



West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022

First Consultative Draft

Summary Document and Feedback Survey     July 2016

## West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022: Consultative Draft

This draft Local Housing Strategy sets out the Council's plans for housing and housing support related issues over the next five year period. We would like to encourage everyone to complete the following survey and return it, either electronically to:

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or by post to:

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The survey can also be accessed via Survey Monkey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/22NMSFB>

West Dunbartonshire Council is consulting over its Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022 which will be presented to Housing and Communities Committee and submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2016 .This paper presents a summary of the draft and includes a survey to allow you to make comment. The full version of the draft strategy is available on request or at the Council's website here:

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/housing/local-housing-strategy/>

## 1. Introduction

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to prepare a Local Housing Strategy which is the main strategic document on:

- Housing;
- Homelessness;
- Housing support services; and
- Fuel poverty.

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how West Dunbartonshire Council and its partners plan to address the housing and housing related issues over the next five year period 2017–2022.

The Strategy contains an action plan which outlines the projects/activities to be implemented to achieve the aims of the Local Housing Strategy for the period 2017 – 2022. The LHS is supplemented by the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2017 – 2022 (SHIP) detailing how the investment priorities will be delivered.

Question 1. Has the Introduction clearly set out the purpose of the Local Housing Strategy?

Yes

No

Don't Know

☐

Any other comments

2. Strategic Policy Framework

This section outlines the wider policy context affecting the Local Housing Strategy. It details the other main strategies, policies and plans, both local and national which the LHS refers to.

The main other relevant documents are;

- West Dunbartonshire Council's Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017 which has a vision of:  
*A prosperous West Dunbartonshire recognised as a dynamic area within a successful Scotland*
- The Community Planning West Dunbartonshire 2014 – 2017 Single Outcome Agreement is the overarching strategic framework for the partnership<sup>1</sup>. It outlines the long term vision for the area and the key priorities and outcomes.
- The West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2015 –2016 is the Integration Authority's paper setting out their outcomes and priorities<sup>2</sup>. The HSCP Partnership Board's :
  - *Mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of West Dunbartonshire.*
  - *Purpose is to plan for and ensure the delivery of high quality health and social care services to and with the communities of West Dunbartonshire.*
- The LHS sits within the planning framework of the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan – Proposed Plan 2016<sup>3</sup> at a regional level, and the West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (Proposed Plan) 2015<sup>4</sup> at a local level, with the latter providing the land use planning context.
- The LHS has a role to play in meeting the key strategic priorities of the West Dunbartonshire Economic Development Strategy 2015 – 2020: Sustainable Economic Growth for All
- Homes Fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century February 2011 which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for housing to 2020
- More Homes for Scotland, the Scottish Government's plan to provide 50,000 new affordable homes over the next 5 years
- The Council's Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 2016

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.wdcpp.org.uk/media/136670/wd\\_soa\\_2014-17.pdf](http://www.wdcpp.org.uk/media/136670/wd_soa_2014-17.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wdhscp.org.uk/media/1213/wdhscp-strategic-plan-2015-16.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/Proposed\\_Plan\\_Jan\\_2016\\_WEB\\_Low\\_Res\\_Update.pdf](http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/Proposed_Plan_Jan_2016_WEB_Low_Res_Update.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4307506/ldp-adopted-version-march-2015-web.pdf>

- The Scottish Social Housing Charter introduced in April 2012 detailing outcomes and the standards which Social Housing landlords are required to meet.

Question 2. Are all the key relevant policies and plans included here?

Yes

No

Don't Know

If No, please list anything else you think should be included?

### 3. The Consultation Process

Here we set out how we plan to consult with people in developing the strategy which includes this survey.

The consultation is being promoted principally through:

- Invites to all appropriate organisations on the Corporate Community Group Distribution list
- The offer to speak at any of the above organisations' events
- A presentation to the umbrella group, the West Dunbartonshire Tenants and Residents Organisation (WDTRO)
- A special meeting of the Housing Providers Forum, the meeting which brings together the Council, The Scottish Government and the RSLs operating in West Dunbartonshire
- A range of social media outlets including the Council's website, Twitter and Facebook

- Local press, the Council's *Housing News* quarterly tenant's newspaper, libraries and other noticeboard outlets
- A presentation at the West Dunbartonshire Equality Forum in August 2016.

