

**MORE HOMES BETTER HOMES**



West   
Dunbartonshire  
COUNCIL

**West Dunbartonshire Council**

**Strategic Housing Investment Plan**

**2024/25 – 2028/29**

**Agreed November 2023**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

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1.1 The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024/25 – 2028/29 sets out the funding priorities for affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire for the next five years as outlined in the West Dunbartonshire More Homes Better Homes Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027. The SHIP is an operational document rather than a strategic one.

1.2 The SHIP is an annual document whose focus is to set out strategic housing investment priorities through the targeting of the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme Funding (AHSP), including its Council House Building Programme (CHB) component.

1.3 The SHIP details how West Dunbartonshire Council will assist in supporting the Scottish Government's commitment to deliver new affordable homes in Scotland in support of the Housing to 2024's vision for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be. The Housing to 2040 Strategy includes a target to provide 110,000 affordable homes by 2032 with at least 70% of these homes to be developed for social rent. This SHIP aims to deliver around 793 new social rented homes in West Dunbartonshire during the period of the SHIP. Among the housing-related commitments in its Programme for Government issued in September 2023, the Scottish Government's reaffirmed the importance of achieving these targets.

1.4 The SHIP has been prepared using the latest appropriate guidance, namely:

- [Strategic Housing Investment Plan \(SHIP\) guidance note MHDGN 2023/02](#)
- [Affordable Housing Supply Programme \(AHSP\): process and procedures MHDGN 2023/01](#)
- MHDGN 2019/02 Guidance for Setting Local Housing Strategy Targets to Support the Delivery of More Wheelchair Accessible Housing – March 2019. Cognisance has also been taken of the consultation currently ongoing on Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland's homes.

1.5 Housing Services has worked with all appropriate Council service areas and consulted with the West Dunbartonshire HSCP in the preparation of this Plan. Consultation has taken place with the RSLs operating in West Dunbartonshire through the Housing Providers Forum

and regular programme/liaison arrangements. The Scottish Government More Homes Division Glasgow and Clyde Area Team have contributed to the preparation of the SHIP. Further information on the consultation process is contained at Section 10 below. The draft SHIP was the subject of discussion at the West Dunbartonshire Tenants and Residents Organisation (WDTRO), the tenants' umbrella forum, before seeking Committee approval.

1.6 The Scottish Government issued new SHIP Guidance (MHDGN 2023/02) in June 2023. The main changes to the guidance were as follows:-

- an updated set of affordable housing investment benchmarks is reflected in this guidance note, alongside illustrative examples showing how these work in practice – these benchmarks are 16.9% higher than the previous set (this percentage increase reflects the Scottish Social Housing Tender Price Index for the year to December 2022)
- homes within new build and conversion projects receiving AHSP grant funding will require to contain zero direct emissions heating systems
- an additional 'quality measure' benchmark for the installation of electric vehicle charge points has been introduced
- the quality standards that would require to be met when purchasing 'second-hand' residential dwellings with vacant possession have been included
- RSL social rent benchmark assumptions are reintroduced for grant assessment purposes, and
- Information is provided on the Scottish Government's Heat Network Fund.

It continues to emphasise links to the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Gypsy/Travellers accommodation, Wheelchair Accessible Housing and support for Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans.

1.7 To assist in advance planning of housing investment, the Scottish Government advises local authorities annually of their minimum Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA). 2022/23's Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA) outturned at £2.8m behind target, this was a disappointing performance and signalled the first year since 2011/12 where outturn was less than the allocation. More positively, the Scottish Government have reviewed our 2023/24 development programme with ourselves and are proposing, subject to Ministerial approval, to increase our RPA by circa £3m from the current £10.795m. While this is very much to be welcomed and highlights an ongoing confidence in West Dunbartonshire to deliver against our clear targets. The programme is overwhelmingly Council driven, and the delivery of our own programme

will be key in ensuring the additional funding and continued confidence in the Council's deliverability. If repeated every year, this would give a projected grant receipt for the period of the SHIP to 2028/29 of around £69m in total. As noted above, a 16.9% grant benchmark increase is now in play and, while welcome, will impact on the overall numbers able to be delivered by the RPA.

1.8 The high ambitions contained in this SHIP can only be delivered with adequate financial support from the Scottish Government's AHSP, not least in respect of the Council's own new build programme. While some progress has been made to address the historic disparity between Council and RSL grant rates, the playing field is not yet level, with RSL grants being more generous than those for Councils. Despite the grant uplift and the prospect of benchmark flexibility, the huge increase in build costs will make it challenging to accommodate the proposed programme in the HRA Capital budget.

