



West Dunbartonshire Council

Affordable Housing Design Standard 2020 Q1

Contents

Chapter	Title
---------	--------------

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Building design
- 3 Layout and design features
- 4 Minimum space standards
- 5 Disabled access requirements
- 6 Future proofing
- 7 External areas
- 8 Dementia friendly design
- 9 Glossary

Introduction: Foreword from Councillor Diane Docherty, Convener of Housing and Communities



I am pleased to present the revised and updated West Dunbartonshire Affordable Housing Design Standard which was approved by Housing and Communities Committee in February 2019. Our innovative Design Standard was first introduced in 2015, setting the highest standards for new Council and Housing Association properties anywhere in Scotland.

Since then, a number of other Local Authorities have followed our example, putting in place new build quality requirements which exceed what is required by statute. In the period since 2015, we have expanded our new build programme and together with Housing Association partners, have committed approximately 1,000 new homes towards the Scottish Government's target of introducing 50,000 new affordable housing units throughout Scotland by 31 March 2021. I am pleased to say that in West Dunbartonshire, we are well on our way to meeting our target.

While we are delighted to be able to support the Scottish Government's new supply ambitions, we were keen, not to lose sight of quality. We recognise that it is vital to provide new homes which meet modern benchmarks on key elements such as space standards, energy efficiency and accessibility. In addition, ensuring our new homes meet the needs of a changing demographic was an important consideration. In this respect I am particularly pleased to note that we have incorporated Dementia friendly elements in some of our developments, improving design for those affected by this condition. We anticipate that these design elements will be included in other developments in future.

The house building environment is an ever changing one and this Design Standard will be regularly reviewed including as we respond to the ongoing climate emergency to ensure that we are providing the very highest quality and sustainable homes for social housing tenants across West Dunbartonshire

We welcome the support from the Scottish Government's More Homes Division and our partner Housing Associations in delivering on this aim.

Introduction: Purpose and Background

Purpose:

The purpose of the design standard is to ensure that the homes we are designing and building are of the highest quality and incorporate best practice design enabling those who live in them to enjoy a high quality home environment regardless of age, ability, health or tenure.

Background:

The housing team at West Dunbartonshire Council have carried out extensive research and consultations including reviewing the financial and procurement implications alongside a risk analysis and economic impact assessment. Whilst some concerns were raised, particularly around cost, it was felt that improved quality homes were a good thing long term and contribute to the council's strategic goals.

Timeline:

- November 2015: WDC introduced a design standard for housing supported by the ASHP requiring new homes to meet higher standards in respect of floor space, accessibility and energy efficiency. The standard applied to both Council and housing association new build homes.
- April 2016 new design standard introduced for any new homes developed for affordable rent in West Dunbartonshire.
- November 2018: A review of the standard was supported by the Housing and Communities Committee and consultation was undertaken.
- February 2019: WDC introduced an improved/ revised design standard for new homes funded by the ASHP. Details of which are covered in this document. Agreed any ned projects from April 2020 will need to comply.
- April 2020: any new projects will need to incorporate the design standard by this date.

Introduction: How it works & what has changed

How the design standard works:

The standard includes details of essential elements alongside a list of desirable elements which we are asking developers to consider, however we acknowledge that some of these might be aspirational.

We recognise that whilst we are committed to building quality new affordable housing, a degree of discretion may be required where a project is finding it difficult to meet the full criteria. Decisions on such matters will be the responsibility of the More Homes Board.

2016 Design Standard v 2020 Design Standard

Many of the original features of the 2106 Design Standard remain including silver energy efficiency standards and better provision of home office space, energy use monitoring and improved accessibility but the changes are apparent in:

- Minimum floor areas to ensure that better space standards are achieved.
- ▶ 10% of housing to be wheelchair standard or other specialist accommodation.
- Include dementia friendly elements as standard into all new homes, not just specialist ones.
- Future proof measures to improve the flexibility of the new homes.
- Additional advice on external areas.

Key to the tables:

E= essential (must be provided)

D= desirable (ideally should be provided)

2. Building design

Having well designed buildings is a basic requirement of our design standard.

In addition to being well designed, homes should be designed to take advantage of, and mitigate, any weather conditions, for example taking into consideration sunlight and prevailing winds.

Further, homes should be built to energy efficient accreditations and innovative designs and solutions are welcomed.



