

# LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2017 - 2022



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# Foreword



*Welcome to the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy.*

This important document sets the vision for Housing and Housing Support services across West Dunbartonshire for the period 2017 - 2022. Good quality housing is a cornerstone of any thriving community and we in West Dunbartonshire Council aim to ensure that our communities are safe and secure, with housing that meets the needs of all our residents, including those with particular housing requirements.

As the statutory housing authority, West Dunbartonshire Council plays the lead role in delivering on this strategy. However, the ambitious plans contained in this strategy can only be realised through partnership working with a wide range of agencies and organisations and with the support of local people in our communities. For example, the success of the new affordable housing programme detailed in our More Homes West Dunbartonshire initiative will be determined by how well we work with colleagues in the housing associations and the Scottish Government, More Homes Division.

The LHS is laid out under five key themes covering the wide range of housing and housing support related activities. The main actions associated with each theme are listed in the Action Plan and progress on these will be monitored as we move forward.

Councillor David McBride  
Convenor of Housing, Environment and Economic Development



The West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy  
'More Homes, Better Homes West Dunbartonshire'  
vision is:

**“To develop and maintain a partnership approach, maximising opportunities to promote the growth of the housing sector, create opportunities to deliver joint solutions, meet housing need and provide a wide range of high quality and sustainable housing in a strong well functioning local housing system”**

# Foreword *(continued...)*

Within the LHS there are ten high level objectives which will allow the success of the implementation of the strategy to be assessed. The 10 key objectives entitled 'Forward in All Directions' are outlined below:

## ***Forward in all directions - 10 point success plan***

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing through the More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire initiative in partnership with developing HA partners delivering 1000 new social rented homes in West Dunbartonshire.
- Ensure a generous supply of suitable housing sites and deliver on the Council's main strategic housing regeneration priorities including those at Dumbarton Harbour and Queens' Quay
- Reduce the impacts of climate change and fuel poverty by supporting energy efficiency measures across all housing sectors and by delivering on compliance with EESSH for social rented housing by December 2020.
- Use all available powers to improve the housing quality across all tenures, particularly in mixed ownership blocks, and to improve the delivery of the Council's Housing Capital Programme through the More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire initiative.
- Introduce a Housing Options approach to prevent homelessness and to ease access to suitable accommodation for West Dunbartonshire households.
- Work with partners to reduce repeat homelessness and increase tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector.
- Adopt a more holistic joined up approach to improving standards in the Private Rented Sector
- Work with the HSCP to develop housing support services for those with particular housing needs, around the principles of Forward Planning, Choice and Prevention.
- Ensure rapid access to assessment, and provision of aids and adaptations.
- Improve education, training and job opportunities for West Dunbartonshire residents through the workstreams and investment associated with this strategy and build on existing strong links through Working4U.

# Foreword *(continued...)*

## Equality and Inclusion

The development of the strategy has been underpinned by West Dunbartonshire Council's commitment to promoting and sustaining equality and inclusion, and equality and diversity principles. In particular, the Council is committed to fulfilling the three key elements of the general equality duty as defined in the Equality Act 2010:<sup>1</sup>

- **Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
- **Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**
- **Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.**

This strategy was informed by an Equality Impact Assessment within the context of the Council's Equalities Mainstreaming Report and its Equality Outcomes 2013 - 2017.

During the drafting of the strategy we have taken account of the Council's Equalities Outcome of Greater participation and Involvement of people from underrepresented Groups in influencing Decision Making in the Area, by consulting directly with members of the West Dunbartonshire Equality Forum, made up of community equality groups (and Public Organisations). This consultative process fed into the EIA and into the final text of the LHS.

We have also taken account of two other Council Equality Outcomes on:

- **Reducing Hate Incidents In West Dunbartonshire** *(see section 8)*
- **Better Meeting The Accommodation Needs Of Gypsy/Travellers** *(see section 9)*

EIAs will be carried out on any policy developments arising from the strategy, and evidence gathered, during the creation of the LHS will be used to inform them.