1.9 It is clear that the need for affordable homes has and will increase in the current ongoing economic environment. Our More Homes West Dunbartonshire approach is an ambitious plan that aims to continue the positive momentum of the delivery of much needed Council homes in West Dunbartonshire and will significantly assist the Council's aim to deliver 2500 new social and affordable homes by 2032.

1.10 There are several areas emphasised in Housing to 2040 which influence the SHIP, in particular:

- Housing to 2040: vision & route map
- Funding for new build homes
- Design of new homes
- Referencing the energy efficient Scotland route map
- Investing in renewable energy infrastructure
- Focus on creating 20 minute neighbourhoods
- Supporting people with housing costs & stopping homelessness
- Equalities and inclusion
- Affordability and accessibility
- Digital access.

1.13 As always, the funding shown for projects is an indication only of the spending plans and does not guarantee that these sums will be made available. Each proposal will require going through a further detailed assessment before funding is committed to ensure that the project complies with requirements and to ensure that funding is available.

1.14 Following submission of the SHIP, the Scottish Government will issue a Strategic Local Programme Agreement to West Dunbartonshire Council (SLPA) confirming the AHSP funding.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN

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2.1 The principal purpose of the SHIP is to set out the strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a 5-year period to achieve the outcomes set out in the LHS. This SHIP sets out the planned housing investment programme for 5 years, covering the period 2024/25 – 2028/29.

### 2.2 The SHIP:

- Sets out investment priorities for affordable housing
- Demonstrates how these will be delivered
- Identifies the resources required to deliver these priorities
- Enables the involvement of key partners in the delivery of affordable housing.

2.3 Key investment priorities on a site by site basis are set out in the templates attached to this plan. The templates give information on the following:

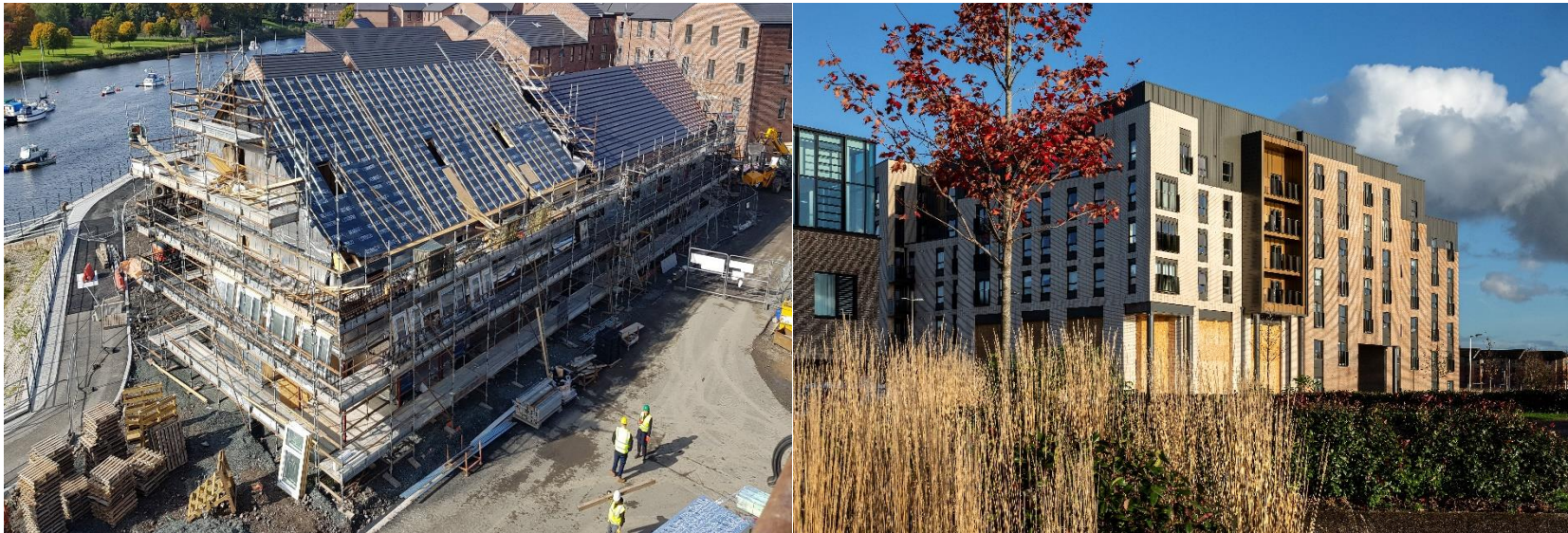
- The priorities for new affordable housing projects
- Estimated start and completion dates
- Projected funding sources
- The number of units to be provided (by tenure and type)
- Funding requirements of Committed Projects