Building Homes and Improving communities

Building Design: Buildings & Energy Efficiency

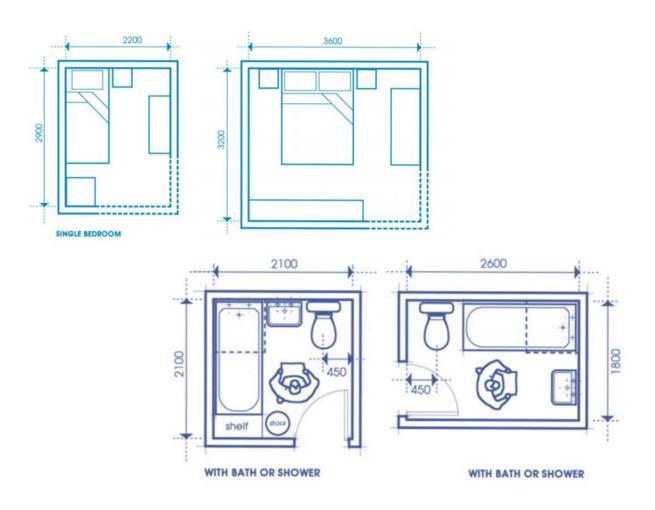
Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Buildings designed to have a minimum life of at least 60 years.	X		May be relaxed n exceptional circumstances e.g. topography
All new homes must achieve a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of at least 80.	X		
All new homes must meet at least the silver active standard (all aspects 1-8).	X		
Careful consideration should be given to providing the best orientation for the properties in terms of solar gain and potential cooling advantages		Х	
Main entrance doors should be positioned to take cognisance of prevailing winds		Х	
We encourage considerations of innovative carbon reduction measures, for example Waste Water Heat Recovery systems (WWHRS), in new developments		Х	

3. Layout and design features

The layout and design of a home are important features within a building and development design.

A well designed space should not only give people the space they need to live comfortably, with enough storage space to accommodate their belongings but it should also offer flexibility in order to allow them to change how they use the space to suit their needs as they change.

Thus guidance applies to overall layout but with specific guidance for bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and common spaces. It should be noted that many of these aspects are essential, rather than desirable.



Layout and design features: Property Layout

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Dual aspect homes should be provided wherever possible		X	North facing single aspect properties will never be acceptable nor in homes with more than three bedrooms.
Level access should be provided to the principal entrances.		X	Where topography does not allow this, level access must be provided to another entrance, acceptable only in exceptional circumstances.
A home office space must be included in every property, in larger homes (4 or more people) further home office space might be required.	х	х	This is a silver standard requirement.
All floor plans should show a furniture layout to comply with those set out in HfVN and should clearly indicate where the home office space is located.	х		
The layout of adjacent dwellings, as well as lifts and circulation spaces, must seek to limit the transmission of noise to sound sensitive rooms	X		
Internal ceiling heights must be a minimum of 2.4m in all habitable rooms, measured from finished floor level.	Х		

Layout and design features: Bedrooms

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Double bedrooms must be capable of accommodating twin beds.	X		
The bed space should be located such that the bedhead is not under the window.		Х	
Built in wardrobes should be provided to all bedrooms, Wardrobes should have sliding or slide hung finished flush doors, a continuous shelf and hanging rail. The internal depth of the wardrobe should not be less than 600mm.	X		See separate section on storage spaces for more detail. Only in exceptional circumstances should these be omitted.
Future provision for direct access from the main bedroom to a bathroom is desirable.		X	

Layout and design features: Bathrooms

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Internal bathrooms i.e. those without windows, should be avoided wherever possible		X	
Baths should not be sited under windows		X	
The preference is for the bathroom door to open outwards while ensuring this does not cause an obstruction in the hall.		X	
Slip resistant floor finish (m R value = 11) and integrated coved skirting to be provided to all wet rooms; bathrooms, shower rooms and WCs. Coving in kitchens is preferred but optional.	X		
A dwelling should have at least one accessible WC and wash hand basin and at least one accessible shower/bath, located on the principle living level of a dwelling.		X	

Layout and design features: Kitchens

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Kitchen designs should include a dining space suitable for the size of the household. Only in exception circumstances should this be omitted.	X		
Floor spaces within the kitchen (minimum 625mm clear width) must be allocated for a cooker, a full height fridge/ freezer, and a washing machine. For dwellings for six people of more, also provide space for a tumble drier with vent and a dishwasher.	X		
Slip resistant floor finish (min R value = 111_ and integrated coved skirting to be provided to all kitchens	X		
Consideration to be given to providing floor finishes to open plan kitchen/dining areas.		Х	
In eight person homes, there should be a separate utility room with space for a sink and two appliances as a minimum.		X	