Question 3. Do you think we have given enough opportunities for people to comment on the draft LHS ?

Yes

No

If No, can you suggest any other ideas for engagement?

#### 4. Key Themes

The strategy is split into 5 key themes:

- **Housing Need and Demand** covering

Need and Demand Projections

Housing Land Supply

Affordable Housing Supply Programme

Council New Build

Tenure Balance

Right to Buy

- **Promoting Good Quality Housing** covering

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)

Regeneration

The WDC Design Standard

Fuel Poverty

Climate Change

Private Rented Sector

Assistance to Owners

- **Homelessness and Housing Options** covering

Housing Options

Housing Advice and Prevention

Temporary Accommodation

Tenancy Sustainment and Support

Supported Accommodation



- **Sustainable and Supportive Communities** covering

Neighbourhood Quality/Sustainable Places

Estate Management

Anti Social Behaviour/Public Reassurance

Equalities eg how we tackle hate crime

Community Justice

- **Addressing Particular Housing Needs** covering

Health and Social Care Integration

Aids and Adaptations /Access to Suitable Housing

Care and Repair

Older People's Households

Learning Disability

Vulnerable Young People

Dementia

Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

Gypsy/Travellers.

Question 4. Do you agree that the five themes remain appropriate?

Yes

No

Don't Know

If No, what would be your suggestion?

The previous LHS had a particular focus on particular housing regeneration areas. 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 and analysis of the capital investment made in the area. The previous LHS contained a list of ten areas which were considered to be housing regeneration priorities. The areas were:

1. Bellsmyre;
2. Haldane;
3. Clydebank East;

4. Central Alexandria;
5. Central/Radnor Park;
6. North Mountblow;
7. Castlehill;
8. Brucehill;
9. South Drumry; and
10. Westcliff.

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, a number of factors are taken into account including availability of land, type of housing being proposed, deliverability and value for money.

**Question 5. Do you agree that it remains important to have a focus on regeneration of housing estates?**

Yes

No

Don't know

**Question 6 Do you agree with the revised list of Housing Regeneration Priority Areas?**

Yes

No

Don't know

If No, which areas should be considered?

## 5. Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand

This section looks at the projected housing need and demand and what this may mean for the development of the housing strategy for the area. It also deals with how the LHS fits with the Local Plan and wider Planning framework.

A Housing Needs and Supply Assessment (HNDA) was undertaken through the *Clydeplan* group of 8 Local Authorities in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley city region area and completed in 2015 as part of the proposed Strategic Development Plan.

Key findings from this assessment were:

- The HNDA shows a continuing reduction anticipated in West Dunbartonshire's population, due primarily to net out-migration
- Whilst the projected population in West Dunbartonshire continues to decline, the number of households is projected to increase. This trend is reflected across both the private and social rented tenures
- Over the city region as a whole, the 2015 HNDA estimates suggest less growth in the private sector and more significant growth in the Social Rented /Below Market Rent sector compared with the previous HNDA.

The study noted the following characteristics of the make-up of housing in West Dunbartonshire:

- West Dunbartonshire has a higher than average proportion of flats than most local authorities at 51%, with only the four Scottish cities having more (and against a Scottish average of 38%).
- It has a higher than average percentage of dwellings in the lowest 3 Council Tax bandings (A–C).
- Almost half of West Dunbartonshire Council’s own housing stock is of non–traditional construction.

Taking account of the HNDA results West Dunbartonshire Council has set a target 230 new build houses per year, made up of 150 private 80 Council/Housing Association.

The proposed new actions arising from this section are:

#### Key Actions

- Meet the annual Housing Supply Target of delivering 80 new Social Rented homes
- Meet the annual Housing Supply Target of delivering 150 new Private Sector homes
- Ensure a generous supply of suitable housing sites
- Deliver on the Council’s main strategic housing regeneration priorities at Dumbarton Harbour and Queens’ Quay
- Make best use of resources including the Scottish Government’s new Infrastructure Fund to help meet the *More Homes Scotland* targets
- Carry out an update of the 2014 Affordability Review.