### 3. KEY OBJECTIVES

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3.1 The overarching objective of the SHIP is to help deliver the Council's key housing priorities as contained in its [Local Housing Strategy 2022 - 2027](#), in particular by directing investment to the agreed regeneration areas and on increasing the supply of new affordable housing across West Dunbartonshire. The LHS sets an annual Housing Supply Target of 230 new houses across all tenures, with 80 of these being for Social Rent.

3.2 The Council notes the Scottish Government's ongoing support for new affordable housing and the target contained in Housing to 2040 to provide 110,000 affordable homes by 2032 with at least 70% of these homes to be developed for social rent. Under its More Home West Dunbartonshire initiative, the Council has made and will continue to make a significant contribution to this goal, subject to ongoing Scottish Government support funding.



## 4. POLICY CONTEXT

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4.1 The Scottish Government’s [Housing to 2040](#) consultation provides the backdrop to housing policy in the period of this SHIP and beyond. The vision setting document for Housing to 2040 identifies challenges relating to the ageing population, changing household structures, climate change, homelessness, child poverty and wider welfare reforms, which will all impact on housing.

4.2 The [LHS 2022-2027](#) and its annual updates provide the principal West Dunbartonshire Council policy context to the SHIP.

4.3 All Scottish Local Authorities have in place a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) setting out their approach to minimising the time a household remains homeless and ensuring they can access appropriate housing as quickly as possible. To help the delivery of the WDC RRTP, the Council has agreed to allocate one property in each of its new CHB projects for RRTP purposes. In response to the ongoing homelessness crisis, we are engaging with our SHIP developing partners with a view to them taking a similar approach.



## 5. LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2022- 2027

5.1 The Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027 continues to place an emphasis on regeneration, acknowledging the need to improve many of our neighbourhoods and to provide housing that meets the changing requirements of our communities. In terms of the types of housing which is required, we recognise that physical access to too many of our houses is an issue. We will therefore encourage the provision of more accessible housing and ones that are suitable for wheelchair users. Similarly, we know that there is a size imbalance between the available housing and the demand, with particular shortages of 1-bedroom properties and, especially larger family houses. Developers seeking to access AHSP funding must consult with WDC Housing Development team on how best to contribute to addressing these imbalances and on meeting the objectives of the LHS.

5.2 As well as supporting wider regeneration objectives, where the opportunity arises, the SHIP will seek to assist in reviving our town centres. There is a growing recognition that housing can play an important role in bringing life back to our high streets. We will consider acquiring vacant commercial units with a view to conversion to housing.

5.3 In addition to the regeneration agenda, the Council is keen to encourage an increase in the housing supply more generally across West Dunbartonshire to mitigate an ageing demographic and to stimulate the local economy. Increasing the supply will also more support to be given to the Ukrainian and Afghan Resettlement Programmes.

5.4 The Council, as Strategic Housing Authority, has the statutory lead role in setting out the investment priorities for the delivery of affordable housing. Through the “More Homes West Dunbartonshire” approach, we are working with our strategic development partners to take forward opportunities to provide a broad range of high quality affordable homes in safe and attractive neighbourhoods that meet the needs of our residents. We were somewhat disappointed that only a small number of RSLs have brought forward projects for funding through this SHIP. This may be indicative of a shortage of appropriate sites. We will continue to work with Planning and Estates colleagues, and with the private sector, to identify a healthy supply of development sites and continue to encourage proposals from RSLs for future inclusion should resources allow.

5.5 There is a shared recognition that the Housing Sector – through the leadership of the Council – and the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) must work together closely in supporting the delivery of the health and social care integration

agenda. We are conscious that our understanding of the nature and extent of the need for specialist housing requires to be improved. We are working with the HSCP to get a clearer picture of the level of need and predicted demand for the next five years. The Local Housing Strategy notes that successful housing and social care support depends on the location, model and range of housing available. A Housing Contribution Statement forms part of the HSCP Strategic Plan outlining our joint objectives. Recent research indicates that four-fifths of LA projects featured some degree of specialist provision, compared to just over a half of RSL projects. We encourage Housing Associations to bring forward projects that support the provision of much needed specialist housing.

