been becoming wetter and warmer. This is forecast to continue with extreme weather conditions such as flooding becoming more commonplace.

These changes in our climate are impacting our housing stock; for example on the lifespan of roofs and beyond, preparing our homes for the changing climate we need to make them more energy-efficient, reduce their impact on the climate, and reduce energy costs for residents.

Heating homes and hot water currently accounts for 31% of UK carbon emissions (Energy Savings Trust, 2017). We need to reduce the amount of energy needed to heat our homes and move towards more sustainable sources of power such as electricity, which is predominately generated by wind turbines. This represents both a challenge and an opportunity.

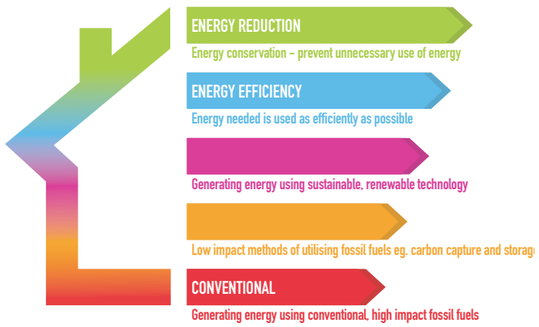
The impact of climate change will be felt by all, but it will be vulnerable groups such as those who live in flood-prone areas, have health conditions, or are on low incomes who will be impacted the most by these changes to our climate.

In the next sections, we will set out how we will continue to invest in our stock, and demonstrate the support we will give to our strategic housing

partners, private landlords, and owner-occupiers to help them prepare and improve their homes.

Our approach

In alignment with the **Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan** this Local Housing Strategy will follow the principles of the energy hierarchy (see graphic below) developed by the Scottish Government.



This approach first looks to reduce the amount of energy consumed before employing more advanced techniques and technologies, such as renewables, to reduce the amount of energy needed.

The most cost-effective way to reduce emissions is to reduce the amount of energy used in the first place, which helps to target fuel poverty too.

Fuel Poverty

The impact on households living in fuel poverty, as with any form of poverty and hardship, are complex. Recent research has shown that cold properties impact health; cold homes can aggravate respiratory illnesses such as asthma and reduce dexterity, increasing the likelihood of falls or accidents. In addition to physical impacts, fuel poverty and cold homes can impact mental wellbeing and in 2014 it was estimated that fuel poverty cost the NHS £80 million per annum[4].

[4] **https://www.gov.scot/publications/fuel-poverty-target-definition-strategy-scotland-bill-fuel-poverty-strategy/pages/8/**

National Context

Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition, and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 established a new two-part definition whereby a household is considered fuel poor if:

- **after housing costs have been deducted, more than 10% (20% for extreme fuel poverty) of their net income is required to pay for their reasonable fuel needs**
- **after further adjustments are made to deduct childcare costs and any benefits received for a disability or care need, their remaining income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living, defined as being at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard (MIS).**

The 2019 Act also introduced a new statutory target for reducing fuel poverty that:

- **by 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household, in any Local Authority area, in Scotland is in fuel poverty**
- **in any event, no more than 5% of households, in any Local Authority area, in Scotland are in fuel poverty**
- **no more than 1% of households in Scotland are in extreme fuel poverty**
- **the median fuel poverty gap of households in fuel poverty in Scotland is no more than £250 in 2015 prices before adding inflation.**

The act also set interim targets of a maximum of 15% of households are in fuel poverty by 2030 and 10% by 2035, with those in extreme fuel poverty reducing to a maximum of 5% and 3% respectively.

A finalised Fuel Poverty Strategy was due to be released in 2020 but has yet to be published but we understand it will be released by the end of 2021. However, the draft strategy sets several ambitions and goals and demonstrates clearly that tackling fuel poverty should be a priority.

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Fuel Poverty in West Dunbartonshire

28% of households in West Dunbartonshire are in fuel poverty. This equates to around 12,000 households. This is marginally higher than the national figure of 25% (Scottish House Condition Survey-SHCS, 2018).

SHCS estimate that West Dunbartonshire Council households in fuel poverty will require a median amount of £440 uplift in income to take them out of fuel poverty, this is almost £200 more than the target identified by the Scottish Government (£250, based on 2015 figures).

- **28% of older households are fuel poor - similar to Scotland**
- **30% of other household types are fuel poor - similar to Scotland**
- **24% of families are fuel poor - similar to Scotland**

Extreme Fuel Poverty

Of those in fuel poverty in West Dunbartonshire, one-third (4,000 households) are estimated to be in extreme fuel poverty of which 50% are owner-occupiers.

Why are households fuel poor?

Using data from the Energy Saving Trust, which uses EPC data to estimate fuel bills and fuel poverty we can identify trends.

Social rented properties, both Local Authority and Housing Association owned, typically have fuel bills which are on average below the median. This reflects the investment made into improving energy efficiency in these homes under the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) and demonstrated by the higher SAP (energy efficiency) scores.

In comparison, fuel bills are typically higher and energy efficiency scores lower in the owner-occupied and private rented sectors but the likelihood of fuel poverty, whilst lower remains relatively high.

The major cause of fuel poverty is low household income and this likely applies across all tenures. For example, we know that 50% of our owner-occupiers are over 60 and therefore many are likely to be retired and reliant on a pension, and pension levels can vary significantly.

Thus, promoting energy efficiency measures across tenures could help reduce fuel poverty by reducing the gap particularly so in owner occupied and private rented homes.



Figure 7
Table showing number of properties, probability of fuel poverty, and average of fuel bill compared to median and average energy efficiency (SAP) rating.

Tenure	Total number of properties	Average of probability of fuel poverty (fuel bill >10% of income after housing)	Average of probability of extreme fuel poverty (fuel bill >20% of income after housing)	Average of fuel bill comparison to median (estimate)	Average of current energy efficiency (SAP) rating estimate
Housing Association	4,816	36%	11%	95%	71.53
Local Authority	11,247	43%	13%	96%	69.90
Owner Occupied	26,347	21%	8%	110%	64.50
Privately Rented	3,309	21%	7%	109%	65.05

Source: Energy Saving Trust, January 2021 data

Ultimately, the levels of poverty in West Dunbartonshire mean that low household income will continue to result in fuel poverty even in the most energy-efficient homes therefore we need to work with our colleagues in other teams to help people maximise income, for example fuel bill support for older households.

In the first instance, we will seek to promote the support and advice offered by our energy savings team which is available for free to all residents and can help them improve their properties.

70% of survey respondents did not know the Council offered this service therefore we must work to promote it and when asked what information would be helpful, survey respondents demonstrated support for the following and therefore these will be the focus of the service going forward:

1. **Information about how to reduce my fuel bills e.g. energy saving advice**
2. **Information about finance e.g. loans, grants to fund upgrades**
3. **Technical information about how to make my home more energy efficient**

70%
of survey respondents unaware of the Council's energy savings team

In addition, the energy savings advisor and housing teams will continue to work with colleagues in Working4U to help people increase their incomes, this is particularly important for those on low incomes because the property could be very energy efficient but if they don't have the income to heat it then they may also be limited in other areas such as food, clothing and furniture.

However, a major challenge remains around electricity and its cost. Electricity continues to be an expensive way to heat your home but it is increasingly the most renewable and energy-efficient thus there will be pressure to use more electrical systems. We are hopeful that the UK Government will review the costs of electricity and the corresponding taxes but in the meantime we will continue to tread carefully.

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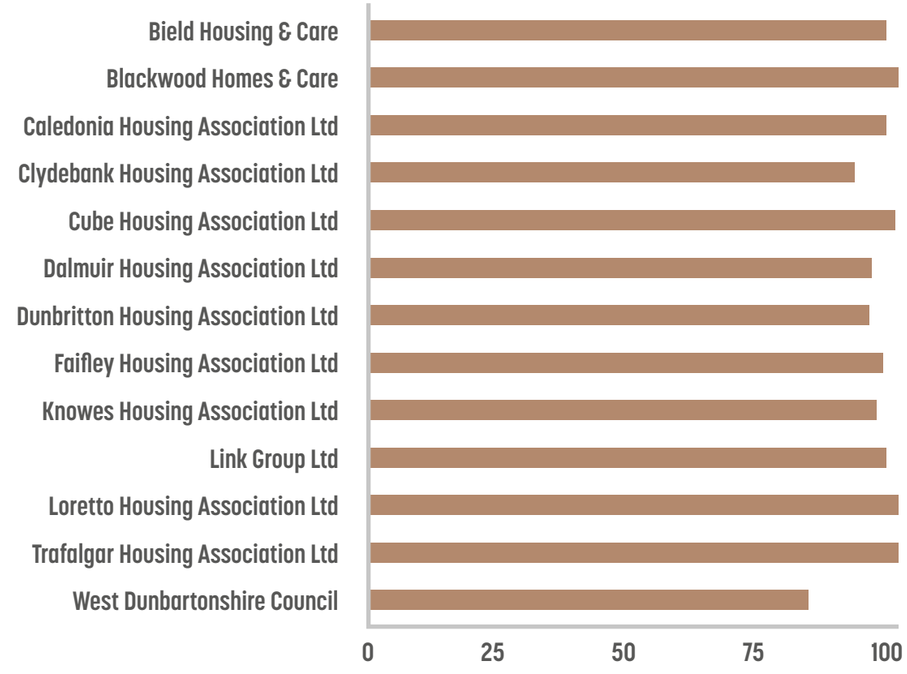
Quality homes across all tenures

Social rented homes
Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) sets energy efficiency standards for social rented homes in Scotland. Introduced in March 2014 the standard introduced energy efficiency standards for properties with a deadline of December 2020.

This has been broadly achieved, see below table demonstrating compliance by ourselves and our strategic registered social landlord (RSL) partners.



Figure 8
Chart showing percentage of properties meeting EESSH



Source: Scottish Housing Regulator
ARC submissions 2019/2020

Achieving EESSH has been expensive, with the investment funded from landlord rental income. It has also at times been challenging particularly in some housing types or in mixed tenure blocks when owners or landlords are not able, or willing, to invest in upgrading their property.

The deadline for EESSH has now passed and the Scottish Government has set new significant climate change targets. As a result, more onerous energy efficiency standards are being placed on social landlords going forward, known as Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing post-2020 (EESSH2).

The new standard requires that properties become as "energy efficient as possible", with a target of having as many properties as possible rated EPC band B or higher, and none being below an EPC band D. Technical exemptions will apply such as those using alternative fuels, the accepted EPC rating for these will be C.

This will require further significant investment to bring homes up to this new, higher standard and all landlords will require to have an EESSH2 strategy which will set out how landlords plan to work towards these new goals and targets and identify any challenges.

Levels of fuel poverty in West Dunbartonshire mean we, and our strategic partners, need to be mindful that energy efficiency investments represent value for money for our tenants and allows us to continue to carry out planned maintenance. Consequently, we will continue to programme energy improvement measures for non-compliant homes as per our regular programmes.

In addition to this, we intend to explore through the development of a pilot or strategy a holistic approach to achieving high levels of energy efficiency. This approach will allow us to take into consideration the variety of property types found in West Dunbartonshire, many being of non-traditional construction which were built at a time when there was no requirement for basic wall insulation levels to be met.

We also have a high share of stock in flatted or shared block construction involving private owners which presents obstacles for example when introducing insulation measures as these are not essential under title condition definitions.



WDC Housing Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Capital Programme

West Dunbartonshire Council has adopted a strategic, evidence-based approach to managing its Housing Revenue Account assets, in particular its housing stock.

Using a asset management database, the Council assesses the performance of its stock yearly. This assessment allows the Council to establish which properties are performing well across several indicators that look at demand, current costs, and future costs. This method has provided the Council with robust information and evidence that informs strategic plans including the demolition programme, the Council's new build programme, and the HRA Capital Programme.

The outcomes of the assessment including plans that stem from them are reported on an annual basis to the Housing and Communities Committee.

Private homeowners

Owner-occupied properties are, on average, the least energy-efficient of all tenures. Similar to Scotland, 61% of owner-occupied homes in West Dunbartonshire are rated EPC D or below and therefore there is significant scope to improve their energy efficiency score and thus reduce bills.

In 2019 the Scottish Government consulted on an option to introduce a minimum EPC rating of C for homes at the point of sale or major renovation from 2024. This may potentially apply in the lifetime of this strategy, although this has yet to be confirmed. Further, the Scottish Government in their recent Heat in Buildings Strategy committed to ongoing support for owner occupiers to improve and invest in their properties and as such we will seek to encourage owner occupiers to engage with advice services such as Energy Advice Scotland who can offer financial assistance such as grants and loans.