The Council has embarked on work to wide and deepen its equality monitoring on housing applications, allocations and repairs, which will improve our evidence base for EIA processes and policy formulation and review.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre- screening report has been carried out in respect of this Strategy. The Council has determined that a SEA is not required in this instance. The SEA Screening Report can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/environmental-assessment/sea/SEAG>

<sup>1</sup> The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how West Dunbartonshire Council and its partners plan to address the housing and housing related opportunities and challenges over the next five year period 2017/18 - 2021/2022.

## 1.2

This new plan aims to build on the significant progress made on the issues identified in the previous LHS 2011 -2016<sup>2</sup> and to address newly arising housing matters<sup>3</sup>.

## 1.3

The Scottish Government requires every local authority to draw up a Local Housing Strategy as the main strategic document on:

- housing
- homelessness
- housing support services and
- fuel poverty.

Guidance was issued in August 2014 supporting local authorities in this task<sup>4</sup>.

## 1.4

The Housing Development team of the Council's Housing Services has led on the preparation of the LHS but has been assisted by staff from across all appropriate Council Departments and partner agencies.

In particular, the development of the LHS has been taken forward in association with colleagues from the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, demonstrating the vital role housing has to play in the integration of health and social care services.

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 will be augmented by the biennial Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2017-2022 (SHIP) detailing how the investment priorities will be delivered.



West Dunbartonshire  
Health & Social Care Partnership

2 WD Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016 November 2011 [http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/753598/lhs\\_final\\_november\\_amended\\_electronic\\_version.pdf](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/753598/lhs_final_november_amended_electronic_version.pdf)  
 3 A Key Actions 2011 and Outcomes Paper has been prepared summarising progress made against the key actions identified in the previous LHS. The paper may be viewed here: <http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/housing/local-housing-strategy/>  
 4 Local Housing Strategy Guidance August 2014 Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/08/3070>

## 2 Strategic Policy Framework

### 2.1

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to prepare a Local Housing Strategy which is supported by a comprehensive assessment of housing needs and conditions and produces strategies to address the issues identified.

### 2.2

The Local Housing Strategy is set within, and contributes to, a wider strategic policy framework including:

- **The LHS supports the vision of West Dunbartonshire Council's Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017:**  
*a prosperous West Dunbartonshire recognised as a dynamic area within a successful Scotland<sup>5</sup>*  
**The LHS will contribute to all five of the Strategic Plan's 5 priorities:**
  - *improve economic growth and employability*
  - *improve life chances for children and young people*
  - *improve care for and promote independence with older people*
  - *improve local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure*
  - *improve the wellbeing of communities and protect the welfare of vulnerable people.*
- **The Community Planning West Dunbartonshire 2014 - 2017 Single Outcome Agreement is the overarching strategic framework for the partnership<sup>6</sup>. It outlines the long-term**

vision for the area and the key priorities and outcomes. The SOA focuses on four interconnected priorities which are delivered through local multi-agency action and coordinated activity. The four priorities are:

- *employability and economic growth*
  - *children and families*
  - *older people*
  - *safe, strong and involved communities.*
- **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>7</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*
    - *core values are protection; improvement; efficiency; transparency; fairness; collaboration; respect; and compassion.*
  - **Local Authorities are required to provide a Housing Contribution Statement to set out the role and contribution of the local housing sector in meeting the outcomes and priorities identified within the Strategic Plan. The West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Board Housing Contribution Statement May 2016 provides the bridge between the Local**

5 [https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/1801902/wdc\\_strategic\\_plan.pdf](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/1801902/wdc_strategic_plan.pdf)

6 [http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/136670/wd\\_soa\\_2014-17.pdf](http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/136670/wd_soa_2014-17.pdf)

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

8 WDHSCP Board Housing Contribution Statement May 2016 - Link to be provided.



## 2 Strategic Policy Framework *(continued...)*

Housing Strategy and the HSCP Strategic Plan and outlines the important part housing will play in the integration process<sup>8</sup>.