5.6 Given the local demographic, the prevalent topography and the nature of our housing stock, accessibility to housing for people with a mobility issue is a big concern in West Dunbartonshire. We continue to encourage developers to prioritise developments that meet the needs of people with mobility issues and our Housing Design Standard sets out our requirements.

5.7 While all new housing supported by the AHSP is required to satisfy Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN) criteria, the West Dunbartonshire Design Standard ensures an even higher quality standard. The Scottish Government is consulting over proposed changes to the HfVN that has been in place for 25 years. A number of the proposals already form

part of our Design Standard and we would welcome this updating, although it is unlikely to become effective until 2025/2026.

5.8 We also aim to continue to improve the supply of housing suitable for wheelchair users. In some circumstances the provision of lifts may present a solution to accessibility issues. The [West Dunbartonshire Design Standard: 2019](#) requires that all SHIP projects provide a minimum 10% proportion of wheelchair accessible homes (see 17.2 below). This requirement may only be relaxed in exceptional circumstances where, for example, the project is being developed for different specialist housing purposes or where the topography is particularly difficult. Where no specific specialist housing provision is stipulated in the project, it will generally be assumed that around 10% on each site will be for this purpose, with the detail being agreed at a later date in consultation with HSCP colleagues. The Design Standard is under review with a revised version scheduled to be in place for projects commencing after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

5.9 Research has found that the rate of child poverty in Scotland is lower than in the rest of the UK because of a higher prevalence of social housing. The SHIP supports the housing related actions contained in the Local Child Poverty Action Report 'Improved Life Chances for all Children, Young People and Families'. In particular, the SHIP supports those actions in the report around the delivery of new affordable housing through the More Homes better Homes West

Dunbartonshire approach (H&E/1819/HD&H/002), developing community benefits including job opportunities (RES/1718/PR/001) and reducing the cost of living through better energy efficiency (H&E/1920/W4U/12). Working 4U are represented on the More Homes Delivery Group where they help shape the development of the programme. To address the historic shortage in homes four and more bedrooms, we are encouraging developers to provide larger family homes in their projects and have adjusted our scoring matrix accordingly. If this continues to be an area of demand concern, we will consider introducing a target quota for larger homes.

5.10 The Council is currently engaged with the residents of our Gypsy/Travellers site over much needed improvements. We are in discussion with the Scottish Government over accessing their Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Fund but if this fails, we will give consideration to the option of accessing the AHSP fund. Accordingly, the Dennystoun Forge site is included in the SHIP as a possible future project of 20 homes.

5.11 While there is limited evidence of significant demand for intermediate/mid-market rent products (MMR) in West Dunbartonshire, some housing providers retain an interest in looking at such products and this SHIP contains a small number of shared

equity projects. The Council too is considering providing some shared equity tenure homes as part of our Council house new build programme.

## 6. PROJECT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

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6.1 Projects considered for inclusion in the SHIP are subject to a matrix based scoring analysis to assess their relative merits. Various criteria are employed in assessing and prioritising the projects:

- *The strategic priorities of the Council including contributing to Covid-19 recovery plans*
- *Contribution towards meeting the assessed housing need and demand and especially supply of larger family homes*
- *Meeting regeneration /Planning objectives including support for 20 minute neighbourhood principles*
- *Degree of Low carbon/energy efficiency*
- *SIMD Scoring*
- *Affordability*
- *Deliverability including site constraints*

6.2 There are information gaps in respect of some mooted projects: these have been listed on the scoring pro-forma as “shadow” or reserve projects and these will be subject to reassessment when the full information is available. These projects may feature in future versions of the SHIP.

## 7. FUNDING

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7.1 Funding for the projects in this programme comes from two principal sources:

- the allocation from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme as noted at 1.6 above and
- funding from the housing providers' sources, primarily private borrowing by RSLs and Prudential borrowing by the Council.

7.2 As noted above, our annual Resource Planning Assumption stands at £10.795m plus an expected £3.0m of additional funds. This is a significant level of support from the Scottish Government, providing a platform for a healthy new build programme during the course of the SHIP. While this is very much to be welcomed and highlights an ongoing confidence in West Dunbartonshire to deliver against our clear targets, the programme is overwhelmingly Council driven, and the delivery of our own programme will be key in securing the additional funding.

7.3 The RPA announcement was made prior to the discussions around the National Acquisition Scheme that may release further funds, or at least increase the grant subsidy available for larger family homes in support of our buyback programme. The More Homes Board will carry out ongoing monitoring of the programme's progress to ensure its delivery and to maximise approved RPA spend.