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Supporting owner-occupiers to know what their options are and supporting them to access funding, where appropriate, or skilled tradespeople needs to be a priority. As noted above, 70% of respondents were not aware that we offered energy advice service and therefore we would hope that by promoting this, as set out above, will be helpful and we will include them in area based scheme where appropriate, as set out below.

Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector has a slightly higher SAP score than owner-occupied properties yet fuel bills remain above the median and 57% of properties were rated EPC band D or below (EST, 2020).

This may prove problematic going forward as the Scottish Government is proposing to introduce a minimum EPC score of E for all tenancies by March 2022 and an EPC score of D for all tenancies by March 2025. These dates are subject to change due to the recent pandemic but will likely apply during the life of this strategy.

We will continue to work in partnership with private landlords active within West Dunbartonshire through our landlord's forum and ensure that they and their tenants are aware of our energy advice service.

We will make them aware of these changes and support them to invest and upgrade their properties to ensure they comply. We will support private tenants in engagement with their landlords over improving the energy efficiency of the homes they rent. As with owner-occupiers, we will take landlords and their tenants into consideration with our area-based initiatives covered below.

57%

of properties rated EPC band D or below

Supporting Owner Occupier and Private Landlords with their homes

Scheme of assistance strategy

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 introduces a 'Scheme of Assistance' based on the principle that individual owners (including owners of privately rented houses) have primary responsibility for maintaining their properties in good condition, with assistance available from Local Authorities when necessary.

Part 2 of the above Act requires Councils to publish a 'statement of assistance'. This Statement of Assistance sets out how this Council provides advice, information, and assistance for homeowners to improve the quality of private housing in West Dunbartonshire.

Home Improvements & Repairs

West Dunbartonshire Council will provide information and advice that will assist the homeowner in arranging home improvements or repairs by:

- **advice on how to carry out repairs and maintenance**
- **site visits to assist in identifying works that are required**
- **choosing a contractor and signposting to other services to provide other specific advice, e.g. Citizens Advice Service, Money Made Clear, etc**

The Council's Private Housing Advice section will generally be the first point of contact for most homeowners who require information or advice regarding the repair, maintenance, or improvement of their homes.

However, Lomond & Clyde Care & Repair Service can also offer impartial advice and practical assistance to homeowners on improving, repairing, and maintaining their property regardless of their age or disability.

Under One Roof

West Dunbartonshire Council continues to contribute to an online resource for owners of common property which was launched in September 2016. This website is for owners of all types and ages of shared residential properties and their advisers. It will help owners of traditional stone tenements, newly built apartment blocks, ex-local authority tenements, four-in-a-blocks, and converted houses.

Invaluable advice is provided in over 100 articles on flat owners' legal responsibilities towards their co-owners and over 70 technical information articles that enable owners to identify repair problems and understand quotations from builders.

It is envisaged that this website will continue to be a valuable resource, playing a huge part in helping to prevent properties falling into disrepair and leading to better-maintained homes in the future.

Area based Initiatives

HEEPS: ABS:

We use the HEEP: ABS funding to target the areas with high indicators of fuel poverty for energy improvement measures, mostly external wall insulation due to the type of homes in West Dunbartonshire. This is the most beneficial measure to install to enhance energy performance.

With our core allocation from the Scottish Government, we can assist approximately 120-150 per year. We also provide energy advice and signpost to other agencies for energy advice during this process.
The recent Heat in Buildings Strategy noted potential to expand the HEEPS:ABS and other area based schemes and we would welcome this.

LHEES:

The concept of Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) was introduced in 2016 and aims to establish area-based plans and priorities for improving the energy efficiency of buildings and tackling fuel poverty.

We are developing a pilot LHEES which will establish a framework for reducing energy demand and decarbonising the heat supply in the Clydebank area from the boundary with Glasgow City Council on the River Clyde, northwards using Great Western Road as a boundary and to a westerly limit of Mountblow Road.

It is anticipated that the strategy will identify opportunities for additional connections to the Queens Quay DHN, explore the feasibility and costs of other energy efficiency measures and build on existing programmes.



Heat decarbonisation agenda

District Heating Networks (DHN) aims to distribute large-scale sources of heat over a geographic area by connecting multiple buildings to create a heat network. These networks are an attractive option in dense urban areas and have been cited as a means to tackle fuel poverty.

Our DHN at Queens Quay in Clydebank is operated through an energy centre. Within the energy centre, heat pumps extract water from the River Clyde. This water is transported via district heating pipes to homes and businesses to heat them. Each property connected to the district heating network will have a Hydraulic Interface Unit (HIU) which is similar in size to, and looks like, the traditional boiler it will replace.

This device allows tenants and landlords to switch on the heat and hot water as and when it is required. It also allows them to monitor the amount of energy consumed to ensure they are billed accurately for it.

Following the introduction of Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations which came into force initially in 2014 and has since been amended, accurate billing and use of metering devices that track consumption are now required in DHN.

This change aims to drive energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from heating and hot water usage by making people more aware of what they use. Metering also supports fair and transparent billing for customers on heat networks and operators must use these devices to bill customers based on their consumption of heating, cooling, or hot water.



New build housing design requirements

The Scottish Government has established an ambition to achieve tenure-neutral space and quality standards for new homes (and existing homes where possible) and this has been supported by our survey respondents; 78% said homes should be designed to cater to a variety of needs and 66% said making all new homes energy efficient should be a priority.

The majority of homes, and all affordable homes, are designed in accordance with Housing for Varying Needs, which was last updated in 1999 and is understood to be under review. This standard sets basic requirements for homes to ensure that they should be able to meet the existing and future needs of occupants. These are supplemented by technical Building Standards which are updated regularly.

Best design and good practice is always evolving and West Dunbartonshire Council introduced its first **Design Standard**, required in addition to HfVN, in 2017, the first such standard in Scotland, and updated it again in 2019. The current Design Standard requires all new affordable homes to at least meet the Silver Active energy efficiency building standard and the design standard will be subject to ongoing review.





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New build housing & energy efficiency

New build housing accounts for a small but important share of the homes we live in and it will have a particularly important role in ensuring that modern properties are not only well designed, but highly energy efficient.

New build properties thus offer an opportunity to put best practice into use, and we have seen the development of innovative forms of new development including the introduction of new Building Standards for energy efficiency, NetZero Carbon, and Passivhaus continuing to drive innovation and change in this sector. As per our pilot projects referenced above we will develop new build pilot projects to ensure we are bringing best practice to our new homes. In addition to the Council's own new build, through the Design Standard and SHIP discussions we will encourage RSLs to meet similar high standards of energy efficiency in their projects.

We anticipate that each of these development types, alongside any other to emerge which are similar, will help us towards our NetZero ambitions and we will actively support and encourage developments that fulfil such criteria.





Poor quality homes (Below Tolerable Standard)

The tolerable standard sets out the basic requirements for a healthy safe home. It applies to all tenures and is as defined by section 86 of the 1987 Act and amended by section 102 of the 2001 Act and section 11 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006:

A home that meets the current tolerable standard if meets all the criteria set out in the legislation, but the property is below tolerable standard if one or more of the criteria are not met

The criteria are set out in the act. It is estimated that 2% of properties in Scotland are classified as Below the Tolerable Standard, we do not have the statistics for West Dunbartonshire but it is estimated to be around 1% to 2%.

These homes are rarely found in the social rented sector due to the various requirements on social landlords and as a result, they are primarily found in the private rented and owner-occupied sectors.

When these properties are identified, as per our Statement of Assistance, we will support the property owners by providing support and guidance using formal measures such as maintenance orders and works notices where appropriate.

We intend to utilise other initiatives, such as energy efficiency improvements, our private landlord forum, and our relationship with colleagues in HSCP, to identify and support owners in the most appropriate way.

Conclusions

Quality homes are the foundation of many of our ambitions including reducing our impact on the environment, reducing fuel poverty and supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents. Achieving these goals will require effort, not only from ourselves, but also our strategic partners, home owners and private landlords.

In order to help everyone contribute towards these ambitions, education is important. Our survey identified that 70% of people did not know that we offered an energy advice service. Therefore we will look to promote the energy advice service to our residents and enable the energy advice officer to link in with colleagues in housing operations and Working4U to ensure that households are helped to increase their incomes.

Action 2.1:
Promote the energy advice service to residents, and landlords through the landlord form, across West Dunbartonshire Council and report annually on number of households helped and type of advice required.

Education and learning is also important for West Dunbartonshire Council as the strategic housing authority. Understanding, technology and best practice energy efficiency measures are constantly evolving and changing and we want to ensure that we are taking best practice forward for our homes.

Therefore in addition to continuing our planned asset management investment and strategies we will look to carry out a number of holistic pilot studies both in our existing homes and future developments. These will allow us to try new technologies and work with tenants to understand their experiences of these new measures.

Action 2.2:
Develop, track and share the findings from a number of holistic energy efficiency retrofit and new build pilot projects.

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Area based schemes such as HEEPS: ABS, the District Heating Network and the upcoming LHEES report offer us the potential to approach, and tackle, energy efficiency and fuel poverty on a community focused basis. Therefore, we will work where possible to maximise the number of homes and households who benefit from these opportunities. Further, funding opportunities may present themselves and we will aim to utilise this funding as much as possible.

Action 2.3:
Maximise the number of households who benefit from area based schemes and report annually on the number of households who have been supported through area based opportunities.



Finally, new build homes offer an opportunity to ensure that all new homes we add to our housing stock are designed with best practice energy efficiency in mind and can cater to a variety of needs of households. We understand a review of Housing for Varying Needs is underway and we anticipate building standards will continue to evolve and as such we will continue to ensure our design standard for affordable homes reflects best practice and therefore we commit to updating it at least once within the lifetime of this strategy.

Action 2.4:
Update the Design standard to reflect best practice to ensure all affordable homes in the area are designed and built to highest standard including dementia design features and wheelchair specialist homes.

Homelessness and Housing Options

3



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Tackling homelessness has been a focus of Scottish Government policy and the legal and regulatory framework which has been put in place means that Scotland has some of the strongest rights in the world for anyone experiencing homelessness.

However, there is an ambition to do more to ensure that people experiencing homelessness can access the accommodation and support they need. This ambition focuses on preventing homelessness in the first place and then preventing it from recurring through the provision of supportive pathways.

The forthcoming introduction of the Prevent Duty will increase the focus on the prevention of homelessness and place a duty on many of our partners such as Health and Social Care Partnership, education and criminal justice to highlight and work to prevent homelessness too. This represents an opportunity to assist people earlier but will also be a challenge to ensure that we have the resource available, in the face of short-term funding plans, to assist both our partners and those households they, and ourselves, identify.

Statutory requirement summary

Local authorities have a duty:

- **to provide advice and information about the prevention of homelessness**
- **to carry out a robust homelessness assessment within 28 days**
- **for the provision of suitable temporary accommodation for those who require it**
- **to secure the provision of permanent accommodation when assessed as homeless**
- **to assess support needs for those found to be "homeless or threatened with homelessness unintentionally" and who we have reason to believe requires a support assessment.**

And a power:

- **to assess whether a household has a local connection**
- **to refer those where no local connection has been established to another local authority that they have a connection with**
- **to assess intentionality (to have done something deliberately, or failed to do something, which resulted in homelessness).**

These duties and powers have been shaped by 35 years of legislation and regulation. In addition to this summary, more detailed information is available in our background papers.

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

Our approach to tackling homelessness is linked to the Scottish Social Housing Charter, which sets out the outcomes and standards that all social landlords should be delivering for their tenants and other customers.

The Charter:

- **describes the results that tenants and other customers expect social landlords to achieve**
- **covers social landlords' housing activities only**
- **can be monitored, assessed, and reported upon by the Scottish Housing Regulator**
- **does not replace the legal duties that apply to social landlords.**

The Council has to report on these outcomes annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator and makes this information available to the public each year in October.

Scottish Housing Regulator

Evidence about homelessness in WDC

Number of homeless households
Homelessness figures remain high in West Dunbartonshire. During our Homelessness Strategy "More than a Roof", which covered the period 2017/20 there was a reduction in homeless applications of 2.6% over the 3 years to a figure of 1021.

Who is homeless in West Dunbartonshire?
The age profile of those presenting as homeless in West Dunbartonshire has remained relatively stable in recent years, although in the last year of "More than a Roof" there was an increase in applications from those over 60 years old.