Layout and design features: Stairs, Hallways, Storage & Circulation Space

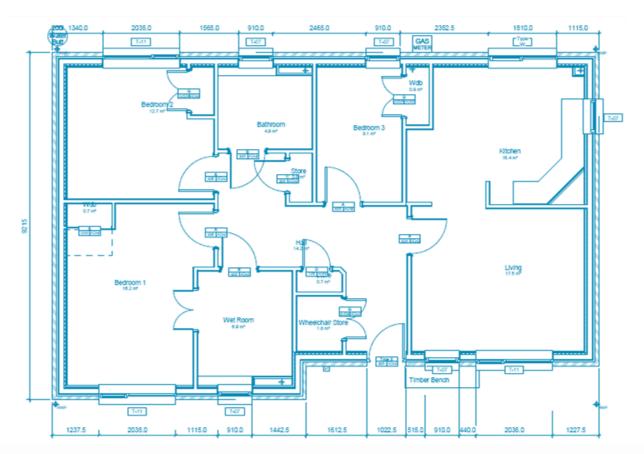
Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Tapered treads must be avoided in the design of stairs	X		
Ceilings over stairs should be lower to match the rake of the stairs for ease of maintenance, while maintaining the required minimum 2000mm head room.	X		
Entrance doors to dwellings must have a minimum clear opening of 870mm	X		
All corridors must have a minimum width of at least 1200mm (+ an increase at change of direction to allow a 1.5m turning circle).	X		
Internal door widths must be a minimum 800mm clear width.	Х		
The maximum depth of a storage cupboard should be 1m. They should be free of hot water cylinders, boilers, heat exchangers, washing machines and the like and all part of the cupboard should be a minimum of 2000mm high.		X	

4. Minimum Space Standards

Having the space you need and a home layout that allows you to live an active and comfortable life is our priority regardless of your age, ability or family structure.

Whilst existing homes may represent a challenge new build properties can aspire to deliver the best space standards and layouts and thus we have established minimum space standards to govern new developments.

These space standards include a guidance for the required standards for wheelchair users. In order to address the needs of wheelchair users within our communities as it stands at least 10% of properties in new developments should be entirely wheelchair friendly.



Minimum Space Standards: General needs

	Minimum Net Floor Area					
Number of bedrooms/ people	One-storey dwellings (m2)	Two-storey dwellings (m2)	Three- storey dwellings(m2)			
1 bedroom (1 person)	33.0					
1 bedroom (2 person)	50.5					
3 person	61	68				
4 person	73.5	79				
5 person	82.5	89.5	98.5			
6 person	90	97	102.5			
7 person	111.5	114.5	118.5			
8 person	120.5	123.5	127.5			
9 person	129	132	136			

The above areas are based on the New Floor Areas, defined as:

- Living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, shower rooms etc.
- General storage space including areas occupied by fitted cupboards
- Halls and staircases.

It excludes:

- Common Corridors, landing stairwells and areas of a shared nature
- Areas where the headroom is less than 1.5m
- Common utility rooms.

Minimum Space Standards: Wheelchair adaptable

	Minimum Net Floor Area					
Number of bedrooms/ people	One-storey dwellings (m2)	Two-storey dwellings (m2)	Three- storey dwellings(m2)			
1 bedroom (1 person)	43					
1 bedroom (2 person)	58.5					
3 person	75	82				
4 person	87.5	93				
5 person	100.5	107.5	116.5			
6 person	108	115	120.5			
7 person	122.5	136.5	140.5			
8 person	133	151	155			
9 person	147.5	161.5	165.5			

The above areas are based on the New Floor Areas, defined as:

- Living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, shower rooms etc.
- General storage space including areas occupied by fitted cupboards
- Halls and staircases.

It excludes:

- Common Corridors, landing stairwells and areas of a shared nature
- Areas where the headroom is less than 1.5m
- Common utility rooms.

Minimum bedroom sizes: General needs & Disabled

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Single bedrooms: the minimum floor area for a single bedroom, exclusive of built wardrobes, is 8m2 and should be a minimum of 2150mm wide. Should have a wardrobe min 600mm by 800mm		X	General needs
Double bedrooms: the minimum floor area for a double/ twin bedroom, exclusive of built in wardrobes is 12.5m2. One double or twin bedroom should be at least 2750mm wide and the others 2600mm wide. Should have a wardrobe min 1200mm by 600mm.		X	General needs
The minimum floor area for a single bedroom is 10 m2 for wheelchair housing.	X		Disabled access
The minimum floor area for a double/twin bedroom is 15.5 m2 for wheelchair housing.	X		Disabled access

5. Disabled access requirements

Those who require the use of wheelchairs or have other challenges can potentially benefit the most from purposefully designed space.