The Council will recruit a Senior Housing Development Officer to lead on delivering our local scheme that would see a minimum of 300 new social homes in West Dunbartonshire over the next 5 years and would be the dedicated contact point within the local authority which the national scheme demands.

7.4 New revised AHSP grant benchmark levels were published in June 2023; these reflect a 16.9% uplift based on the Scottish Social Housing Price Index. While this cost uplift is very welcome, the rising cost of new build places them on the edge of viability.

7.5 For the costing of this SHIP, unless otherwise known, it has been assumed that both Council and RSLs projects will be seeking an average grant figure of £110,000. While the new RSL current benchmark support figure is £102,054 per unit (3-person equivalent plus additional quality measures) and the Council equivalent is £94,456, we expect a number of the proposed projects will be above benchmark, and for the Council projects in particular, will contain a higher than average number of larger sized units.

7.6 A recent study has found that the average gross new build affordable housing cost per unit was around £166,000, ranging from £107,250 to £296,000. We anticipate that a large number of projects will require to seek above benchmark grant funding from the Scottish Government. Our estimate of £110K per unit may be

an underestimate and this is an issue we plan to discuss with the Scottish Government.

7.7 Where a Council House Building project is proposed on a Housing Revenue Account site, it is assumed that there will be no acquisition costs to the project.

7.8 In collaboration with the Scottish Government More Homes Division, and representative bodies such as ALACHO, the Council will continue to consider alternative and innovative funding proposals for the delivery of affordable housing. In addition, we will seek to explore with partner RSLs any opportunities to support the programme with funding from their financial reserves or other sources.

7.9 West Dunbartonshire Council is a partner organisation in the Scotland Excel framework and while we anticipate that this will continue to be a principal procurement delivery vehicle for new SHIP projects. In consultation with our Procurement colleagues, we are engaging with other appropriate frameworks.

## 8. PROGRESS ON PREVIOUS SHIP 2023/24 – 2027/28

8.1 The progress on the SHIP 2023/24 - 2027/28 priority projects is summarised in table 2 below:

Table 2: Progress on Previous SHIP 2023/24 – 2027/28

<b>Projects Completed 2023/24</b>			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Developer</b>
<b>140 Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick</b>	48	Site start Jan 2021 with completion delayed until September 2023	Link HA
<b>Projects Currently On-Site/Due on Site 2024/25</b>			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Developer</b>
<b>Clydebank East</b>	88	Site Start Jan 2023 Est Completion Spring 2025	WDC
<b>Pappert, Alexandria</b>	26	Est Site Start Jan 2024 Est Completion Winter 25	WDC
<b>Wilcox Park</b>	17	Est Site Start Winter 2023/24 Est Completion Winter 2024/25	WDC
<b>Mount Pleasant, Old Kilpatrick</b>	19	Est Site Start March 2024 Est Completion Spring 25	WDC

<b>Bank St, Alexandria</b>	22	Est Site Start Winter 2023/24 Est Completion Winter 2024/25	WDC
<b>Clydebank Health Centre</b>	38	Est Site start July 2024 Est Completion December 2025	WDC
<b>Abbeylands Road, Faifley (Bowling Club)</b>	27	Est Site Start Spring 2024 Est Completion Summer 2025	Knowes HA
<b>Bellsmyre Regeneration Phase 1</b>	60	Est Site Start November 2023 Est Completion February 2025	Caledonia HA
<b>Bellsmyre Regeneration Phase 2</b>	50	Est Site Start February 2024 Est Completion February 2025	Caledonia HA
<b>Dalquhurn Phase 4</b>	25	Est Site Start November 2023 Est Completion November 2024	Caledonia HA
<b>Golfhill Drive, Alexandria</b>	7	Est Site Start Spring 2024 Est Completion Spring 2025	Dunbritton HA
<b>Bonhill Gap Sites</b>	34	Est Site Start Spring 2024 Est Completion Summer 2025	WDC
<b>Bellsmyre Regeneration Phase 3</b>	28	Est Site Start August 2024 Est Completion November 2025	Caledonia HA
<b>Dalquhurn Phase 5 &amp; 6</b>	25SR/25SE	Est site Start 2024 Est Completion September 2025	Caledonia HA
<b>Gilmour Avenue</b>	2	Est Site Start Spring 2024 Est Completion Autumn 2025	WDC
<b>Brown Ave, Haldane</b>	1	Est Site Start Spring 2024 Est Completion Summer 2024	Dunbritton HA
<b>Buybacks</b>	<b>300</b>		WDC