1,021
homeless applications in 2019 - 2020

Figure 9
Table showing Homeless applications by age

Year	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
Age	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
16-17	31	3%	22	2%	38	4%
18-25	259	25%	258	25%	267	26%
26-59	722	69%	715	69%	659	64%
60+	36	3%	42	4%	57	6%
All	1,048	100%	1,037	100%	1,021	100%

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures

The rate of youth homelessness continues to be high and a key area of concern and focus. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government for 2019/20 highlighted West Dunbartonshire as a youth homeless hotspot, with a Youth Homeless rate of 26.7 per 1,000 population against a Scottish figure of 12.7.

There are more applications made from households where the main applicant is male, however, this gap reduced over the 3 year period of "More than a Roof" and in 2019/20 a male was recorded as being the main applicant in 52% of applications, compared to 48% of applications where a female was the main applicant.

In terms of household type, during the 3 years of "More than a Roof" over 70% of applications were received from single people, and around a quarter were from households with children, the vast majority of these being single-parent households.



Homeless rate per 1,000 population

West Dunbartonshire **26.7**
Scotland **12.7**

Figure 10
Table showing Homeless applications by household type

Year	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
Household type	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Single person	759	72.4%	754	72.7%	716	70.1%
Single Parent	189	18%	190	18.3%	199	19.5%
Couple	48	4.6%	42	4.1%	51	5%
Couple with children	42	4%	48	4.6%	50	4.9%
Other	5	0.5%	2	0.2%	4	0.4%
Other with children	5	0.5%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%

The core reasons for homelessness in West Dunbartonshire are households being asked to leave their current accommodation and disputes within a household (both violent and non-violent). More data in our background papers.

Homeless Prevention & Housing Options

Preventing homelessness and helping people understand their housing options are the core motivations of both this Housing Strategy and our homelessness strategy, More than a Roof, and if homelessness cannot be prevented then our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan aims to help people find settled housing as soon as possible.

The Housing Options approach seeks to help households understand their choices around housing and help them find appropriate housing solutions.

As such, we continue to strengthen our housing options approach by embedding the delivery of a robust housing options service when someone, or a household, makes contact by creating a new role within our team to provide housing options information and advice at the front of our service. We have also reviewed existing homeless caseworker job profiles to incorporate a housing options service.

Further, we have developed our own WDC Housing Options Guide and implemented the Housing Options HUB PREVENT1 guidance to ensure that there was a shared understanding of prevention activities and recording.

Whilst some in-house training and case study review has taken place, as a member of the West of Scotland Housing Options Hub, we will benefit from licences purchased to allow all staff to use the Housing Options Toolkit when it is rolled out at the end of summer 2021. This is in addition to continuous staff development and training which includes motivational interviewing, trauma-informed practice (ACEs), mediation and dealing with disclosure for example.

Other new housing options which are being scaled up as part of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan include Housing First and converting temporary accommodation to a permanent housing outcome for homeless households who have settled well and wish to stay where they are. RRTP funding has also contributed to the provision of a proactive prevention role for those at risk of losing their existing home and by providing a prevention fund.

West Dunbartonshire Council continues to work closely with partners on the West of Scotland Housing Options Hub (includes East Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, and East Renfrewshire, North and South Lanarkshire, and Glasgow City Council and GHA) to seek service improvement in the delivery of housing options and the prevention of homelessness.

We reviewed and re-launched our Help to Rent West Dunbartonshire rent deposit guarantee scheme to support the private rented sector as a viable option for households across West Dunbartonshire.

The Prevention Review Group (PRG)

The Prevention Review Group (PRG) was set up at the request of the Scottish Government to take forward work on preventing homelessness identified by the independent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and the subsequent Scottish Government /COSLA Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan published in 2018. The Group's task was to identify legal duties on local authorities and other public bodies to prevent homelessness.

The PRG included representatives from local authorities, HSCP, and third sector organisations. A consultation was carried out that included speaking with people who have lived experience of homelessness and frontline workers.

Effective homelessness prevention requires action as early as possible. People facing housing difficulties may be involved with various services before they make contact with housing or homelessness service, providing potential opportunities to act early. Health and social care services, children's services, police, and prisons may all work with people who are at risk of homelessness, as well as social and private landlords, providing opportunities to identify issues early and intervene.

Therefore, the PRG has identified a need to introduce a duty or duties to prevent homelessness on services beyond homelessness and housing. We expect this duty to be introduced during the lifetime of this strategy and once we know what this duty will look like and understand the ways it may increase demands on some of our services and staff, we will look to work with partners to put policies and protocols in place to help them identify people at risk of homelessness early.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

The cornerstone of the recommendations of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) is a transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach, of which Housing First forms a smaller yet significant component.

Rapid Rehousing is about taking a housing-led approach for people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- **a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible**
- **time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better**
- **when temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished, and within a community.**

And for people with multiple needs beyond housing:

- **Housing First is the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages**
- **a highly specialist provision within small, shared, supported and trauma-informed environments if mainstream housing, including Housing First, is not possible or preferable.**
- **each Local Authority was required to develop their plans in collaboration over a planned and costed phase of 5 years (2019/20 to 2023/24). Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans are now an integral part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and will be reviewed annually as part of the SHIP process.**

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The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is designed to be a working tool which:

- **sets out the local housing market and homelessness context in West Dunbartonshire**
- **provides the baseline position of temporary accommodation supply**
- **identifies support needs to enable rapid rehousing**
- **sets out West Dunbartonshire Council and partners' 5-year vision for temporary accommodation supply**
- **details the actions required to achieve our vision for temporary accommodation supply and settled housing options for homeless households**
- **provides a Rapid Rehousing resource plan required to deliver the plan.**

Home at the Heart is West Dunbartonshire Council's first Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for the period 2019/20-2023/24. The plan was developed in partnership with key stakeholders including the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and local Registered Social Landlords. It followed on from the good work and progress made in "More than a Roof", West Dunbartonshire's previous homeless strategy 2017-2021.

The plan also confirms that rough sleeping is not a widespread issue within West Dunbartonshire and that the rehousing outcomes being achieved for homeless households are largely positive. However, challenges exist, with the levels of overall homelessness and youth homelessness which remain the highest in the country, the proportion of homeless households with multiple and complex needs increasing, and the number of households that lose contact with the service being a cause for concern.

Our plan acknowledges the challenges faced in terms of developing appropriate Accommodation and Support Pathways which work for homeless households and has the following four key outcomes:

1. **deliver a Whole Systems approach to the prevention of homelessness**
2. **enable service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly**
3. **to develop interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment**
4. **implement a Housing First model which enables the most excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment.**



Objective One
Whole Systems approach to the prevention of homelessness

An enhanced prevention service has been launched under this objective to ultimately reduce homelessness demand in West Dunbartonshire and to stop homelessness from happening or reoccurring.

The current Section 11 process will be reviewed with the aim to intervene at an earlier stage to stop homelessness from occurring. Other pilot projects will be explored contributing to preventing homelessness.

Objective Two
Service users with low or no support needs to access settled housing quickly

Measures put in place to house those with no and low support needs as quickly as possible which is one of the main aims the Scottish Government wanted in every RRTP.

To enable this to happen requires current applicants to be housed and for new incoming demand to also be housed at the same time meaning higher letting targets. Annual letting targets will be set based on applicants waiting to be housed and an assumption on new demand. Targets for all partners are set and agreed upon in Contribution Statements. This then will allow another aim to be achieved, reducing time in temporary accommodation for the same group.

Objective Three
Develop interim housing options which enable independent living and housing sustainment

Under this objective a Supported Accommodation Service was established, this has been in place since April 2019. We have also committed to create defined housing pathways for the following particular groups:

1. Prison Leavers
2. Care Leavers
3. Armed Forces
4. Hospital Discharge
5. Domestic Abuse
6. LGBT+

To date, we already have the first five in place with the last one currently being worked on and due to be launched in Year 3 of the RRTP.

Another aim under this objective is Conversions. Where temporary accommodation is converted to a Scottish Secure Tenancy as our experience to date shows 100% tenancy sustainment. There has also been a budget for conversions however this has been increased through RRTP funding and targets set. Below shows the number achieved in the last 2 years and targets for the remaining 3 years.

No of conversions:

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
11 achieved	32 achieved	target 30	target 30	target 30

Objective Four
Implement a Housing First model which enables the most excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment

The final objective is to establish a Housing First Service for those with multiple and complex needs and who are mostly likely to be excluded from normal routes to housing. It aims to deliver a housing led approach and lead to more sustainable housing outcomes.

The service was set up in our first year of the RRTP and plans are to continue to expand the service throughout the years to meet the projected demand. We have created a specific RRTP pathway for those who would benefit most from Housing First.

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Housing First Case Study

Ann (35) had been known to homeless services for several years and had 10 previous homeless presentations as well as failed previous secure tenancies.

Ann has a history of addiction, mental health problems, and past trauma. Ann presented to WDC homeless service after a relationship breakdown and fleeing domestic violence.

She had previously lived in supported accommodation but the previous stepped-up approach required applicants to become "tenancy ready" by first working their way through issues that may prevent them from sustaining a tenancy, but this model proved problematic for Ann and others who required additional support.

The Housing First approach identifies settled accommodation early, allows support workers to be more reactive to the immediate needs of the clients and as such this was the agreed best option for Ann.

Through the Housing First process, she received an offer of housing in her chosen area with an RSL partner. With Housing First additional funding she has been able to choose her furniture and carpets for her property and was also provided with white goods. Ann expressed how grateful she was at having a carpet as her previous tenancies had never felt like a home due to not being able to afford the essential items she needed.

A year on Ann continues to meet with her Housing First keyworker regularly and takes part in regular care plan and key-work meetings. She has been supported to engage in walking and going to the gym which has helped with her anxiety. Ann is also engaging with other agencies to address issues that have contributed to previous failed tenancies. Ann states that she now feels part of a community and does not feel stigmatised for her past issues as she is managing her tenancy and running her own home with the confidence that she will not be going back through the homeless system in the future.

Pathways, Policies and Protocols

Housing works with the WDHSCP and other partners to improve pathways to housing solutions for groups with particular challenges. We highlight here the following groups:

- **Prison Leavers**
- **Young Care Leavers (see Chapter 5)**
- **Armed Forces Leavers**
- **People being discharged from Hospital (see Chapter 5)**
- **Young people facing homelessness**
- **People experiencing domestic or sexual abuse**

Prison Leavers
We have a dedicated Resettlement Officer providing a housing options service to persons with convictions, this is part of a wider prison discharge pathway that ensures West Dunbartonshire Council delivers on the SHORE Standards.

Pathways include supporting individuals to hold on to existing secure accommodation where possible and opening up opportunities for individuals to access secure accommodation and/or Housing First direct from prison.

Other initiatives such as closer working relations with Community Justice partners, signing up to the Scottish Prison Service data sharing agreement, and developing Information Sharing Protocols with RSL partners have contributed to early intervention and increased housing options for persons with convictions.

Leaving Care Housing Protocol
West Dunbartonshire's Leaving Care Housing Protocol ensures that an integrated and coordinated service exists so that no Young Care Leaver will become homeless on leaving care or lack support to achieve independence and stability within the community.

The protocol is based on the principle that care leavers should have access to secure accommodation and is complemented by our Housing Allocations Policy, which recognises Young Care Leavers as a group given reasonable preference to housing. More details available in Chapter 5.

Armed Forces
West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Options and Homelessness Officers provide high-quality professional housing advice which can help veterans plan for life outside the military environment. This can include assistance for those whose military service has resulted in a need for additional support or a specific adaptation to their home.

Our officers provide personalised housing options suited to the veterans, and where appropriate their family's needs. Information is available online but they offer housing options meetings for those who require, or would benefit from, advice.

As well as looking at housing solutions, they also provide information and links to other services, which could impact your housing options, such as the Welfare Rights Hub, employment and training, and support services, etc.

For example, if a veteran has recently left Armed Forces and is looking for employment or unsure what their next step is, the Working4U Service can help and the Department for Work and Pension has dedicated armed forces employment champions, there are two within West Dunbartonshire Council; one in Clydebank and one in Dumbarton. The housing options team also works with several third sector partners including Poppy Scotland to assist veterans in settling into post-service life.

Hospital Discharge
WDC's hospital discharge protocol outlines the legislative and operational frameworks agreed between services for providing assessment, planning, and appropriate accommodation for people with housing and health and/or social care needs who are discharged from the hospital (see Chapter 5).

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Domestic and sexual abuse support and strategy
As a local authority, we have a responsibility to prevent and respond to domestic abuse per **Equally Safe** (Scotland's strategy for preventing and addressing violence against women and girls).

Domestic Abuse is a violation of basic human rights, and this includes children. It is recognised that children who live with domestic abuse are, themselves, experiencing abuse.

In response to this, West Dunbartonshire Council Housing and Homelessness Services have developed a policy to prevent and address domestic abuse. It has been developed in conjunction with the Violence Against Women (VAW) partnership and has been approved there.