- The LHS sits within the planning framework of the *Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan - Proposed Plan 2016*<sup>9</sup> at a regional level, and the *West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (Proposed Plan) 2015*<sup>10</sup> at a local level, with the latter providing the land use planning context. Strategic Development Plan Housing Estimate Outputs help inform Housing Supply Targets for both the LHS and the Local Development Plan. The LHS has been drawn up within the context of the role of WDC as the lead authority delivering the *Glasgow City Region Housing and Equalities* portfolio.
- 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*<sup>11</sup>. These priorities are:
  - *stimulating economic investment and growing the business base*
  - *improving the skills of all of our people and supporting them into work*
  - *creating an inclusive and prosperous place where people choose to live work and invest*
  - *building stronger partnerships and innovative approaches to delivery.*
- The LHS supports the delivery of the national housing policies

of the Scottish Government in particular *Homes Fit for the 21st Century February 2011* which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for housing to 2020, and actions and proposals to realise that vision<sup>12</sup>, and the subsequent *Joint Housing Delivery Plan for Scotland June 2015* which identifies priorities to deliver on the vision<sup>13</sup>.

### Joint Housing Delivery Plan for Scotland

The Joint Housing Delivery Planning Group meets three times per year and is supported by a number of work-streams and sub-groups. Its purpose is to drive forward JHDP agenda in consultation with Scottish Government Ministers. West Dunbartonshire Council is an active participant in the group, contributing its own experience and learning from others in the process.

- Under the heading of *More Homes Scotland*, the Scottish Government announced its commitment of over £3 billion over the next five financial years to fund the delivery of 50,000 affordable homes. This is accompanied by increased subsidy levels and support for City Deals<sup>14</sup>. In support of this ambition, the Scottish Government have made supplying more homes a national strategic “social infrastructure” priority in the 2015 Infrastructure Investment Plan<sup>15</sup>. The initiative involves four central themes:

9 [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)  
 10 <http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4307506/ldp-adopted-version-march-2015-web.pdf>  
 11 <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4310257/sustainable-growth.pdf>  
 12 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/02/03132933/0>

13 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/3392>  
 14 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/reform/more-homes-scotland>  
 15 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/12/5962>

## 2 Strategic Policy Framework *(continued...)*

*more investment for more housing; a more effective planning system; supporting infrastructure, land and housing delivery; and making available expert advice.* A flexible five-year grant and loan fund has been established, starting with a £50m allocation for 2016-17, to help tackle infrastructure blockages and accelerate the delivery of the affordable housing programme. In addition, *Draft Planning Delivery Advice: Housing and Infrastructure* was published in February 2016 giving weight to the need to identify the infrastructure required to deliver new housing<sup>16</sup>. This housing supply initiative is expected to have a most welcome positive impact on the delivery of new affordable housing during the period of this LHS.

- The Scottish Government encourages a Housing Options approach to housing advice and homelessness prevention<sup>17</sup>. WDC supports this direction and is part of the West of Scotland Housing Options Hub whose aim is to implement a common housing options approach across the region. Establishing a housing options approach is one of the key actions in the Council's *Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2016*<sup>18</sup> and the *Housing and Employability Delivery Plan 2016/17*.
- The Scottish Government introduced the *Scottish Social Housing Charter in April 2012* detailing outcomes and the standards which Social Housing landlords are required to meet. All social landlords must submit an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator in May

of each year. The SHR has the responsibility to assess, and report on, the performance of these landlords.

- This LHS has been completed in the days immediately following the vote to leave the European Union. The impact on the economy of this decision will not be known for some time but will undoubtedly have consequences for housing during the period of the plan.



<sup>16</sup> <http://blogs.scotland.gov.uk/planningarchitecture/2016/02/17/planning-delivery-advice-housing-and-infrastructure-2/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/homeless/HomelessnessPrevention/hubs/options>

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/2619064/homelessness\\_strategy\\_2013-2016.pdf](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/2619064/homelessness_strategy_2013-2016.pdf)

## 3 The Consultation Process

### 3.1

Local authorities have a statutory duty to involve, consult and engage with as wide a range of their residents as possible and, in particular, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to consult on the preparation of their LHS.

### 3.2

A range of media was used to engage with people in drawing up this LHS. The consultation process commenced in November 2015 and concluded in October 2016.

### 3.3

A Citizens' Panel survey carried out in November 2015 which had 858 respondents featured the Local Housing Strategy. The survey found the vast majority of Panel members agree the Council should give priority to the regeneration of its housing estates (96%) and to more affordable housing (91%). Fewer supported more private housing (49%, with 35% disagreeing). There was also a high level of agreement with the themes of the new Local Housing Strategy, especially *Ensuring People Have Access to Affordable Housing* (99% agree) and *Promotion of Good Quality Housing* (also 99%)<sup>19</sup>.