Question 7. Do you think the proposed actions are appropriate?

Yes

No

Question 8. Are there are other actions we should consider?

## 6. Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing

This section outlines how we plan to promote good quality housing across all tenures in West Dunbartonshire and the measures we will take to improve sustainability and energy efficiency as well as reducing fuel poverty.

The Scottish Government had a target that all socially rented housing is to be brought up to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015. The SHQS required that all houses should be:

- Compliant with the Tolerable Standard;
- Free from Serious Disrepair;
- Energy Efficient;
- Provided with Modern Facilities and Services; and
- Healthy, Safe and Secure.

In March 2015, WDC achieved the objective of compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).

87.9% of WDC social housing stock fully met the standard and 12.1% were exempt or in abeyance. Overall, the Housing Association stock in West Dunbartonshire has achieved a compliance rate of over 90%.

The Council's asset management base approach to its own stock has provided the Council with a robust information and evidence that informs strategic plans including the demolition programme, the Councils new build programme and the HRA Capital Programme.

Fuel Poverty: The key contributors to fuel poverty are household income, fuel costs and the energy efficiency of the home.

One of the contributors that we can impact on is the energy efficiency of the home. However despite major levels of investment in our social housing in recent years and those private properties in common, the Scottish House Condition Survey 2011–2014 estimates that there were 29% of households living in fuel poverty and 6% of households living in extreme fuel poverty in West Dunbartonshire (2014).

#### Key Actions

- Continue to ensure that the Council's housing is fit for purpose and protected for the future by directing large scale longer term investment via the HRA Capital Programme.
- Ensure the Council's housing maintains compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and reduce the number of abeyances.
- Ensure the Council's housing complies with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by Dec 2020
- Contribute to the Scottish Government and Council's vision for lower carbon consumption, reducing the impacts of climate change and fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of homes and enhanced new build standards
- Continue to target available funding to improve the energy efficiency of private sector housing supported by Home Energy Efficiency Projects Scotland – Area Based Schemes (incorporates privately owned ex-council or ex-housing association homes)
- Continue to target available funding to improve the energy efficiency of council homes via the HRA Capital Programme incorporating external funding where available
- Continue to provide the home energy advice and information service

- Continue to engage with owners in mixed tenure blocks at an early stage to increase participation in improvement programmes and promote support via grant funding or payback schemes.
- Review and update the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy

Question 9. Do you think the proposed actions are appropriate?

Yes

No

Question 10. Are there are other actions we should consider?

## 7. Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options

The strategic aims are

1. To Prevent Homelessness occurring in West Dunbartonshire
2. Improved access to support services and increased tenancy sustainment
3. To improve the range of Housing Options available in West Dunbartonshire and ensure a sustainable housing solution



4. To continue a commitment to develop and improve services to tackling homelessness through a partnership approach.

Important points from the draft strategy include:

- Homelessness in Scotland has continued to fall since the last LHS in 2012. West Dunbartonshire has mirrored this. In 2011/12 there were 1545 homelessness applications taken.
- When looking at all applications in 2015/16 just over half (56%) of the main applicants were male. Two thirds of the single person households were male, whereas 93% of the single parent households were female
- Over a third of people who presented to West Dunbartonshire as homeless were aged between 16 and 25
- Just over a third of households stated their reason for homelessness as being a dispute within the household. Just over half of these were violent or abusive and 85% of these households were female
- 51% of young people assessed had a support requirement for housing management skills. A quarter of households assessed as homeless had a mental health support need and 16% had an addiction
- West Dunbartonshire Council has a Temporary Accommodation Model that is used on a regular basis to look at the stock of temporary and supported accommodation against who is homeless in the area. This model will ensure we have the right type and number of temporary and supported accommodation.
- Welfare reform is a key challenge for the Council as it is likely that the need for temporary accommodation may increase as increased number of households fall into debt. It is vital that the housing service works in partnership with internal and external partners to mitigate the changes
- Scotland currently has 23,000 long term empty homes in the private sector – long term empties are classed as any property that has been empty for 6 months or more. West Dunbartonshire currently has over 400 properties recorded as being in this category. This pool of vacant houses is seen as a potentially valuable resource in addressing housing supply and homelessness issues.