This wider policy incorporates our **No Home for Domestic Abuse** approach to support Council tenants experiencing domestic abuse to remain in their own home and the wider housing options, accommodation, and support services available to everyone living in West Dunbartonshire regardless of tenure.

This policy aims to provide a proactive housing response to preventing and addressing domestic abuse by:

- **Providing a sensitive and supportive response to victims/survivors**
- **Working collaboratively to enable victims/survivors to access a range of housing options, advice, information, and support**
- **Holding perpetrators to account**

The policy is in line with the Domestic Abuse (protection) (Scotland) Bill 2020. This bill has just been passed in parliament and gives the social landlord the ability to apply to the courts for recovery of possession of a house from the perpetrator. This is with the view that the tenancy can be transferred over to the victim. This is the case for joint tenancies too.
More details available in our full policy: **No Home for Domestic Abuse**.





Young people, homelessness and housing options

Young people experiencing homelessness are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. In West Dunbartonshire Council young people aged 16 to 24 make up 9.8% of the population[5]. Despite this, in 2020/21 32% of homeless presentations were from young people.

As a local authority, we have a duty to assess, provide support and accommodate anyone who is assessed as homeless and this includes young people. Young people face many barriers when accessing housing, in particular affordability, worsened by recent welfare reforms, which can make access to housing more difficult for young people than other age groups. Welfare reforms also have implications for the type of temporary housing we can provide; funding is capped at housing benefit level and if the cost to provide supported accommodation exceeds that cost then a funding gap emerges which needs to be met by West Dunbartonshire Council.

Taking a housing options approach will help young people face the challenges and barriers in a comprehensive approach that can involve multiple and varied actions to achieve sustainable housing outcomes for individual customers. Housing options are not just about providing good quality advice, but about working around the person to help them gain the skills and knowledge to make an informed choice about their housing. Having the appropriate range of housing options available to young people, as well as providing support when required, is key to enabling tenancy sustainment.

As a Council, we need to be innovative when looking at homeless prevention and the housing options available to young people. West Dunbartonshire Council undertook a Young Persons Housing Options Service. This was across the Clydebank area and involved the use of mediation. The project was a success and has now been adopted across the whole Council area.

West Dunbartonshire Council is exploring option as part of a National Lottery-funded Early Action System Change, West Dunbartonshire Council is working closely with Action for Children who provide a bespoke Youth Housing Options Service for young people aged 16-24yrs.

We are also funding a new Shared Living pilot for young people who would otherwise struggle in their tenancy due to affordability, linked to recent changes in welfare reform, and isolation. This is a new housing option for young people with matching and support services provided by Simon Community Scotland.

West Dunbartonshire Council will continue to monitor youth homelessness levels across West Dunbartonshire and identify further actions where appropriate.

[5] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/Council-area-data-sheets/west-dunbartonshire-Council-profile.html#table_pop_est_age

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Conclusions

Prevention of homelessness has, and will continue to be, our focus. We have already put in place a number of policies and pathways to support people and households at risk of homelessness to understand their housing options.

We understand that as the HARSAG recommendations come into place other public sector bodies such as education and health services will have a responsibility to prevent homelessness. We know that education and making the right information available for example about tenant rights can be crucial in preventing homelessness and averting crisis. Therefore, as and when, more information about the Prevent duty is available we will work with our partners to develop a joint approach to helping them fulfil this duty. We already have a good working relationship with a number of partners and this action will build on those relationships.

Action 3.1:
Once details are available develop in partnership with other public sector bodies education and support to help them fulfil their prevent duties.

Ensuring that people and households achieve permanent settled accommodation as soon as possible has been shown to deliver a range of benefits for their health and wellbeing. As such, and in line with the HARSAG recommendations we have developed our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and intend to deliver the actions and outcomes set out in that. Therefore, we will commit to deliver that plan including the development of a LGBT+ pathway acknowledging the particular challenges those who are LGBT+ can face, as identified in our HIIA.

Action 3.2:
Deliver our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan including committing to continually review our pathways to ensure they reflect best practice.

Our Housing First model is for those tenants who have complex needs which have historically made sustaining a tenancy difficult and these tenancies come with significant levels of support and as the case study above makes clear it can be transformational.

The goal for this model is to firstly help people become established in their own home and able to participate and be part of their communities. In turn, it should help prevent future homeless presentations and whilst resource intensive can bring significant benefits, and therefore cost savings, for many parts of the public sector including the NHS and social services.

However, at the moment housing first is a pilot with funding only agreed for three of the five years of this strategy and thus we will need to work with our partners to establish how to best fund this service going forward.

Action 3.3:
Work with our partners to establish long term financial support for Housing First acknowledging the variety of benefits it delivers across the public sector.

Finally, our survey respondents and HIIA process identified that one of the major components needed for our approach both homeless prevention and rapid rehousing to be successful is a steady supply of homes available across all tenures and types, but in particular affordable housing and therefore this part of the strategy links closely to other actions and ambitions, primarily around the development of more, new homes including those set out in chapter 1.



Place and Community

4



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Our places, our towns, and communities are where many of the ambitions of this strategy intersect. The physical buildings, which provide us with homes, sit within and help create places and therefore we must work to make these places the best that they can be.

High-quality places which are safe, vibrant, and community-focused are home to people who are healthier and happier. For example, creating places which encourage people to take fewer car journeys and instead travel safely and pleasantly by foot, bike or public transport brings benefits for both their health and is more sustainable.

Focusing on the local area will be important for making our places resilient to climate change too; by considering our planting and trees which absorb rainfall and provide shade, and local food growing initiatives to reduce food miles.

Place making as a public health priority

Our places can have an important role in encouraging active travel, such as walking and cycling and by making routes safe and pleasant we can encourage and support, improvements in the physical wellbeing of the residents who live there.

There are also benefits to be had for mental wellbeing, for example studies have shown that access to green spaces, such as parks, can boost mental health by improving mood, reducing stress, and encouraging activity (Mind, 2021). To maximise the positive role of green space, both new and existing spaces need to be integrated into our places and communities so that everyone has good access to these benefits.

Therefore our places play an important role in health and this applies across all ages and demographics including children. The WHO (2016) has shown that access to green space for children is important for both cognitive and physical development, for example allowing them to develop fine motor skills which are important for adulthood.

Place making and climate change

The recently established **Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan** identifies that our places will have an important role to play in our ability to respond to, and be resilient to, climate change.

Flood prevention systems and technical flood planning will be part of that approach but it is important we also support and contribute to attempts to manage water in our neighbourhoods. For example through using permeable surfaces, planting specific types of plants, and mechanisms such as rain gardens which slow the pace of water. These types of interventions can bring other benefits such as cooling on hot days and providing biodiversity for animals.

These types of actions can build our resilience and capacity to respond to changes but our places also have an important role to play in helping our communities reduce their carbon emissions by reducing the need to drive, promoting walking and other active travel choices by making sure our homes sit within places of short distances. Thus meaning within short distances people can be connected to other places, for example by bus. West Dunbartonshire is well placed as it is fairly compact and largely urban and this links to 20-minute neighbourhoods covered below.

We will do this by supporting town centres and neighbourhoods to provide our communities with the amenities they need, as set out below, and by working with colleagues in other teams to ensure that the space around our homes contributes to our resilience to climate change for example through biodiversity.



Place making and planning context

Creating places is about giving our communities an identity and making West Dunbartonshire a place where people want to visit and live. It is about integrating and thinking about how houses, communities, open spaces, schools, other community facilities, town centres, industrial areas and the countryside come together to create places that people are proud to call their home.

West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2

Local Development Plan 2 sets out a design framework based on creating places for people and focussing on a green infrastructure first approach to design. This approach will help to create new communities and places whilst strengthen existing ones. Polices CP1 and CP2 of the LDP 2 set out the requirements in this regard and achieved the first Building with Nature Accreditation in the UK.

High-quality places and design is also a priority for the Council and as such, a Place and Design Panel has been established to raise the standards of design and place-making within West Dunbartonshire and is a formal process that will benefit proposals brought to the Panel through the provision of a workshop approach, bringing various skillsets together. The Place and Design Panel Terms of Reference detail the work of the Panel and the types of applications that it will consider.

Policy CP 4 of the Plan requires developers to incorporate the recommendations of the Place and Design Panel. If the developer chooses not to do so, justification must be provided as to why the recommendations have not been adhered to.

20 minute neighbourhoods

What is a 20-minute neighbourhood?
20 minutes or approximately 800m based upon average adult walking time. Within this distance, a short ten-minute walk there and ten minutes (total time 20 minutes) back you should be able to access and use, services, amenities such as public transport links, and green spaces.

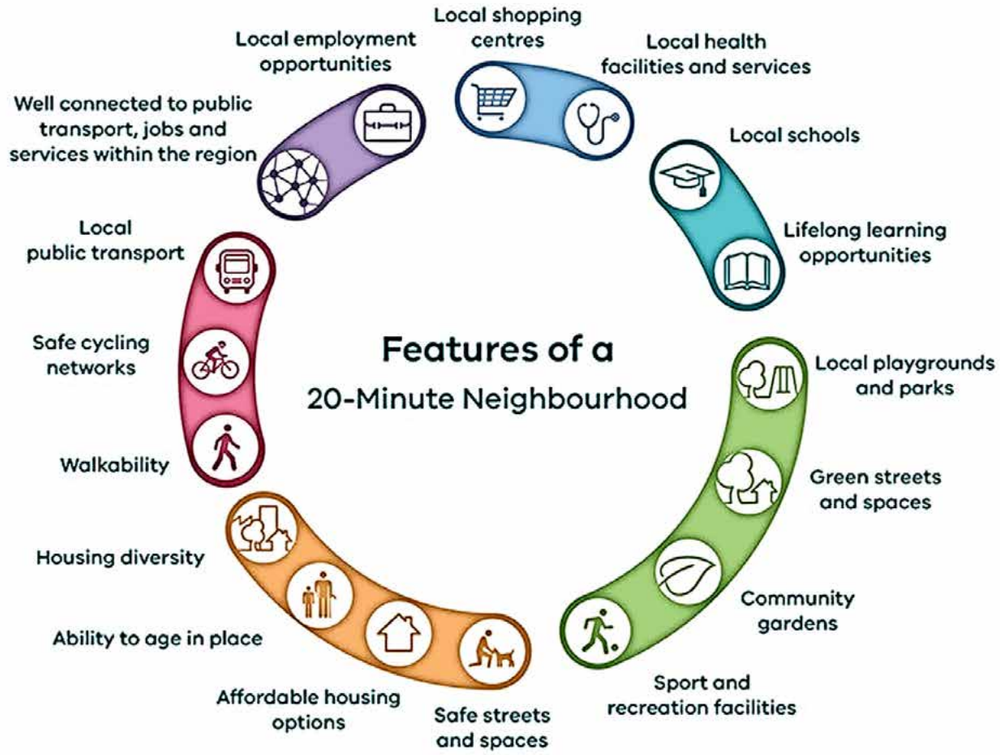
Our consultation noted the differences between good (some amenities available nearby, more within reach by public transport) and great (lots of amenities nearby such as in town centre locations) but the opportunity to make good amenities great for example by good, safe paths, cycle routes and cycle storage at home and at destinations such as schools and stations. This was reflected by our survey respondents:

72%
of whom thought that 20 minute neighbourhoods would improve their neighbourhoods

52.5%
thought it would encourage them to walk or cycle more.

Indeed, walkability is an important feature of a 20-minute neighbourhood but it also supports cycling and public transport use. This may require a more dense urban form but neighbourhoods that fulfil these principles have been shown to have positive outcomes for health and wellbeing, alongside supporting reduced carbon emissions.

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20-minute neighbourhoods and policy context
20-minute neighbourhoods are a concept that has been gaining popularity in policy for several years. The idea originated in large cities, with Melbourne and Paris being the most famous examples, but it is increasingly viewed as a good model for all neighbourhoods.

The recent pandemic has highlighted the importance of having good quality local amenities such as shops and green spaces and as a result, the Scottish Government, in the most recent programme for Government (2020), identified 20-minute neighbourhoods as something they support and we anticipate it may become more prominent in government thinking as contained within NPF4.

Creating 20-minute neighbourhoods
The most obvious first step in creating 20-minute neighbourhoods is to carry out community reviews. This involves taking the above graphic list mapping up where amenities such as schools and public transport are, types of housing available, and establishing how walkable an area is.

In addition to the physical elements of the space both our HIIA process and survey respondents felt strongly that feelings of safety should be prioritised for example well lit and overlooked streets, wider paths to allow those using prams or wheelchairs to move around easily and cycle safety measures.