<b>Future Sites Identified in SHIP</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Artizan Centre, Dumbarton Town Centre</b>	WDC hope to provide some housing as part of a wider town centre regeneration project, initially a 42 home Later Living development. There is a possibility that other affordable housing opportunities will become available in later phases.
<b>Boquhanran Road, Dalmuir</b>	Clydebank HA is in early stage discussions to build up to 90 units here.
<b>28 Bridge St, Alexandria</b>	WDC looking to convert/ or build anew the old hostel unit previously operated by Preparation for life.
<b>Cottage Hospital, Dumbarton</b>	Dunbritton Housing Association are currently looking at the possibility of developing 10 units of social housing on the site.
<b>Dennystoun Forge</b>	WDC propose to develop 20 homes at the Gypsy Traveller site through the SHIP if alternative Scottish Government funding is not available.
<b>Dumbain Road, Haldane</b>	Wheatley group are looking at this site which sits within the LL&T National Park.
<b>MBQ Blocks, Mountblow</b>	The Council is in the process of the demolishing these three multis and plans to provide new homes in their place.
<b>Mitchell Way</b>	The Council and some RSL developers have expressed an interest providing the housing element of the Alexandria Town Centre regeneration.
<b>Ottowa Crescent, Dalmuir</b>	Dalmuir Park HA are in discussion with a developer over a 20 unit development on the site of a former care home.
<b>Queens Quay Site 3</b>	WDC propose up to 100 units on this site but will depend on the success of a Derelict Land Fund application and the acquisition of additional land. Viability to be assessed early 2024.
<b>Queen Mary Avenue, Drumry</b>	WDC looking to develop around 16 homes on the site of a former hall.

<b>Skypoint, Faifley</b>	There is development interest should social housing form part of the school reprovisioning project.
<b>Smollett/ Dumbuie</b>	WDC wish to build replacement homes where defective ones were demolished.
<b>Stanford St, Clydebank</b>	Clydebank HA is in discussions to build up to 88 units here.
<b>Wilox Park Ph 2</b>	WDC looking at a second, complementary phase of the older people project.

## 9. SHIP 2024/25 – 2028/29: PRIORITY PROJECTS

9.1 Table 1 of the SHIP Templates at Annexe A, Affordable Housing Supply Programme: Years 2024/25 -2028/29, details the projects contained in this SHIP. The priority projects for this period, including those currently on site, are as shown in table 3 below. All units are social rented unless otherwise stated and unit numbers are draft in many cases.

**Table 3: SHIP 2024 - 2029: Priority Projects by Developer\***

Site/Developer	Number of Units
<b>West Dunbartonshire Council</b>	
Clydebank East (ex MSF site)	88
Pappert	26
Bank St	22
Mount Pleasant	19
Willox Park	17
Clydebank Health Centre	38
Bonhill Gap Sites	34
Gilmour Avenue	2

<b>Units</b>		<b>246</b>
<b>Knowes Housing Association</b>		
Abbeylands Road, Faifley (ex bowling club)		27
<b>Units</b>		<b>27</b>
<b>Dunbritton Housing Association</b>		
19 Brown St, Haldane		1
Golfhill Drive, Dalmonach		7
<b>Units</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Caledonia Housing Association</b>		
Bellsmyre Regeneration Phase 1&2		110
Dalquhurn, Renton Phase 4, 5,6		75 (inc 25SE)
Bellsmyre Regeneration Phase 3		28
<b>Units</b>		<b>213</b>
<b>TOTAL PRIORITY PROJECTS</b>		<b>494</b>

\* All homes are social rented unless otherwise stated and it includes projects currently on site. During the period of the SHIP, a further 300 buyback/ROTS are planned to add to this total.

9.2 WDC operates a very popular “Buy Back” scheme whereby the Council can re-purchase vacant Right to Buy and other houses which are on the market, to help meet strategic housing objectives, including regeneration projects. The scheme has grown significantly in recent years with support from the AHSP. Due to high demand, West Dunbartonshire Council committed to scaling up our own Acquisition/Buyback scheme and has committed £20m from the HRA over the next 5 years to acquiring new homes to meet need. The buyback scheme provides support to the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and other strategic priorities. Criteria apply to the buyback programme to ensure that the properties being considered will help address housing need. For example, in response to the identified high demand, we place an emphasis on acquiring larger family homes in this and in any West Dunbartonshire ROTS schemes. The Scottish Government have indicated that they will be willing to support larger family home acquisitions with above benchmark grant awards where appropriate.