### 3.4

The consultation was promoted through:

- Invites to all appropriate organisations on the Corporate Community Group Distribution list

- The offer to speak at community organisations' events. Where presentations were made, the consultation was cascaded to the constituent bodies.

- Presentations to:

- West Dunbartonshire Tenants and Residents Organisation (WDTRO), the umbrella group for our 15 registered TROs
- West Dunbartonshire Equality Forum
- Housing Providers Forum, the meeting which brings together the Council, RSLs operating in West Dunbartonshire and the housing investment division of the Scottish Government
- Homelessness and Housing Access Forum
- West Dunbartonshire Access Panel.

- A range of social media outlets including the Council's website, Twitter and Facebook. A Survey Monkey questionnaire was carried out which attracted 25 responses.

- Local press, the Council's Housing News quarterly periodical, library and other noticeboard outlets.

### 3.5

For the period of this LHS, the priority housing regeneration areas can be found on the map on P13.

<sup>19</sup> WD Citizens' Panel December 2015 [http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/206697/2015\\_libraries\\_and\\_cultural\\_services\\_etc\\_survey\\_final.pdf](http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/206697/2015_libraries_and_cultural_services_etc_survey_final.pdf)

## 4 Key Themes

### 4.1

This LHS has been drawn up around the following 5 key themes:

- housing need and demand
- promoting good quality housing
- homelessness and housing options
- sustainable and supportive communities
- addressing particular housing needs.

### 4.2

The Citizens' Panel survey carried out in November 2015 overwhelmingly endorsed these themes; as did the results from the Survey Monkey questionnaire.

### 4.3

In recognition of the growing importance of the Housing Options approach to homelessness prevention, the theme previously entitled Homelessness has been changed to Homelessness and Housing Options.

### 4.4

#### **Prioritisation of Housing Regeneration Areas**

The previous LHS contained a list of ten areas which were considered to be housing regeneration priorities. A number of these have been the subject of earlier regeneration masterplanning or feasibility studies.

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 November 2015 Citizens' Panel survey demonstrated widespread support (96%) for giving high priority to regeneration of housing estates. It is proposed that the focus on regeneration will continue to be reflected in the prioritisation of housing projects brought forward by the Council and its partners.

New SIMD data published this year together with representations made during the course of the consultation exercise has helped inform a review of the priorities. The proposed Housing Regeneration Areas for the period of this LHS are:

- Bellsmyre
- Brucehill
- Castlehill
- Central/Radnor Park
- Clydebank East/Whitcreek
- Dalmuir
- Drumry
- Haldane
- North Mountblow (Brunswick/Montreal/Quebec)
- Westcliff.

## 4 Key Themes: Housing Regeneration Areas 2016



## 4 Key Themes *(continued...)*

While these areas were termed housing regeneration areas, the importance of linking proposals here to wider social and economic outcomes is recognised. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan gives a degree of prioritisation to projects located in these areas. Not all these areas contain prospective new housing sites but in these cases other regeneration avenues will be explored including that of major refurbishment works.

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. Projects proposed for inclusion in the WD SHIP are scored against a matrix of factors and their priority assessed accordingly.

New Housing projects supported through the AHSP will recognise the importance of placemaking principles in supporting successful communities.

The Queens Quay and Dumbarton Harbour regeneration areas will offer huge potential for housing development over the period of the plan and these are also key priorities for the Council.

West Dunbartonshire Council recognises the value of the town centres which lie at the heart of our communities. The Council seeks to support the town centres in the challenges they face in remaining attractive destinations for both residents and visitors. Increasing the population of town centres through new housing and bringing empty properties back into use will be an important element in any strategy to revitalise these areas.



## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand

**Key LHS Outcome:**  
Ensuring people have access to affordable housing of all tenures which is in the right location and is suitable for their needs.

### 5.1 Introduction

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. The housing need and demand assessment is the principal production for defining the housing supply base for the local housing strategy and the housing land allocation for the strategic and local development plans.