This is no small project and it makes sense in the first instance to align it with other initiatives or projects, for example the Alexandria Masterplan or Queens Quay Masterplan which can help involve residents in creating the places they want and weave the 20-minute neighbourhood into that. It may be that some amenities or services will be shared between communities, depending on the size of the area, but these must be connected by public transport and active travel routes.



Town Centres

Town centres are highly accessible, have good public transport connections and a large number of amenities. There are several smaller and larger town centres within West Dunbartonshire.

Our main town centres are Clydebank, Dumbarton, and Alexandria which are well connected by public transport and offer a range of retail and leisure opportunities for their catchments. In addition to these are smaller centres which typically offer shops, transport links, and schools and are located in areas throughout West Dunbartonshire including Faifley, Duntocher, Old Kilpatrick, Bowling, Milton, Renton, and Balloch.

Looking forward, housing within these areas can bring huge benefits in terms of vibrancy, driving demand for amenities, as well as allowing people to be less reliant on cars. Ultimately, the inclusion of housing can help town centres be resilient places.

Our planning and housing policies promote the Town Centre First Principle and we utilise the toolkit for example the work undertaken in Alexandria to create the Alexandria masterplan. Further, any new developments aim to be sensitive to the local area and through our work around tackling empty homes we aim to bring empty properties in our town centres back into use. All of which aim to support and promote our town centres.

Housing Regeneration Areas Strategy

Quality places are resilient and as we as a Council look to build more resilient communities we want to ensure our homes and their respective places continue to support this ambition. This is already evident in a number of our planning and housing policies but the Local Housing Strategy allows us to identify areas for regeneration where additional focus is required.



The principal criteria used in designating the priority Housing Regeneration Areas were the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) statistics, the findings from the Council's Asset Management assessment, details in chapter 2, and analysis of the capital investment made in the area. We had in the draft version excluded Bellsmyre from our regeneration areas due to the improvements in the SIMD statistics but our survey respondents and workshop feedback felt strongly that it should be included.

The areas identified and proposed are set out below:

- **Haldane, Balloch**
- **Bonhill, Alexandria**
- **Brucehill, Dumbarton**
- **Westcliff, Dumbarton**
- **Castlehill, Dumbarton**
- **Bellsmyre, Dumbarton**
- **Mountblow, Clydebank**
- **Dalmuir, Clydebank**
- **Drumry, Clydebank**
- **Faifley, Clydebank**
- **Clydebank East, Clydebank**

While these areas were termed housing regeneration areas, the importance of linking proposals here to wider social and economic outcomes is recognised. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan will give a degree of prioritisation to projects located in these areas.

Not all of these areas contain prospective new housing sites but in these cases, other regeneration avenues will be explored including holistic refurbishment programmes and other forms of investment into these communities. For example, supporting active travel through twenty-minute neighbourhoods or the expansion of district heating systems.

It should be stressed that investment in new affordable housing will not be confined to the regeneration areas. When deciding on the priority for any given new affordable housing proposal, several factors are taken into

account including the availability of land, type of housing being proposed, deliverability, and value for money. Projects proposed for inclusion in the WD SHIP are scored against a matrix of factors and their priority is assessed accordingly.

Empty Homes Strategy

Making the most of our existing homes is a key policy focus for this strategy and a priority for both West Dunbartonshire Council and the Scottish Government.

Our Empty Homes Strategy was recently updated and approved in February 2021 and establishes the strategy's key objectives as:

- **maximise the re-use of empty homes,**
- **reduce the number of long term empty problem properties,**
- **help to alleviate the effects of homelessness and a waiting list in WDC**
- **Support Town Centre regeneration.**

WDC has a target to bring back into use 25 empty homes each year and during the last financial year (April 2020 to April 2021) brought 29 long-term empty properties back into use. There are 352 empty homes still on the register and they are spread across the Council area:

- **Alexandria 105**
- **Clydebank 145**
- **Dumbarton 102**

The Empty Homes Strategy works in alignment with the Buy-back Strategy, details below, and so far 15 out of the 40 homes purchased through the Buy-Back scheme have been empty homes and we are hoping that should more empty properties be suitable to be purchased through this scheme, we could then use the existing Empty Homes Loan Fund to refurbish these properties if necessary, making more family homes available for social rent for perpetuity.

Empty Homes and increased Council Tax

The Scottish Government announced in 2012 that local authorities would be given new powers to help reduce the number of empty homes and since April 2013 Councils have had the option to reduce, increase or maintain discounts on second homes and long term empty properties with the further option to increase Council tax owed for properties that have been empty for 12 months or more.

From April 2014, West Dunbartonshire Council has agreed to adopt a new policy that is intended to reduce the number of empty properties in our area. This policy included doubling the Council tax for long-term empty homes.

Following a review of the Empty Property Discount Policy, some discretionary elements have been agreed upon that will prevent the application of a double Council tax charge for properties that have been empty for over 12 months in some circumstances.

Existing owners of empty homes can apply for a maximum three-month discretionary exemption to allow them to do required works, for example make it suitable for habitation or prepare it for sale. Meanwhile, new owners can apply for up to 12 months to allow them to carry out required works.



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Compulsory Sale Orders

The Scottish Government has intended to legislate to introduce a Compulsory Sale Order (CSOs) Power for vacant land and buildings. When introduced CSOs will be a legal mechanism intended to help local authorities address the many thousands of empty homes and vacant urban land across the nation.

CSOs would allow the authorities to sell these buildings and plots to the highest bidder after they have been derelict for a set period, allowing them to be regenerated.

This would give the Empty Homes Strategy and officer an additional tool in those instances where all other means of engaging with the owner have been exhausted. The intended legislation that would introduce these powers was delayed because of BREXIT and the COVID-19 pandemic but we await its introduction and more detail.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)

Many public sector organisations (e.g. local authorities, Transport Scotland) and a range of infrastructure providers (e.g. energy transmission companies) have powers to purchase land without the owner's agreement if there is considered to be a strong enough case in the public interest in doing so, this is known as a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

The CPO process can be lengthy, fraught, and time-consuming and therefore we are wary of using this power, particularly when linked to empty homes, and instead welcome the prospect of Compulsory Sales Orders instead for these properties.

Otherwise, Compulsory Purchase Orders will be viewed as an option of last resort for properties that are structurally unsound, unsafe, or are otherwise putting communities at risk but we will always seek to work with owners and landlords before taking a CPO forward.

Buy Back Strategy

West Dunbartonshire Council's Buy Back Scheme was updated and approved in October 2019. It allows the Council to purchase homes previously sold through Right to Buy to increase the amount of affordable housing available. To meet the demand for housing, the scheme has clear aims and criteria.

The main aims of the scheme are:

- **to acquire housing that can increase the stock of WDC social housing**
- **help maintain or create viable sustainable communities**
- **assist with managing the effects of Welfare Reform**
- **assist the Council with SHQS/ capital Improvements**
- **potentially assist with bringing empty homes back into use.**

We are keen to see our registered social landlord partners also take a strategic approach to buy-backs to help deliver the objectives of the LHS. Negotiations are ongoing with the Scottish Government's More Homes division regarding Affordable Housing Supply Programme funding for the buy-back programme.





Tenant Participation

Involving You, the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy for 2021-2024, aims to involve tenants in decision-making about their homes and the services they receive. It does this by enhancing feedback to tenants, continuing to encourage the involvement of under-represented groups including young people, homeless people, and minority ethnic groups, and promoting the personal benefits to tenants of participating in decision-making processes.

The strategy builds upon previous successful strategies and is informed by both the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001and the Scottish Social Housing Charter requirements, which set out between them tenant rights and Council duties. We recognise that involving tenants and other service users in decisions about their homes, services and communities helps us continually work to improve these same places and homes alongside the services we offer and as such we are committed to continually improving and listening to our tenants and residents.

We also recognise that getting involved brings benefits for our tenants and communities and as such we aim to provide a variety of different opportunities and formats to help get as many people as possible involved including Housing News, our quarterly newsletter, Tenants and Residents Associations, Scrutiny Panel, attending focus groups and public meetings. More details can be found in the strategy.



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Conclusions and actions

Places and communities are vitally important to both our resident's health and well-being and our ambitions to reduce our impact on the environment. Indeed, our survey findings suggest strong support for the idea of 20 minute neighbourhoods and the opportunity they present to improve our places. However, housing is only one part of our places and we do not have control over every element of our places but we will endeavour to work with colleagues in other teams for example roads and their active travel strategy ensuring that our homes contribute the best they can. We will commit to carrying out at least one 20 minute neighbourhoods reviews per year with our colleagues and communities where appropriate.

Action 4.1:
Carry out at least one twenty minute neighbourhood review per year with colleagues from other teams, and communities where appropriate, identifying gaps and priorities. In addition we will support other team's strategies which are in alignment with these principles for example active travel and economic development.

Beyond 20 minute neighbourhoods we will work to support our places across a number of measures. For example our town centres and housing regeneration areas, our survey responders demonstrated clear support for prioritising investment in these areas. We will report back annually on the investment made and projects taken forward in these areas by both ourselves and partners such as the registered social landlords active in West Dunbartonshire. This may include new homes, connections to district heating and retrofit homes for energy efficiency.

Action 4.2:
Report annually on investment actions taken into town centres and housing regeneration areas by ourselves (West Dunbartonshire Council) and our partners.

All of these measures require that we make the most of our existing homes and indeed we have a number of policies, strategies and tools at our disposable to help us do this. We look forward to the introduction of Compulsory Sales Orders and hope that it will be a helpful tool. In addition to these national polices, our Empty Homes and Buy Back Strategies ensure that we make the most of existing housing in our communities and as such we will report annually on progress on these strategies.

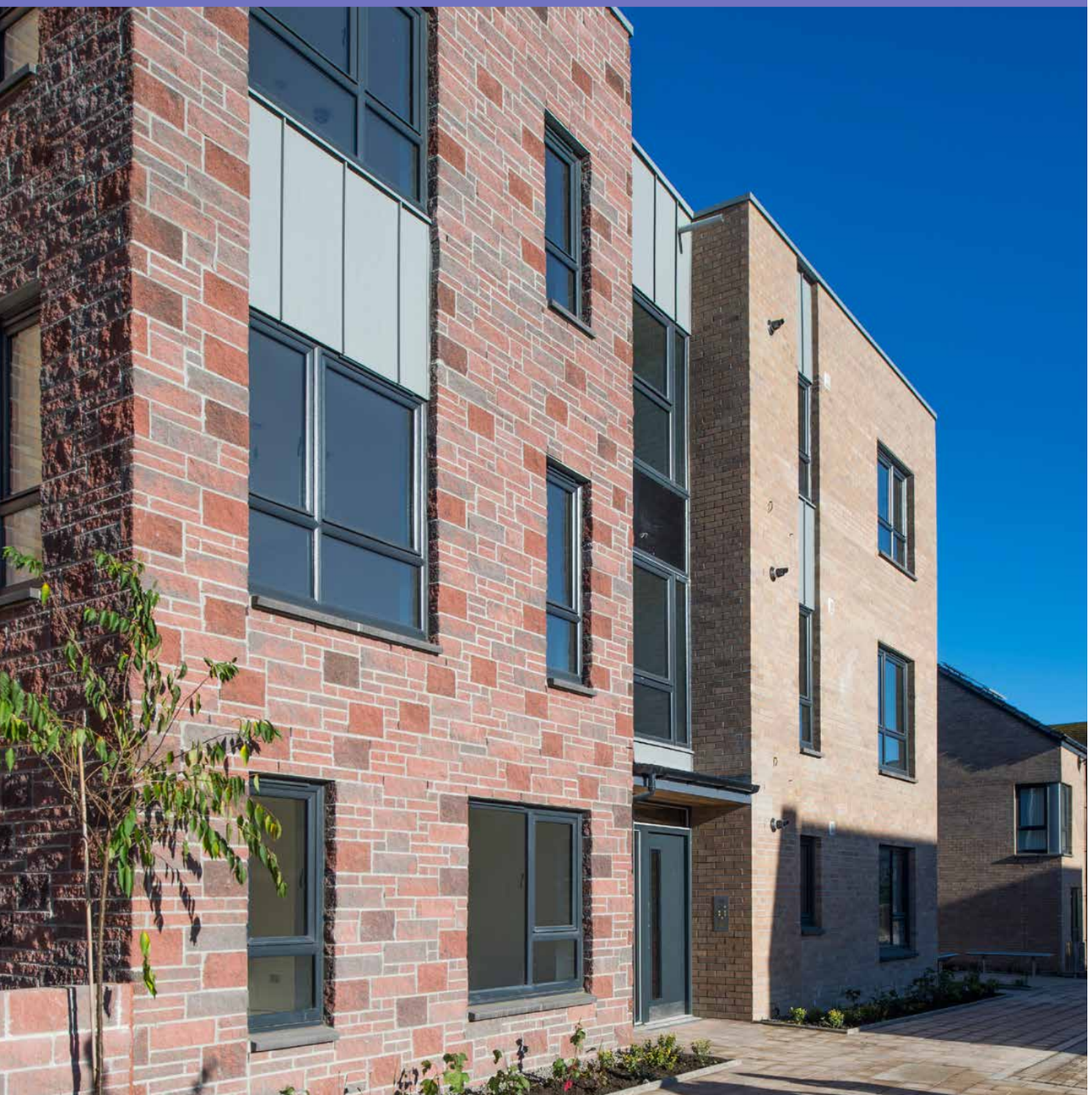
Action 4.3:
Report annually on the number of homes brought back into use by the Empty Homes officer and strategy and report on the number of homes purchased by the Buy Back officer and strategy.