## Key Actions

- Ensure that the aims and objectives of West Dunbartonshire's Homelessness Strategy 2013–2016 are completed;
- Develop and Implement a new West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2017–2020 that incorporates the temporary accommodation;
- Undertake a review of supported and temporary accommodation in West Dunbartonshire;
- Strengthen partnership with WD HSCP and Employability Services;
- Continue to work in partnership to tackle homelessness in West Dunbartonshire;
- We will introduce a housing options approach to ease access to suitable accommodation for West Dunbartonshire households;
- We will carry out a review of Housing Support in West Dunbartonshire to plan for future service provision
- Continue to mitigate the effects of the changes brought about by welfare reform
- Work with Community Justice Partners to progress the community justice redesign in line with the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016
- Continue to develop and roll out the new Low Moss Prison Protocol in partnership with the other agencies involved, with a view to expanding across wider Scottish Prison Service establishments
- Reduce the number of young people presenting as homeless
- Reduce the number of people or repeat homelessness presentations and increase tenancy sustainment
- Continue to make use of the private sector as a housing option. For example to increase the number of people who use the rent deposit scheme
- Roll out the new Health, Homelessness and Housing Protocol
- Work in partnership to ensure children are not adversely affected by homelessness
- Develop in partnership an education package that can be rolled out across the local authority. Continue to promote and utilise the Young Persons' and Families' Mediation Service (a partnership of the Neighbourhood Management Service, Homelessness Service, and Housing Allocations Service).

Question 11. Do you think the proposed actions are appropriate?

Yes

No

Question 12. Are there any other actions we should consider?

#### 8. Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities

This section deals with housing operations around estate management, allocations, voids, and caretaking. It also looks at issues around Anti- Social Behaviour and housing's role in the Community Justice process.

A recent organisational review across housing services enabled us to establish a new operational framework focusing on key actions with regard to:

- Making better use of existing housing stock
- Developing local lettings planning
- Improving housing advice and housing options
- Tenancy Sustainment
- Reducing void houses and associated rent loss

- Maximising rent collection levels and reducing rent arrears
- Improving the Environment through legislative fixed penalty notice
- Area Regeneration & Environmental Improvement
- Reshaping access to housing services in 2016/17.

The Scottish Government is currently working with stakeholders to develop a new model for community justice in Scotland. At a local level, strategic planning and service delivery is expected to become the responsibility of local community justice partners which will include housing. A joint working Protocol is being prepared which will seek to set out the roles and responsibilities with regard to homelessness prevention and other housing matters.

### **Key Actions**

- In 2016/17 we aim to improve our performance in reducing the number of empty homes by prioritising and reconfiguring tasks and actions within our estates service and to link these actions with the Your Communities operating objectives.
- We have created 2 specific Void Officer roles within our new operating model which will focus specifically on reduce void housing, creating efficiency within the void house process, maximise income and reduce expenditure on void housing and develop a robust void action plan at a geographical level.
- Improve tenancy sustainability and reduce the number of terminations for non-positive reasons and set geographical targets.

- Reduce the number of presentations to homelessness services from a secure WDC tenancy and to set a target that is proportionate to a stock ratio within all social rented landlords within West Dunbartonshire.
- Develop local lettings planning within each area, using landing profiling and other demographic tools to make best use of our housing stock to achieve individual tenancy and broader community sustainment and social cohesion.
- Develop local strategies to tackle low and no demand housing
- Work with our strategic partner and local housing providers to develop new build housing and improve nomination and access to new build housing on a site by site review.
- Enable Housing Officers to take a lead role in “WDC transfer” termination visits to prevent rechargeable repairs and reduce void repair costs.
- Improve pre-tenancy housing advice and assessment of income maximisation to achieve tenancy sustainment.
- Improve the customer experience through a reviewed customer satisfaction monitoring framework across housing operations. Improve rent collection levels and set targets for income maximisation and recovery of arrears at a geographical patch level.
- Create a work stream and associated action plan tackling anti-social behaviour across West Dunbartonshire, underpinned by our ARC performance framework.
- Create a work stream and associated action plan to improve tenancy sustainment levels and reduce the number of abandoned houses
- Create a work stream in partnership with homelessness services and multi-agency partnership framework to tackle

domestic abuse

- Housing Services will fully contribute to the development of the Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan, to be published March 2017.