Currently we are estimating that 300 units will be acquired by the Council through this route as well a further 20 by RSLs via ROTS.

9.3 Excluding the reserve projects, the SHIP shows the provision of almost 800 affordable rented homes over the 5-year plan period.

The delivery of this ambitious plan will depend upon the ongoing support of our developing RSL partners and, in particular, appropriate funding from the Scottish Government.

9.4 The grant funding required to deliver the priority programme we estimate to be around £62.6m. While this figure is within the estimated Resource Planning Target of £69m for the period, we are likely to be entering a period of rising costs and potentially one where specifications are improved in response to climate change and Covid-19 response issues. A particular concern is the indication that the cost of providing Passivhaus standard is increasing significantly. The estimate cost does not include future projects which have not yet been appraised but many of which will be likely to feature later in the plan period.

9.5 While almost all projects contained in this SHIP are for social rent, alternative tenure in the form of shared equity units are proposed by Caledonia HA. Further investigation of the market for alternative tenures requires to have been carried out which suggest there may be an interest in certain areas of West Dunbartonshire.

9.6 Due to continuing uncertainties over details of some of the proposed projects in the SHIP and the availability of funding, the SHIP will require to show flexibility and be subject to continual monitoring. The annual cycle allows frequent monitoring which will be carried out through the Council’s performance management system and through key structures such as the More Homes Board,

the Strategic Housing Providers Forum, Housing Improvement Board and programme review meetings with the Scottish Government.

9.7 The Council has carried out an analysis of potential projects against an objective Prioritisation Scoring Matrix and assessed them accordingly. A number of factors are taken into account including availability of land, type of housing being proposed, compliance with LHS objectives, deliverability and value for money. The scoring mechanism will be kept under review in light of the national response to the Covid-19 crisis. This analysis has informed this SHIP and is attached as Annex B.

9.8 The SHIP scoring matrix contains a longer list of projects which have been brought forward for consideration. These are considered to be reserve projects. If there is slippage, or if additional funding becomes available, some of these projects may be introduced into the programme. We will remain open to consideration of other projects which may be presented during the course of this plan period, indeed these would be welcomed, though bearing in mind that resources are likely to be more limited during this period.

## 10. CONSULTATION

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10.1 This SHIP has been prepared in consultation with all RSLs operating in West Dunbartonshire who were approached with a “call for sites” for consideration for inclusion in the programme.

10.2 The SHIP was the subject of discussion at the Strategic Housing Providers Forum and subsequent individual discussions took place with potential developing associations.

10.3 The Scottish Government’s More Homes Division, Glasgow and Clyde Team were consulted throughout in the preparation of this SHIP.

10.4 A consultation with West Dunbartonshire Tenants and Residents Organisation took place on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 before presentation to Housing Committee on 22 November 2023.

## 11. INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

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11.1 The Infrastructure Fund provides grants for local authorities and RSLs as well as loans to the private sector to help in the delivery sites for new affordable housing.

11.2 The Council has so far been unsuccessful in accessing this fund but will engage further with colleagues in the SG More Homes Division to look at possibilities for grant assistance to ease some of the infrastructural constraints likely to affect projects in the future programme.



## 12. COUNCIL TAX ON EMPTY AND SECOND HOMES

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12.1 In West Dunbartonshire funding raised from reducing empty and second hand homes is used to support our Homes Again West (Empty Homes) approach which has led to 164 homes in the local authority area being brought back into use.

## 13. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

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13.1 At present there is no Affordable Housing Policy in West Dunbartonshire, and therefore no developer contributions providing support to the programme in West Dunbartonshire. The introduction of NPF4 may signal a change in how housing site allocations are made by tenure in West Dunbartonshire. Further discussions will take place with our Planning colleagues in the preparation of the next Local Development Plan.

## 14. CONSTRAINTS

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14.1 Scottish Government guidance indicates that SHIPs should have an emphasis on deliverability. In preparing the SHIP, every effort has been made to take account of any constraints that may affect the delivery of the projects and this is taken account of in the assessment scoring. There is recognition that many of the larger

and easier sites, including a number of the ex-school sites, have been developed in previous years and the programme outlined in this Plan may be more problematic to achieve. The SHIP will require to demonstrate flexibility in programming of its projects.

14.2 A number of the projects contained in this SHIP are at the early stage of their development and the full issues/constraints are not known at this stage. For example, a number of the projects contained within the SHIP are not at the stage of having the necessary Planning or consents or Building Warrants.