Feeling part of a community and having a say in your community are both really important for building sustainable and resilient places which reflect the ambitions and aspirations of the people who live there. We have recently updated our tenant participation strategy and commit to delivering this and constantly seeking to improve not only opportunities to become involved but support our places, communities and homes.

Action 4.4:
Commit to delivering the Involving You Tenant Participation Strategy and in doing so look to continually improve how we engage and communicate with our tenants and residents, encouraging the involvement of underrepresented groups including private sector tenants, to ensure that our homes and places reflect what the people who live there want to see.

Supported, Specialist and Particular Needs Housing

5



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Housing has an important role to play in health because homes can impact on people's health in a way that few other factors can. Homes are where people spend a significant portion of their time and the links to physical health are clear but homes also invoke feelings of safety and security and therefore have important connections to mental health too.

Having access to the right housing can deliver positive mental and physical outcomes and this is particularly the case for those who require specialist accommodation, support to live independently or have housing requirements that vary from other groups.

This chapter sets out how we plan to ensure these groups have access to the housing and support they require. This will require close working across Council services and in particular with our colleagues in the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). We have set out what that relationship will look like below before setting out local demand and our approach over the coming five years for specialist, supported and particular housing.

Housing and HSCP

Housing Contribution Statement
Housing Contribution Statement (HCS) is the aspect of the Strategic Plan which acts as a "bridge" between the Integration Authority's Strategic Plan and the Council's Local Housing Strategy. It outlines the key areas of joint working and shared objectives. It forms part of the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan: 2019 – 2022.

The Housing Contribution Statement echoes the Strategic Plan in highlighting key areas where Housing and HSCP will be working together in the coming period to:

- **provide a housing support service enabling long term clients to be supported within West Dunbartonshire**
- **continue to develop plans for new and refurbished housing**
- **develop Services at Points of Transition**
- **provide preventative interventions and supports**
- **ensure rapid access to assessment, and provision of aids and adaptations**
- **seek to develop supported housing solutions for younger adults with complex needs.**

Housing will continue to engage with the HSCP over updates to the new Strategic Plan.

Need and demand for specialist accommodation

Several trends are going to influence the need and demand for specialist, supported, or particular housing in West Dunbartonshire. These are long-term trends and this is only a five-year strategy, however it presents us with an opportunity to continue to build upon work done to date and take into consideration best practice.

Changing demands on housing stock
The overall population in West Dunbartonshire is predicted to decline but the percentage of the population aged 65 and over has been increasing over the last 20 years and is expected to continue to increase from 18.8% currently to 22.8% in 2028 and 25.7% in 2043. Those aged 75 and over are predicted to rise from 8% currently to 9.6% in 2028 and then 14.3% of the total population.

Levels of frailty and ill health within our communities would be expected to rise in accordance with this aging population, however, we also have levels of frailty due to long-term conditions and co-morbidities within our under 65 population.

More support required
In West Dunbartonshire, life expectancy at birth was higher for females (79.2 years) than for males (75.0 years) in 2016-18 and has been improving in recent years. Healthy life expectancy measures how long people are living without debilitating health conditions,

chronic illness, or disability. This is not the same as life expectancy. For example for females currently aged 60-64 years in West Dunbartonshire, the average life expectancy is a further 22 years, but only 11 of these years are expected to be spent in good health.

One of the Scottish Government's National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes is that:

People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions or who are frail are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community

People living longer with more complex health conditions means we need to consider and plan for the needs of people being supported at home often over a number of years. Over 1,400 people in West Dunbartonshire currently receive support from the HSCP's Care at Home services with over 10,000 hours of home care provided in a typical week. Around 2,000 people also have the support of a community alarm to provide an emergency response from Care at Home should they become unwell or experience a fall. As our population ages and people live longer with more complex health needs these numbers will increase as will the demand on appropriate housing and/or aids and adaptations.

It is not just older households who require support to live at home but a variety of different groups including people with physical disabilities or complex health conditions who may require to use mobility aids, specialised equipment or wheelchairs and people with learning disabilities whose support allows them to live otherwise independently. Meanwhile, for others, that support might not be in the home but around it, for example for those experiencing poor mental health or particularly vulnerable groups such as Prison Leavers, Young Care Leavers or people being discharged home from hospital where their housing situation has become a barrier.

What does this mean for housing need and demand?

Older households mean we need to plan for smaller households whilst looking to provide housing which is:

- **suitable for people with mobility problems & users of scooters**
- **suitable for people with dementia**
- **future-proofed and adaptable to suit changing needs**
- **provides choice so households can decide the best option for them.**

Crucially our housing stock must seek to make it easier to support people and not act as an impediment to them living a fulfilling life. Thus, this might require housing that has been designed or adapted with a specialist requirement in mind, or that facilitates a degree of independence for example supported living units.

Specialist Housing

Older people's housing
There are approximately 550 purpose-built amenity, retirement and sheltered homes across West Dunbartonshire. They are primarily owned and managed by either West Dunbartonshire Council or our strategic housing partners.

Each of these three types of accommodation offers something slightly different with amenity properties offering emergency response, maintained garden areas, secure entry and repairs service; to retirement which typically offers the addition of a staff presence, some support to residents, laundry and sometimes meals facilities; through to sheltered housing which offers considerable support to residents as well as usually a 24 hour warden presence on site.

We continue to develop new affordable housing options for older households and will be looking to review whether existing housing for this group is suitable going forward. However older people's or age-restricted housing will only ever accommodate a small number of households thus the majority of older people's housing going forward will be formed of existing mainstream homes allowing people to 'age in place'. It may not be the home the person currently lives in as they may require a property with different attributes or they may require right sizing.

Older people's housing was identified by our survey respondents as another focus and area where they would like to see more options available and many felt that internet should be readily available for this group.

Accessible housing & delivery of wheelchair housing

Accessible housing is the cornerstone of independent living. Without an accessible home, it's clearly impossible for many disabled and older people to live as equal citizens - to work, to play, to have relationships, to be active members of our communities and all that follows from that: in other words to do all the things non-disabled people take for granted.

Etienne d'Aboville Chief Executive, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living.

Ensuring our homes are easy to get into, out of, and around is of utmost importance and should form the cornerstone of our approach to both new and existing homes.

People who use wheelchairs face particular design and accessibility barriers, both in and around the home and in the wider environment. Projections indicate that over 31,000 people with disabilities will experience unmet housing needs in Scotland by 2024 (CIH and Horizon 2017).

The recommendation from this report included the development of new wheelchair standard homes for owner-occupiers and tenants; support for home adaptations across tenures; and efficient allocation of accessible and adaptable homes in affordable and social rented sectors to help resolve these challenges.

Our Design Standard necessitates 10% of affordable homes to be wheelchair standard to access affordable housing supply programme funding. We also provide details of wheelchair space standards, alongside required design features in our Design Standard which are required in addition to complying with Housing for Varying Needs and the latest Building Standards.

This requirement applies to the affordable housing sector but is discretionary for private developers and delivering private wheelchair user standard homes can be a challenge and may require national policy change. As such the affordable housing sector continues to be vital and as such so are their allocation policies to ensure the right people have access to appropriate housing.

Respondents to our survey and our HIIA process both identified the vital role wheelchair appropriate housing play and thought it should be prioritised because it could have a significant impact upon people's ability to live independently or provide car to children who use wheelchairs.



People with disabilities

Taking a person-centred approach can help ensure that everyone, regardless of their ability level can access a home that meets their needs and allows them to access support if they require it.

Inclusive design allows people who use wheelchairs, some or all of the time, to use their wheelchair easily and this design, in turn, can also help people of varying levels of mobility, or ability, to use the space. For example, wide door frames cater for people who use electric scooters or walking supports either long term or whilst recovering from injury.

Thus, inclusive design enables future-proofing for everyone whose needs may change permanently, or temporarily, over their lifetime. We understand Housing for Varying Needs is under review and may be updated in the time of this strategy. We welcome these updates as they will apply across all new developments, regardless of tenure.

Therefore, like many areas new build homes offer an opportunity to develop custom homes which deliver best practice design but existing homes are also important and it is crucial we think about how best to make these work. As set out in the following sections, adaptations such as chairlifts, hoists and ramps can be important supports for many different ability levels.

Adaptations & policy for adaptations & allocating adapted property

In comparison to new properties where best practice and inclusive design are more easily integrated into homes, existing homes can represent more of a challenge and may require adaptations to allow people with varying levels of ability or frailty to continue to live in their existing home. Adaptations include ramps, showers, door alterations, path widening, and handrails.

West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership's Community Teams carry out



assessments for equipment and adaptations to make it easier for people to live independently. Adaptations for tenants of West Dunbartonshire Council are provided and funded through the Council and registered social landlords have access to an adaptations budget from the Scottish Government. There is also grant funding available to assist home owners and private landlords to adapt their homes.

The community team at WDC can help with applications, and our Care and Repair Scheme can help households complete the work. Further recent Scottish Government guidance should make it easier to adapt common areas such as closes to support adaptations, **full guidance here**.

Care and Repair

Lomond and Clyde Care & Repair Limited are a community based organisation covering all of West Dunbartonshire. Funded by West Dunbartonshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and Community Planning West Dunbartonshire, they offer advice and assistance to older people and people with disabilities who are homeowners or private rented sector tenants to enable them to have their homes repaired, improved, or adapted.

Further, they also offer a small repairs service which provides a trusted team of small repairs maintenance workers to carry out small repairs to people's homes, to enable them to remain safe and secure within their own homes, whilst retaining as much independence as possible.

Aids and Adaptations

Aids and adaptations while effective can often be costly, particularly where more complex adaptations are required and they are dependent on the design and construction of individual properties.

The design of new homes is hugely important and the development and availability of specialist homes makes it easier to support people to live independently, if this is what is best for them, for as long as possible.

Older, existing homes will always represent more of a challenge but remaining in their own home and community can deliver health and wellbeing benefits.

As such we will provide support to help people remain at home, provide assistance with adaptations and use technology to help older households live as independently as possible.

Technology supported housing

Technology is already an integral part of many homes with many households having smart heating systems, speakers or televisions but looking forward we anticipate that technology will become important in helping people to live independently.

For example, technology can help people manage their properties more easily and systems around heating systems are well established but there is a growing area around technology enabled care such as Telecare whereby people can have sensors or systems installed which allow them access to support quickly if required and also provide reassurance to family members and carers. For example, sensors that track movement can highlight when a person's pattern of daily activity has changed and may be of concern or where a person has experienced a fall.

Our survey respondents identified that technology and access to the internet should be an integral part of our specialist and supported housing provision. They felt that internet provision could help people maintain independence, feel less isolated and make it easier to provide care. Therefore we will work will colleagues in HSCP to ensure that we incorporate technology into our care options.



Dementia Housing

There are around 90,000 people in Scotland currently living with dementia, and this number is expected to increase significantly as the proportion of older people within the national population increases. Locally almost 600 people with dementia received support at home at some point during 2021/22.

West Dunbartonshire Council has committed to CIH's Housing and Dementia Framework and we have incorporated dementia design elements into our design standard to ensure that new homes are dementia friendly. One of the recent developments at Creveul Court in Alexandria has dementia design elements at its core which have been well received by the community and residents who are already benefitting from the good design. Our Design Standard has been updated to encourage the inclusion of dementia friendly elements.

We are aware that new builds can only accommodate limited numbers and that for some people staying in a familiar home can be more beneficial for their wellbeing. Therefore, we need to support people to find the best option for them to allow them to live as independently and safely as possible. Therefore, we will work with colleagues in the HSCP to ensure we follow best practice and are able to provide our residents with choices.