Question 13. Do you think the proposed actions are appropriate?

Yes

No

Question 14. Are there any other actions we should consider?

## 9. Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs

This section of Local Housing Strategy outlines the Council's and its partners approach to addressing the housing and support needs of specific groups in West Dunbartonshire and how it intends to enable people to live at home or in a homely setting which promotes their independence and well-being. It details how housing will interact with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

Whilst acknowledging the particular issues which a specific disability may present, the Local Housing Strategy notes that the housing support needs of the particular groups are fairly consistent. It further notes that successful housing and social care support often depends on the location, model and range of housing available.

The Local Housing Strategy has three underpinning principles which impact on the needs of those with additional housing support needs:

- Forward Planning; future proofing housing and housing support to take account of how people's social and physical needs change.
- Choice; increasing the range of housing and housing support options available to people who need them.
- Prevention; promoting that housing support can be a preventative, relatively inexpensive and cost effective way of enabling people to live independently at home.

The LHS seeks to ensure a clear strategic leadership about housing priorities for older people. It aims to ensure appropriate information and advice to make informed choices and that older people are assisted to remain in and make best use of existing housing stock. It seeks to invest in new housing which meets the needs of older people and to provide low level preventative support.

The Housing Contribution Statement has been published which sets out the role and contribution of the local Housing Sector – through the offices of West Dunbartonshire Council in its role as strategic housing authority – in meeting the outcomes and priorities identified within the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan.

### Key Actions

- Develop housing support service to enable long term clients to be supported within West Dunbartonshire
- 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
- Supporting the housing sector to sustain the tenancies of vulnerable households through early social work interventions, promoting payment of rent, signing up for benefits and other assistance

Question 15. Do you think the proposed actions are appropriate?

Yes

No

Question 16. Are there any other actions we should consider?



## 10. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

This final part of the strategy spells out how we plan to monitor progress on the plan once it has been agreed.

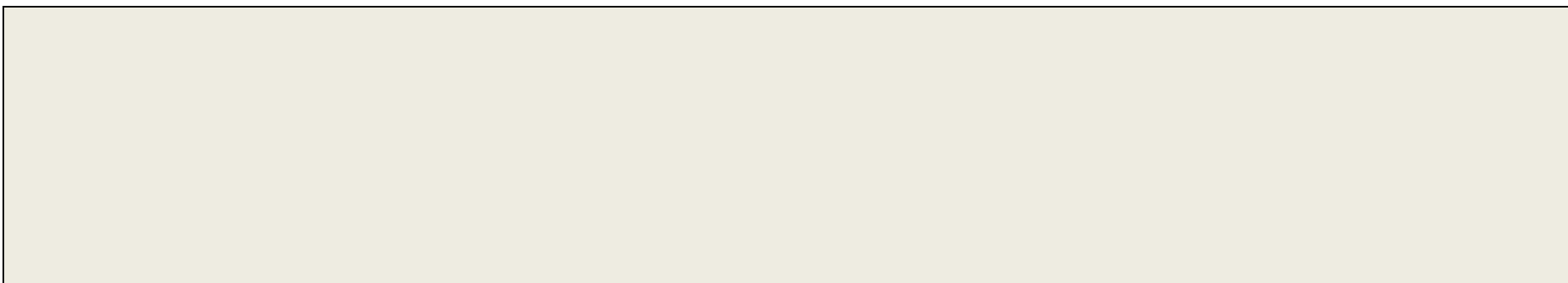
Question 17. Is the monitoring and evaluation framework clear enough?

Yes

No

Question 18. Do you wish to suggest any different ways to monitor the delivery of the LHS?

Question 19. Are there any other comments you wish to make on the draft Local Housing Strategy?



**Thank you** for your time in completing this survey and your comments will be used in the final LHS document that will go to the Housing & Communities Committee on 2 November 2016 for approval. The closing date for the consultation is Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016.