### 5.2 Context

A Housing Needs and Supply Assessment (HNDA) was undertaken through the Clydeplan and completed in 2015 as part of the proposed Strategic Development Plan for the eight local authorities in the Housing Market Partnership area which was published for consultation in January 2016.<sup>20</sup> The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership prepared

the assessment of housing need and demand based on the 2014 Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) guidance and using the new HNDA Tool produced by the Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA). Using the Tool, which was populated with national data, allowed the quick and easy testing of a range of different scenarios and assumptions. The results from the revised HNDA were confirmed as being robust and credible by the CHMA in May 2015.

It provides a shared and agreed evidence base for housing need and demand, which provide the basis for the Housing Supply Targets for both the Local Housing Strategy and the Local Development Plan. The HNDA provides estimates of the amount and likely tenure of additional housing required to meet existing and future demand.

The HNDA analyses the need for social rented housing (including Below Market Rent) at a local authority level. The demand for private sector (owner occupation and private rented) houses was considered within a framework of housing market areas which reflect the way the private market operates across administrative boundaries. Clydebank falls within the Greater Glasgow North and West sub-market area, and supply and demand is considered within this wider area, whereas Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven is considered to be a discreet housing market area.

West Dunbartonshire is unusual in that the planning function is split between the Council and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. For practical reasons, the results from the HNDA cover the whole

<sup>20</sup> Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2 2015 [http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHNDA2\\_PostAppraisal\\_190515.pdf](http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHNDA2_PostAppraisal_190515.pdf)

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

of West Dunbartonshire Council, although some data has been extracted for the area within the National Park.

### 5.2 HNDA Findings

The housing estimates produced from the 2015 HNDA are lower than those produced by the previous HNDA, essentially due to a different approach to backlog need, and the use of the most up-to-date National Records of Scotland (NRS) projections of population and households which reflect recent trends in migration and household formation rates.

The 2015 HNDA is based on the 2012-based principal population and household projections prepared by the NRS.

The HNDA provides a series of Core Outputs, or key findings. For the purpose of the LHS, the key findings may be summarised as follows:

### Population Estimates

The HNDA shows a continuing reduction anticipated in West Dunbartonshire's population, due primarily to net out-migration, as illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1 - Projected Population in West Dunbartonshire by Age Band

	2012	2017	2022
0 - 15	15,913	14,943	14,953
working age population 16 - 65	60,335	58,961	56,491
66 - 74	7,209	8,261	8,885
75+	6,883	7,160	8,031
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,340</b>	<b>89,325</b>	<b>88,360</b>

Source: NRS 2012-based principal population projections

Table 1 illustrates that this reduction in projected population is not equally spread across all age groups though. Whilst there is a reduction in the number of children and people of working age, there is a significant increase in the number of pensioners. This will require an emphasis on the specific needs of an ageing population, and the contribution housing can make to enabling independent living and achieving national health and wellbeing outcomes.



## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

### Household Estimates

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.

Table 2 Projected Households in West Dunbartonshire

2012	2017	2022
42,106	42,529	42,869

Source: NRS 2012-based principal household projections

Other key NRS projections include:

- The total number of households in West Dunbartonshire is projected to change from 42,106 in 2012 to 42,543 in 2037, which is an increase of 1 per cent. In Scotland as a whole, the projected number of households is set to increase by 17 per cent over the same 25 year period.
- In Scotland, the number of lone adult households is projected to increase by 35 per cent over the 25 year period. In West Dunbartonshire, the number of lone adult households is projected to increase by 23 per cent, and the number of larger households in West Dunbartonshire is projected to fall, with the number of households of 2 or more adults

with children decreasing by 34 per cent over the 25 year period. The average household size is projected to decrease from 2.13 in 2012 to 1.93 in 2037.

- In West Dunbartonshire, households headed by 60-74 year olds are projected to increase by 14 per cent, and those headed by the 75+ age group are projected to increase by 70 per cent between the years 2012 and 2037.

### Housing Estimates

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

Table 3 Estimates of Need in West Dunbartonshire

overcrowded households	concealed households	either concealed or overcrowded as a % of total households
1,057	816	4%

Table 4.22 HNDA

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

A range of assumptions in terms of future household formation, income and house prices were considered within the Tool, before an agreed set of initial Housing Estimates were produced, reflecting the number of additional houses required by tenure.