600

people with dementia received support during 2021/22

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Case Study

Our Creveul Court development in Alexandria town centre delivered 22 new homes including 16 flats and 6 wheelchair bungalows. The properties were designed to make life easier for people with dementia and have been well received by the tenants who have moved in. They particularly like the communal garden (pictured), town centre location and the design features which help them retain independence. One resident commented recently that:

"moving to Creveul Court has been better than any medication that any Doctor could prescribe"











Supported Housing

For some people living independently will not be an option and supported accommodation models may be the right housing option. The type of supported accommodation and level of support required can vary significantly for example, households with dementia will require different supported accommodation models to younger people with learning disabilities who are unable or not ready to sustain their property.

Supported accommodation therefore might take the form of sheltered housing for older households where there is staff on-site to help people or it could take the form of a shared house or temporary supported accommodation for those experiencing homelessness to help them access support. Ensuring we have the right mix and types of supported accommodation in the right locations will require ongoing investment and partnership working between HSCP, Housing, and Housing Options.

Individuals with learning disabilities have some of the poorest health outcomes of any group in Scotland. Life expectancy is increasing for people with learning disabilities, but it remains shorter by 20 years when compared to the general population (Scottish Government, 2015). In 2019, there were 458 people with a learning disability living in West Dunbartonshire known to the HSCP's Learning Disability Services.

In line with The Keys to Life, Scotland's learning disability strategy, both the HSCP and Housing strive to tackle the significant health inequalities faced by people with learning disabilities and to improve the quality of their lives. The principles of choice, control, and independence for people with learning disabilities are central to the strategy.

Working in partnership with registered social landlords and support providers, 206 people with a learning disability were living in their own tenancies with support in West Dunbartonshire in 2019.

Significant changes to the number of people with a learning disability living within West Dunbartonshire going forward are not anticipated. Yet, as life expectancy for people with a learning disability is improving this may mean that we have an increasingly older population who have a learning disability and thus have more complex needs. West Dunbartonshire Housing has developed a good working relationship with HSCP Learning Disability Services resulting in good examples of collaborative working, not least in the development of the new six-bedroom Supported Living home at the heart of the St Andrews project.

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People with autism

The Scottish Government and West Dunbartonshire Council recognise that the autism spectrum is wide and autistic people are diverse. As a result, there can be no one size fits all solution for their housing needs; whilst some people who have autism live independently, others may require some level of support and the needs of those with autism, like anyone else, will likely change across their lifespan. In this section of our Local Housing Strategy, we will set out how we plan to support people with autism going forward.

The latest Scottish Government Autism Strategy has established a National Scottish Autism Prevalence Rate of 1.035% (103.5 per 10,000). This means there are approximately 44,133 autistic people in Scotland and this would proportionally equate to just below 1,000 people in West Dunbartonshire. Therefore it is relatively common and people with autism are represented within the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The Scottish Government Autism Strategy identifies four main strategic outcomes and housing plays an important role across many of these. However, it is the healthy life and independence outcomes where housing has the opportunity to play the most visible role, but good housing can assist with all four strategic outcomes.

Whilst autism is not a learning difficultly nor a mental health problem, people with autism are more likely to experience social isolation, mental health issues, and some adults with a learning disability in West Dunbartonshire also have an autistic spectrum disorder.

Therefore some people with autism will require, as part of a wider package of support, specialist housing. We are encouraged to see the Scottish Government commit to ensuring flexibility in the housing grant subsidy arrangements within the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) so that social landlords are supported to build specialist housing in accordance with local needs.

Meanwhile, others may require other types of support for example to sustain tenancies, engage with their community, and access other services. Housing will continue to work with our partners in HSCP to ensure people get the support they require and we will continue to review our policies and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive as possible.

People with mental health needs

The joint strategy, by the NHS, COSLA, and the Scottish Government, Good Mental Health For All set out the absolute importance of good mental health across the lifespan. The strategy identifies that poor mental health can be linked to wider health inequalities with links between mental health and socioeconomic inequality, poor physical health, stigma and discrimination.

Particularly relevant for this strategy is the positive role that good housing and housing support services can have on mental health and wellbeing. The strategy identifies a range of things in the physical environment that have an impact on mental health and wellbeing, including:

- **access to local green space**
- **access to active travel**
- **opportunities for play**
- **good-quality, affordable, safe housing**

Thus, as set out in previous chapters our approach to delivering new, and supporting

investment in existing homes and increased focus on our local places should help mental health and wellbeing.

However, the strategy notes that physical factors are only one element of mental health and it is important to take a person-centred approach in giving support and this may include supporting people to access employment and services. This is an integral part of our Housing Options approach where we work to identify and support people with their housing and tenancy sustainment.

Respondents to our survey highlighted the need for more awareness of mental health and wellbeing in our communications with tenants and thus as identified in the HIIA section of this report we will seek to engage our housing staff in mental health awareness and wellbeing training and encourage our strategic partners to do the same.

People with complex needs

Whilst some people may never require specialist housing or support some people may need some or all of these elements, either throughout their life or over a short period to help them during a particular period of their life.

Complex needs are by description complex and thus taking a person-centred approach is important and day to day support will be provided by HSCP or Housing staff including Housing Options, Housing First, and housing officers, and the physical housing itself forms the backbone to this. The Scottish Government set out in Housing to 2040 that people should be able to live in homes that allow them to access support, therefore we will work in partnership to ensure that both housing and support needs are met.

Offender and Prison Leavers

We have six pathways that support those leaving prison, these require close working with resettlement and support officers who will obtain information about any existing tenancies or properties including if any arrears have been accrued, and if no accommodation is available then organise for accommodation to be made available, potentially short term temporary solutions until permanent accommodation can be found.

As part of this process, the team may identify that the person will require additional support and as such our pathways work closely with Housing First officers and other support mechanisms to ensure that support is available from the day of release.

Armed Forces communities

Faslane, the HM Naval Base, is located in Gareloch near Helensburgh and the Ministry of Defence is proposing to expand their operations thereby relocating other submarines to the area. This will result in more Armed Forces members locating to the base and may result in increasing numbers of families moving with them.

We know that West Dunbartonshire is an attractive place to call home and should families linked to the naval base choose to live here then we will look to accommodate them across the range of housing tenures to suit their needs.

Leaving Care Housing Protocol

West Dunbartonshire's Leaving Care Housing Protocol ensures that an integrated and coordinated service exists so that no Young Care Leaver will become homeless on leaving care or lack support to achieve independence and stability within the community.

The protocol is based on the principle that care leavers should have access to secure accommodation and is complemented by our Housing Allocations Policy, which recognises Young Care Leavers as a group given reasonable preference to housing.

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The protocol has been used as an example of good practice and has been shortlisted for awards with COSLA, APSE, and CIH Scotland in their service and innovation categories.

In June 2019, as a further commitment to strengthening existing services as corporate parents, the Housing Improvement Board approved a pilot Young Care Leavers Rental Exemption Scheme. This scheme supports those care leavers who wish to attend full-time education by covering the rental payments of those eligible.

This enables these students to fully focus on their studies and not have financial worries during this time. It also encourages more Young Care Leavers to aim to further their education by undertaking further or higher studies at college or university.

The pilot Young Care Leavers Rental Exemption Scheme has been monitored since it was introduced in August 2019 and as it has been operating well, and is a key benefit for those Young Care Leavers who are eligible, it was agreed in August 2020 that the pilot Rental Exemption Scheme is made part of our permanent mainstream service provision and incorporated within the main protocol.

We have reviewed our Leaving Care Housing Protocol to take into account recent guidance from the Scottish Government, CELCIS, and "A Way Home Scotland" and found that no additions to the protocol are required as it is fully compliant with the recommendations made and remains reflective of best practice.

Hospital Discharge Protocol

It is often the case that people are unable to be discharged from hospital as they do not have suitable accommodation to go to, or are discharged from hospital to return to accommodation that is no longer suitable.

WDC's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan committed to working in partnership with the WDHSCP to review and build on current arrangements relating to those being discharged from hospital, to ensure that the most suitable accommodation and support pathway is delivered quickly.

The Community Hospital Discharge Team (CHDT) is part of WDHSCP and can offer support or care for those leaving the hospital. This support can include assisting people to continue to live at home, to move to supported housing or a care home, and also offer advice about benefits.

For most patients, following completion of health and social care assessments, the necessary care, support, and accommodation arrangements are put in place in the community without any delay and the patient is appropriately discharged from the hospital.

A delayed discharge occurs when a patient, clinically ready for discharge, cannot leave the hospital because the other necessary care, support, or accommodation for them is not readily accessible and/or funding is not available, for example, to purchase a care home place. Ensuring someone coming out of hospital has an appropriate property to return to is part of this package.

Accommodation and support pathways:

1. **Return home in the short term with appropriate equipment to assist with independent living but pursuing more appropriate settled/permanent accommodation**

2. **Temporary accommodation to facilitate hospital discharge whilst the home is made suitable to accommodate with appropriate aids and adaptations;**

3. **Temporary accommodation to facilitate hospital discharge with appropriate settled/permanent accommodation then being identified.**

As part of our sheltered housing review we will make sure there is an adequate number and the right type of home available to support this protocol.

Groups with particular needs

Gypsy/Traveller communities
There is one long-established site in West Dunbartonshire for Gypsy/Travellers. This provides 20 pitches for a largely settled community and is located at Dennystoun Forge in West Dunbartonshire.

There has been ongoing engagement with residents of the Dennystoun Forge site and this has resulted in improvements to the site we have committed to continual review and consultation to ensure it continues to meet their needs. This forms part of West Dunbartonshire Council's Equality Plan 2021-25 which set out to better meet the needs of both our permanent and temporary Gypsy Travelling communities in West Dunbartonshire.

Recent consultation, as part of the LHS, highlighted that more pitches or different housing options such as cabins may be required at Dennystoun Forge to respond to the changing profile of residents who live there. We will commit to exploring this in more detail with the community.

Further, we do have more transient gypsy populations who may locate in the area for short periods. These groups have different needs to our residents who live in the permanent site.

Travelling Show people
Whilst often considered together gypsy travellers and travelling show people are different and have different requirements and needs. On average there are between three and six license applications per year for circuses/funfairs run by show people visiting West Dunbartonshire.

The normal practice is for people to set up at sites they are using for the shows, and this has not created issues for show people or residents. The LHS arrangements will have no net effect on Travelling Show people visiting West Dunbartonshire.

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Ethnic minorities
West Dunbartonshire Council is a participant in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme; strong partnership working on this scheme has contributed to fostering good relations and equality of opportunity, and this experience will inform not just future relocations, but wider work with all communities in West Dunbartonshire.
In addition we have recently signed up to contribute to the Afghan Resettlement schemes which will seek us house refugees fleeing the situation in Afghanistan.

LGBTQI
We are aware that the LGBTQI community can face harassment and discrimination in the community and this may translate into discrimination in other areas of their lives, including housing.

Whilst, a specific product is not likely to be required for this group, awareness of the barriers and challenges this group can face are important elements of our housing policy. As such as we are developing an LGBTQI pathway as part of our Housing Options approach through which we hope to strengthen our policies to ensure they are supportive of the LGBTQI community.

Key workers
Key workers such as teachers, police officers, and care staff are vital to our communities and economy. They provide crucial services and they must be able to access housing which supports them to do so, for example in locations that make it easy for them to get to work and do their job. This requires housing of all types and tenures to suit different household profiles and thus we will endeavour to deliver across the housing strategy.



Conclusions

Our research has shown that we have a growing number of older households in the council area and as such we need to plan for their housing needs. This was also a clear finding from our HIIA and survey respondents who want us to prioritise support for older people. Our new allocations policy will alleviate some concerns and hopefully facilitate downsizing but we need to ensure the right properties are available. This will include the type of home, its tenure and location and level of support available or it's potential to be provided.

Ultimately, no single housing type or options will be the right option for every older household but we will commit to reviewing housing options for this demographic group. This will include an older person's accommodation review. This will include a review of sheltered, amenity and retirement housing alongside making sure we have enough temporary properties to allow for hospital discharge or respite care to be provided. This will be supported by the provision of new homes and promoting of dementia designed homes as set on in action 2.4.

Action 5.1:
Over the lifetime of this strategy we will carry out a review of older people's housing options including a review of sheltered, amenity and retirement housing. We will work with our strategic partners and HSCP to do this.

Technology offers significant potential to help people of all ages and abilities to manage their home better and feel less isolated meanwhile it can help those who provide or receive care to do so more easily through tech-enabled care. Looking forward we will look to ensure we facilitate and bring best practice to our tenants and residents.