## 15. LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSISTANCE IN THE DELIVERY OF THE SHIP

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15.1 The Council is committed to assist where possible in the delivery of the SHIP projects within the context of the More Homes West Dunbartonshire initiative as outlined in the Local Housing Strategy.

15.2 Within the Council, the officers' More Homes Board monitors the delivery of the new council home element of the programme and will continue to seek to identify additional sites to extend the Council's new build programme, supported by prudential borrowing, the AHSP and the Council's rent pooling strengths. The Council's element of the programme will in the main be carried out in-house by our Housing Development, with the

assistance of Consultancy Services and other Council service areas, demonstrating efficiency and best value in the process, however other routes to delivery, such as off-the-shelf and design and build, will continue to be employed if better delivery efficiency can be demonstrated.

15.3 Land has previously been made available by the Council at below market value to facilitate the development of affordable housing to meet identified needs. However, there is a need to balance this against the Housing Revenue Account's (HRA) interests and the very significant pressures facing Council budgets. In addition, the Council is mindful of the need to balance the provision of private sector and affordable housing sites to meet our Housing Supply Targets.

15.4 Vacant sites in the Housing Revenue Account, or areas of surplus stock, have generally been made available to support the development of social rented housing where appropriate. The costs of acquiring all sites will be reviewed on a case by case basis and the Council as a developing organisation and our partner housing associations will be expected to review their ability to make full use of existing assets and borrowing capacity.

15.5 Housing will continue work closely with Planning colleagues to ensure an adequate supply of development land to meet the increased targets within the context of the Local Development Plan. As noted above, in light of the introduction of NPF4 further

consideration will be given to how housing sites are allocated by tenure through the Planning process.

15.6 Throughout the lifetime of this new Strategic Housing Investment Plan, the Council will continue to explore options around innovative delivery mechanisms to expand the supply of affordable housing.





## 16. DELIVERY

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16.1 In terms of the procurement arrangement noted above, there may be an opportunity in the future to widen the scope to include other partner developers in the programme. In addition, scoping will continue of other new frameworks as they become available to ensure the delivery of the programme and of best value.

## 17. ENERGY EFFICIENCY, ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND SUSTAINABILITY

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17.1 Local Authorities are among a wide range of public bodies required to meet the duties placed on them by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. In this context, developments arising from the SHIP must take account of the change agenda. New Build developments must contribute to the Single Outcome Agreement local outcome commitment to reduce fuel poverty.

17.2 In tandem with this new SHIP, the Council is introducing a revised and updated version of its pioneering higher standard for all Council and Housing Association homes being built in West Dunbartonshire, the [West Dunbartonshire Design Standard](#).

The Standard applies to all new build projects being supported by the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in the SHIP programme and requires these homes to meet a higher standard than the statutory minimum. It is proposed that new homes constructed

under this scheme will achieve Net Zero or Passivhaus standard and Energy Efficiency Rating of B. As well as improving energy efficiency, the policy encourages better accessibility, external design and internal space standards.

17.3 As well as using the more commonly employed air source heating pumps (ASHP) we are investigating the use of ground source heating systems (GSH) which, while currently more expensive to install, may prove to be more efficient and easier to maintain in the longer term. Efficiencies may be achieved by grouping these heating systems to serve a housing project and this is an area for possible development.

17.3 The Council continues to encourage the consideration of district heating systems or other innovative measures that contribute to meeting climate change objectives. The innovative district heating scheme at Queens Quay, Clydebank is available for roll out to nearby housing projects.

## 18. EQUALITIES ISSUES

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18.1 West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to delivering good quality services which are underpinned by a clear understanding of Equality and Diversity and to promoting and sustaining equality and inclusion, and equality and diversity principles.

18.2 An integrated impact assessment was carried out on which predicted that the strategy would have an overwhelmingly positive impact.

## 19. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

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19.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening report has been carried out in respect of the parent Local Housing Strategy. The Council has determined that a SEA is not required in this instance.

## 20. MONITORING

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20.1 Monitoring of progress will be carried out through the Council's performance management system and through key structures such as the Strategic Housing Providers Forum, the Housing Improvement Board, the More Homes Delivery Group and programme review meetings with the Scottish Government. A new SHIP will be submitted annually to the Scottish Government each October following approval by the Housing and Communities Committee.

## 21. FEEDBACK

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For more information, or if you want this information in a different format or language, please use the contact details below:

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