It can allow them to comfortably enjoy their home, undertake activities with their friends and families which would otherwise been challenging and hopefully be independent and active within their communities.

Therefore whilst we have provided particular space standards for wheelchair accessible homes we have also in this section identified design features which should be incorporated where appropriate in order to accommodate and future proof new developments.



Disabled access requirements: Design considerations

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
75% of G/F houses must be provided with a walk in shower unless there are especially difficult site constraints. Where a bath is fitted in a G/F, a wet floor should be provided.	X		
Consideration to be given to suing contrasting colours and finishes around the doors to aid recognition for site impairment.		X	
For the benefit of people with sight impairment, floor surfaces mustn't be heavily patterned or of a gloss finish as this causes glare.	Х		
Door numbers and external door bells must be clearly visible against their background to assist people with a sight impairment.	Х		
Letter boxes should have cages to collect mail.		Х	
The minimum floor area for a single bedroom is 10 m2 for wheelchair housing.	Χ		
The minimum floor area for a double/twin bedroom is 15.5 m2 for wheelchair housing.	Χ		

6. Future proofing

West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to the development of homes which are not simply fit for purpose now but will continue to be high quality homes over the long term.

Thus we are keen to encourage the development of homes which are sustainable and in particular our homes to be heated and powered from sustainable sources and incorporate technology for SMART homes.

Therefore ensuring homes are future proofed for technology means that investment in internet connectivity at the development stage is key so that homes can be fit for 21st lifestyles and this also includes space for working from home.



Future Proofing: Sustainability

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Measures which support the aim of decarbonising the grid, including provision of district heating systems, are encouraged.		X	We are in a transitional period in terms of the development of DHS but this will be an area for development in future versions of the Standard.
LED lighting is preferred for communal areas.		X	
Consideration should be given to the inclusion of smart meters when second generation models, not tied to particular energy suppliers, when available.		X	
Consideration should be given to incorporating mobile phone app based technology for managing home energy and security.		X	
Boilers must achieve at least an A efficiency rating.	Х		

Future Proofing: Internet ready

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
The Design Standard requires the provision of a home office space. Particular attention is drawn to AHSP Process and Procedures MHDGN 2018/01 Annex A: Future –Proofing Access to Internet and Broadband Services.	X		
Provision of a communal satellite & Freeview television system must be specified for flatted properties in developments. Consideration should be made for additional points in the bedroom. A dual satellite dish such as Freebird should be considered to allow wider access to international channels.	X		
Provision must be allowed for 'fibre to the premise' so that any ISP can be utilised by the occupier	X		
Inclusion of a cheap high speed fibre internet package through a particular provider should be considered.		X	

7. External areas:

WDC Local Development Plan advocates sustainability principles and high open space standards in a design-led approach to new housing.

Creating Places details the Scottish Government's vision to protect and enhance the built environment while their policy document Designing Streets promotes an approach to street design which challenges the primacy of motorised vehicles in neighbourhoods. New affordable housing should support the principles contained in these documents.

Developers should also take note of WDC Planning guidance Residential Development: Principles for Good Design, 2014 and Our Green Network, 2015 which are due to be updated along with the current local development plan.



External areas: Sustainability

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Building Standards require the provision of an accessible space to allow for the safe, convenient and sustainable drying of washing (3.11.6). Drying space must be integrated into the design of external spaces. Such provision may be shared, provided the arrangement is practical.	X		
Source Control Drainage shall be employed to minimise SUDS requirements and to provide a natural solution to rainwater runoff. This shall include maximising permeable elements in hard landscape areas subject to discussion with WDC Roads.	X		
Projects must seek to achieve environmentally sustainable parking levels, taking account of the type, tenure mix and location of the housing.	X		
External lighting units will be subject to consultation with WDC Roads but must not distribute light above the horizontal plane.	Х		
Provision for Electric vehicles should be considered (charging points and ducting for future provision of the points).		X	