Action 5.2:
In partnership with HSCP, and other partners, we will look to facilitate tech enabled care solutions in our homes. We will jointly carry out research and look at how we can take these lessons across our housing to ensure everyone benefits.

Survey respondents felt strongly that those who use wheelchairs all or some of the time should have access to homes that suit their needs. Our statistics show us that the number of people who use wheelchairs some or all of the time is forecast to increase and thus we need to ensure that we the right mix of homes available to accommodate this need.

New affordable developments must provide at least 10% of homes as wheelchair suitable and all homes of all tenures should be future proofed as per Housing for Varying Needs but we understand that this standard is under review which is welcomed. As for existing homes we will continue to review our adaptation policies to ensure these are helping the maximum number of people access the right types of homes. We are anticipating new guidance from the Scottish Government and as such we will continue to review our policies against guidance.

Action 5.3:
We will continue to review our adaptations approach in alignment with the anticipated updated policy guidance from the Scottish Government.

Our survey respondents commented that sometimes it feels like the emphasis was on physical impairments or challenges and not on often less obvious conditions or impairments such as mental illnesses and autism. Thus we have identified that training and development for our housing staff, and others who may wish to be involved, would be beneficial to help raise awareness and understanding of the particular challenges some people encounter and how we can best mitigate.

Action 5.4:
As part of our ongoing training programme investigate and provide training on how to best support people with particular support needs including mental illness, autism and any other need, identified during the lifetime of this strategy to ensure understanding and best practice is taken forward.

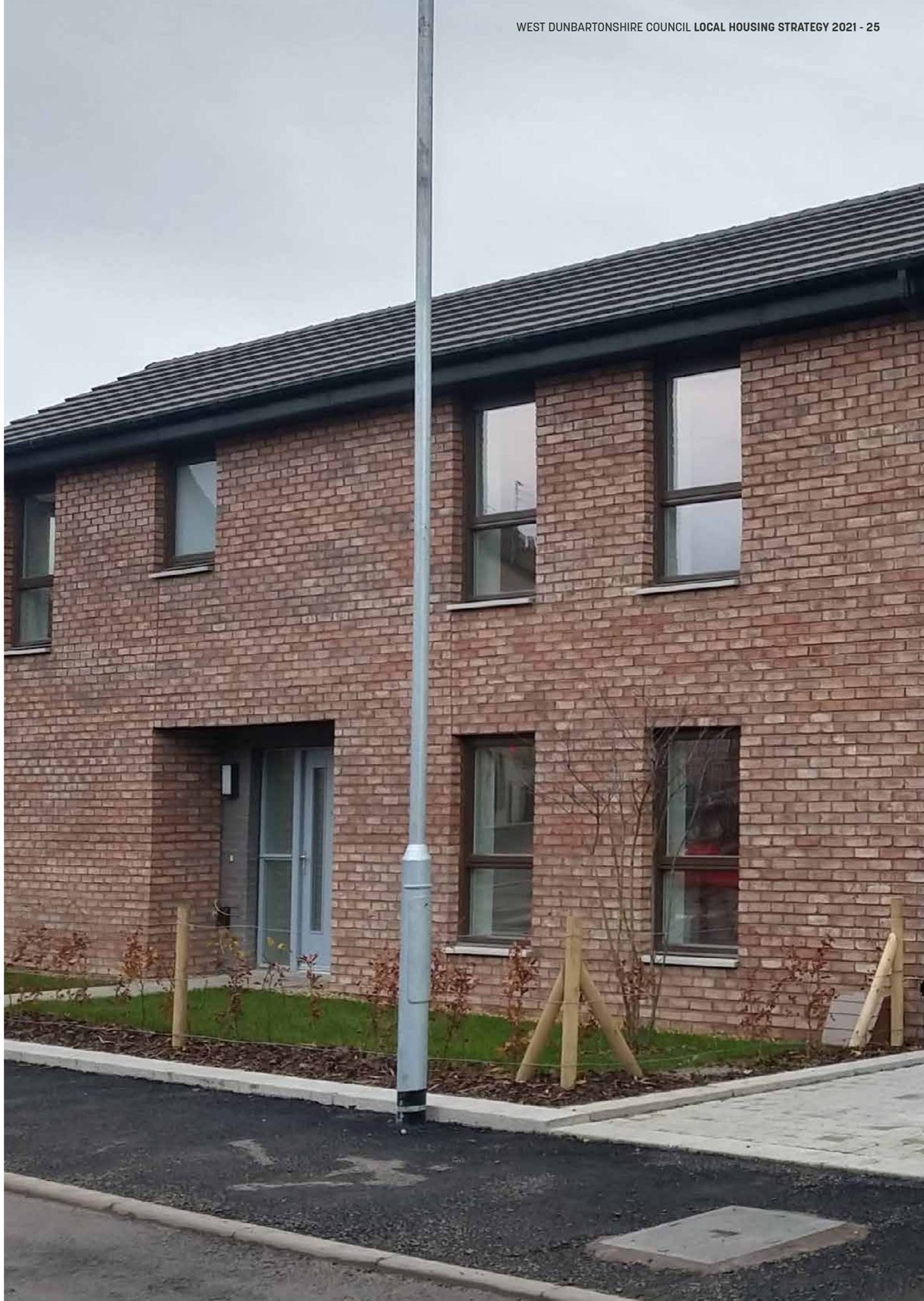
For some people supported accommodation will be the best model and we will continue to provide this option across the council and will commit to reviewing our approach and policies. Supported accommodation takes various form for example sheltered accommodation for older households will be reviewed as part of our older people's housing review and supported accommodation for homeless people will be part of our rapid rehousing plan but we also develop and own supported accommodation options for people with learning disabilities which allows them to live independently.

Action 5.5:
We will continue to work with colleagues in HSCP to ascertain demand for specialist accommodation for people with learning disabilities for example, and developing new suitable properties where appropriate

Other groups required particular housing and one such group are our Gypsy Traveller community who live at our settled site at Dennystoun Forge. We are aware from our scoping works for this report that new and different accommodation options may be required for this group and we will explore this need along with committing to continue to improve, monitor and engage with residents to ensure the site is the best it can be.

Action 5.6:
We will explore to potential need for more and different accommodation options at Dennystoun Forge whilst continuing to improve the site and work with residents to ensure it reflects their ambitions and needs long term.

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Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations

AHSP: Affordable Housing Supply Programme
The principal Scottish Government grant funding for Council and housing association new build affordable housing.

ARC
Annual Return on the Charter:
The annual performance report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Government's performance management tool for local authority and RSL housing.

BTS
Below Tolerable Standard:
Term used to define houses failing to meet a minimum repairs standard as defined by section 86 of the 1987 Act and amended by section 102 of the 2001 Act and section 11 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

CHMA
Centre for Housing Market Analysis is a Scottish Government department which produces the data and information behind the HNDA.

Clydeplan
The name for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority, with participation from the eight local authorities in the area. Previously the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority.

EESSH
Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing:
A measure introduced by the Scottish Government to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty. We are now working towards EESSH2 and updated and more onerous standard.

Equity
Net wealth invested in residential property ie the value of a property minus the owner's outstanding mortgage balance.

Fuel Poverty
A household is defined to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of its income is spent on fuel use.

HCS
House Condition Survey:
A representative survey of the Council's houses often a 15% sample, which is used to inform financial planning.

HIIA
Health Inequalities Impact Assessment is a tool which we used to carry out our equalities monitoring which puts health at the core and encourages us to think about both the mental and physical health impacts of the strategy. It is similar but different to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA).

HNDA
Housing Need and Demand Assessment:
An exercise which requires to be carried out by a local authority or group of authorities to assess estimates of housing need from existing households together with projected housing demand from households that will form in the future. In West Dunbartonshire this is done through Clydeplan and is a key piece of evidence for both the LDP and the LHS.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG)
Is an independent group which advises and reports to the Scottish Government on what needs to be done to eradicate homelessness and rough sleeping in Scotland.

Housing Contribution Statement
The WDHSCP statement of intent paper which acts as the bridge between the Strategic Plan and the Local Housing Strategy.

Housing Estimates
An estimate of the number of new houses required over the period of the plan as estimated by the HNDA.

Housing First
A model designed to ensure that the housing and support needs of homeless people are given priority under the umbrella of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

Housing for Varying Needs
Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN) is a building standard, last updated in 1999 which provides guidance about how to design a home to suit a variety of needs.

Housing Supply Targets
These take the housing estimates and set out how many homes will be delivered during the timescales of the Local Development Plan.

HLA
Housing Land Audit: A comprehensive annual account of the current housing land supply carried out by Planning. All housing sites with a capacity of four or more are identified, organised by tenure and planning status.

HMO
Houses in Multiple Ownership: A legal term to describe a property housing more than two related families and subject to licensing.

HRA
Housing Revenue Account: The self-contained account which funds Council housing from its rental stream.

HMP
Housing Market Partnership: A grouping of Local Authorities who come together to assess the need for, and plan the delivery, of housing across a joint housing market area.

HNDA
Housing Needs and Demand Assessment:
The analysis of projected housing requirements for an area.

HSCP
Health and Social Care Partnership:
The health and social care integration body.

LDP
The Local Development Plan:
The statutory land use planning framework for West Dunbartonshire. This plan covers the whole of West Dunbartonshire with the exception of the area within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. Formerly known as the WD Local Plan.

LHA
Local Housing Allowance: the mechanism for calculating and paying housing benefit. The allowance figures are set by the UK government.

LHEES
Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) aim to establish area-based plans and priorities for improving the energy efficiency of buildings and tackling fuel poverty.

LL&TTNP
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

MMR
Mid - Market Rent:
Rents set somewhere between social housing rent and those in the private rented sector. This is usually calculated at around 80% of the Local Housing Allowance.

NRS
National Records for Scotland:
The Scottish Government compiles and publishes information and data on council areas across Scotland and makes this information available publically. This includes information about population size, number of housesholds and household projections.

Passivhaus
A particular form of new house standard which builds energy efficient homes. It falls within the more general category of Zero Carbon homes which have very low future energy requirements and low fuel bills.

PSHG
Private Sector Housing Grant: A grant available from the local authority to help fund the upkeep of private properties. The funding is made from an annual allocation received from the Scottish Government.

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan
A Scottish Government initiative to ensure homeless people are found settled housing as quickly as possible.

RoS
Registers of Scotland: part of the Scottish Government chiefly responsible for holding records on property and land ownership.

RSL
Registered Social Landlord:
A non- profit making social housing provider registered with Communities Scotland, generally a Housing Association.

SAP
Standard Assessment Procedure:
A government energy rating for homes.

Scottish Social Housing Charter
The Charter introduced in 2012 setting out standards for social housing landlords in Scotland. Monitoring of performance is carried out by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Scottish Government More Homes Division
The arm of the Scottish Government responsible for funding for affordable housing. Previously known as the Scottish Government's Housing Supply and Innovation Division.

SEA
Strategic Environmental Assessment:
An impact assessment required under the Environmental (Scotland) Act 2005.

Section 5s
Section 5 referrals are the formal means by which local authorities can ensure that homeless people are housed by registered social landlords (RSLs).

Sheltered (or Supported) Housing
Housing which gives people the independence of having their own flat within an associated warden service and call duty system, controlled entry and communal facilities.

SHS
Scottish Household Survey is a survey completed annually by the Scottish Government which surveys households on their household for example size, income and perceptions of neighbourhood.

SHQS
Scottish Housing Quality Standard:
A housing standard required to be met by all social housing landlords by 2015.

Supported Living
Where people occupy their own single or shared tenancy and are supported to sustain their tenancy and are enabled to make decisions and choices about their personal and social life. This support can be of just a few hours or up to 24 hours duration.

Telecare
The range of equipment and services available to assist a person to remain safely in their own home. It includes things like movement and fall detectors, panic buttons, and automatic medication management.

Tenure
Housing tenure describes the legal status under which people have the right to occupy their accommodation. The most common forms of tenure are:

- Home-ownership or owner occupation: this includes homes owned outright and mortgaged
- Renting: this includes social rented and private rented housing.

Very Sheltered Housing
Housing which has all the features of Sheltered Housing but will also usually have additional warden services and the provision of (at least one) meals.

Contact details:

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Housing Development and Homelessness
Council Offices
16 Church Street
Dumbarton
G82 1QL
Email: HousingDevelopment@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format on request.

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضا بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة سمعية عند الطلب.

अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਰਾਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formacie audio.

British Sign Language
BSL users can contact us via contactSCOTLAND-BSL,
the online British Sign Language interpreting service.
Find out more on the contactSCOTLAND website.

West Dunbartonshire Council
Council Offices