External areas: Roads & Car Parking

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Developers should engage at an early stage with the Roads Authority to agree upon an environmentally sustainable solution which seeks to minimise car parking spaces.		X	
Normally, car parking should be provided at a level 1-step-down from mainstream developments: i.e. 1.5 spaces per dwelling with 3 or fewer bedrooms and 2 spaces per dwelling with 4 or more bedrooms. An acceptable design can include areas of landscaping showing a superimposed parking layout to the levels agreed with the Roads Authority, conforming to NRDG dimensions.	X		
Areas of car parking should be designed to encourage other uses, such as play. A <i>Designing Streets</i> approach should be considered.		X	
Road layout must demonstrate compliance with current standards / guidance as advised by Roads Service (e.g. NRDG and Designing Streets).	X		

External areas: Path & Cycles & Fencing

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Public footpaths and paths to houses must be a minimum 1200mm wide and should have a 1:100 crossfall.	Χ		
Cycle parking should be provided for flatted developments at the rate of 1 space per dwelling, in line with Cycling By Design 2010. This should be located at ground level and be in a secure, covered environment (e.g. part of the building or a lockable compound)		X	
Timber boundary fencing of gardens should not back directly onto public spaces, including paths. Consideration should be given to running a hedge/planting strip behind the boundary.		X	

External areas: Gardens

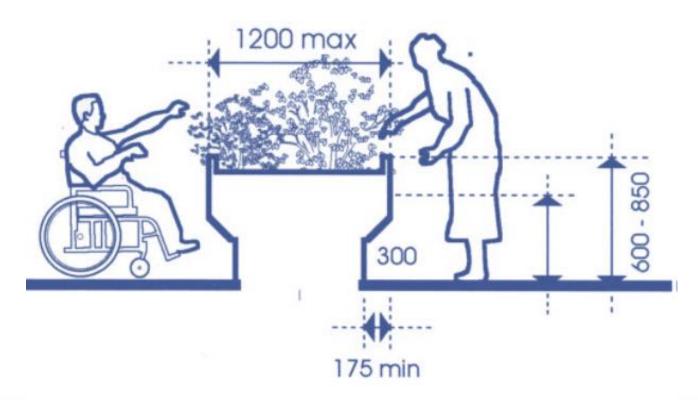
Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Planting should include edible fruit species.		X	
Front garden areas should contain hedges/taller shrubs to give a sense of privacy. Appropriate tree planting is also encouraged where space permits.		X	
Where timber board fencing is used to define rear/side boundaries, self clinging/ climbing plants or specimen shrubs should be used to break up the monotony.		X	
A minimum useable garden space of 50m2 should be provided for each house. For flats, a minimum of 10m2 should be allowed per unit.		X	It is recognised that a balance requires to be struck between the amenity provided by the garden and the maintenance burden it may place on the tenant or housing developer.
Any areas of grass should be of a size, shape and accessibility which facilitate ease of mowing.	Х		Every effort should be made to avoid any "left-over space" which would give maintenance difficulties.

8. Dementia friendly design:

WDC supports the view that housing will play an increasingly important role in improving the conditions for people with dementia.

We may wish to consider designating particular houses or projects as being "Dementia Friendly". For these houses a full range of assistive design measures may be employed. WD HSCP has provided advice on design measures which would assist people with dementia and those with learning difficulties. There may be value in considering incorporating some of these elements as a matter course as a future-proofing measure in mainstream housing, particularly in ground floors.

The principles outlined in this section apply also to other people who would benefit from assistive measures including those with physical disability issues.



Dementia friendly design: General features:

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Flooring should be of a consistent tone		Х	
Noise pollution should be minimised where possible		X	
Allow for easy installation of future telecare items		X	
In appropriate locations, consideration to be given to wall/ceiling structures capable of future installation hoist and track systems		X	
Care should be taken in selecting windows handles. Difficult to open handles or ones in contrasting colours may be appropriate		X	
Two electric double sockets must be made available next to the telephone socket to allow for future telecare items	X		
Spy holes should be provided to external doors (one at standing level, the other for wheelchair users)		X	
Consideration to be given to provision of power switches which are in contrasting colours to the wall		Χ	

Dementia friendly design: Lighting & External areas

Good lighting is particularly important for people with Dementia. Where possible, seek to maximise lighting especially at key areas such as sinks, worktops, bathrooms and external pathways.

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Consider night time lighting pathways to bathrooms		Х	
Light switches should be in a contrasting colour		Х	
For some client groups dimmer lights in living room and bedrooms are beneficial		Х	
Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Non-slip paving must be employed	Х		
Pathways must be well lit	Х		
Extra care should be taken creating short and clear access routes to bin stores and drying areas		X	
Consideration should be given to providing raised planters in gardens		Х	
Planting of scented varieties is encouraged, especially near paths and doorways		X	

Dementia friendly design: Kitchens

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
There should be a continuous worktop between oven and sink		Х	
At least some cupboards should have glazed doors(or shatterproof clear material)		X	
Cupboard door handles should be of contrasting colours		X	
Taps should be lever, not mixer, and marked "H" and "C" in red and blue		X	
Worktops should be of a solid colour, not patterned, and should be of a matte finish		X	
Sinks should be of generous dimensions		Х	
Install non-slip flooring	Х		

Dementia friendly design: Bathrooms

Element:	E:	D:	Comment:
Taps should be lever, not mixer, and marked "H" and "C" in red and blue		Х	
WC should have traditional handle flush levers or raised buttons		X	
Consideration to be given to painting bathroom doors in strong contrasting colour		X	
Provide large wash hand basins	Х		
Install non-slip flooring	X		
Glare from tiles/wet boards should be minimised. Use a matte finish.		X	
In wet rooms, which will have coved skirting, a contrasting capping strip should be included to make it clear where the floor ends and the wall begins.		X	
Showers should have an automatic timed switch off/maximum temperature control		Χ	

9. Glossary

Term	Description
Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP)	The principal Scottish Government grant funding for Council and housing association new build.
Duel Aspect	A property with windows on two or more walls.
Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH)	A measure introduced by the Scottish Government to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty. The standard established a first milestone for social landlords to reach by 31 December 2020.
Fuel Poverty	A household is deemed to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of its income is spent on fuel use.
Green Network	Connected areas of natural, semi natural and created greenspace, active travel and recreational routes, watercourses, woodland and other habitats that together form an integrated and multi-functional network.
Greener Standard	See Silver Standard below
Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN)	Housing for Varying Needs: a design standard which requires new dwellings to be be designed to be barrier free internally to ensure that a wide range of needs can be met. All homes funded through the AHSP must at least meet this standard.

Glossary

Term	Description
Local Development Plan (LDP)	The Local Development Plan: the statutory land use planning framework for West Dunbartonshire. The plan covers the whole of West Dunbartonshire with the exception of the area within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. The current plan is the West Dunbartonshire LDP2 Proposed Plan dated September 2018.
Local Housing Strategy (LHS)	The Local Housing Strategy: the statutory document setting out the strategic housing priorities over a rolling 5-year period. The current version is the More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022.
National Roads Development Guide (NRDG)	The National Roads Development Guide is Scotland's principal guidance on this roads, produced by the Society for Chief Officers of Transport in Scotland.
Open Space	Includes all green spaces which contribute to the amenity of an area.
Place and Design Panel	A forum convened by West Dunbartonshire Planning which works collaboratively with developers, architects and the likes to provide advice and assistance in pre-application proposals to help ensure projects contribute to a culture of design excellence.
Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	Standard Assessment Procedure: a government energy rating for homes.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency: the government body responsible for environmental regulation.

Glossary

Term	Description
Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)	Strategic Housing Investment Plan: the annual document which sets out the funding priorities for affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire for the next five years.
Silver Standard	A sustainability level detailed in the Scottish Government's Building Standards Part 1: Technical Handbook – Domestic (Part 7.1 Statement of Sustainability). Sometimes referred to as <i>Greener standard</i> .
Silver Active Level	The sustainability level above Silver, which requires the inclusion of use of a low and zero carbon generating technology (LZCGT), usually meaning the inclusion of wind turbines, photo voltaic cells, combined heat and power units (fired by low emission sources) or some such items.
Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)	A Sustainable Drainage System manages the impact of new developments on surface water drainage discharges. It may involve elements such as water retention basins and permeable surfaces.
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.

Glossary

Term	Description
Waste Water Heat Recovery Systems	Waste Water Heat Recovery Systems are energy saving devices which recover heat/energy from waste water and use it for other purposes.
West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)	The health and social care integration body with delegated authority from the NHS Greater Glasgow Health and West Dunbartonshire Council.
Wheelchair Accessible Standard	An accessibility standard requiring more than HfVN. These are homes with significantly increased floor areas. Elements might include, for example, particular features in kitchens and bathrooms, hoist systems linking bedrooms to bathrooms and storage space for 2 wheelchairs. As defined under Housing for Varying Needs Part 1 - wheelchair standard.

If you have any questions or require clarification please contact:

Jamie Dockery