Table 4 Initial Housing Estimates West Dunbartonshire 2012-2024

	2012 - 2024 total	Per annum
Private	557	46
SR/BMR	748	63
Total	1,305	109

Source: Fig 5.4 HNDA

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

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

Table 5 Adjusted Housing Estimates West Dunbartonshire 2012-2024

	2012 - 2024 total	Per annum
Private	1,229	102
SR/BMR	748	63
Total	1,977	165

Source: Fig 5.13 HNDA

### Affordable Housing Quota Policy<sup>21</sup>

The Council has considered whether it should introduce an affordable housing quota policy whereby private developers would be required to make a contribution towards meeting affordable housing need in respect of each new housing site. However it was considered that the HNDA did not provide the evidence to support such a measure. Instead, the Local Development Plan seeks to balance the future tenure requirements by specifically identifying sites for either affordable or private housing. It is intended however that flexibility will be applied regarding these housing opportunities.

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

### 5.3 Housing Supply Targets

The Adjusted Housing Estimates are used as a starting point for the development of the Housing Supply Targets (HSTs). These are a policy view of the number of homes the authority has agreed will be delivered. The factors taken into consideration to do this were:

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

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

target will be split equally between the housing sub-areas of Clydebank and Dumbarton/Vale of Leven. The private sector target has decreased from the previous target of 250 pa, whilst the social rented figure has increased from 70 pa to 80 pa.

Table 6 Housing Supply Targets for West Dunbartonshire

	2012 - 2024 total	Per annum
Private	1,800	150
SR/BMR	960	80
Total	2,760	230

Source: Schedule 7 SDP

Factors considered when setting Housing Supply Targets

- **The Capacity of the Construction Industry:** The delivery of housing does not rely solely on the allocation of appropriate land in the development plan and Councils are advised to take into consideration the capacity of the building industry and the functioning of the housing market. The slow down in the construction industry is clearly evidenced by the number of “mothballed” sites and the delays to the completion of approved housing schemes. Given the low level of activity, there is no indication that there are any operative or material issues affecting the industry.

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

- **Wider Strategic, Economic, Social and Environmental Policy Objectives:** Increasing the number of new affordable houses and attracting capital investment are SOA priorities for West Dunbartonshire.
- **Consultation Responses to the HNDA/MIR:** There was a general recognition in the responses that the current economic climate was having an impact on the deliverability of new housing. Some respondents considered that there was a generous supply of housing land making further release unnecessary, whilst others questioned the effectiveness of the housing land supply and promoted new locations for housing development.
- **Funding Availability:** The availability of support funding is the key determinant of the number of new affordable housing being produced. As noted above, the changes to funding arrangements will be a major determinant of the supply of new housing.
- **Consultation Responses to the Draft LHS:** A number of responses were made on the Local Development Plan Housing Issues Paper. There was very strong support for the provision of more affordable housing. Indeed, the provision of more affordable housing was by quite a margin the overall top priority for Citizen's Panel members.
- **Aspirations for Growth:** Halting the population decline is a priority outcome for the West Dunbartonshire SOA, with the target of reducing the decline to 0% by 2015. The Council supports the Scottish Government's goal of increasing housing supply.

### 5.4 Housing Land Supply

In order to provide a generous supply of land for housing and deliver the HSTs, 10% has been added to the private sector HST to ensure flexibility in the housing land requirement. The LDP will make allocate a range of effective housing sites to meet the housing land requirement for both tenures.

Table 7 Housing Land Requirement West Dunbartonshire 2012-2024

	2012 - 2024 total	Per annum
Private	1,980	165
SR/BMR	960	80
Total	2,940	245

Source: Schedule 7 SDP

The LDP will ensure that there is a generous supply of effective land to meet the HSTs for both tenures. These local housing supply targets will be monitored through the Council's corporate performance management system and will be subject regular review and annual evaluation.

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

### 5.5 Housing Profile

#### West Dunbartonshire Stock

The estimated number of dwellings in West Dunbartonshire is 44,734.

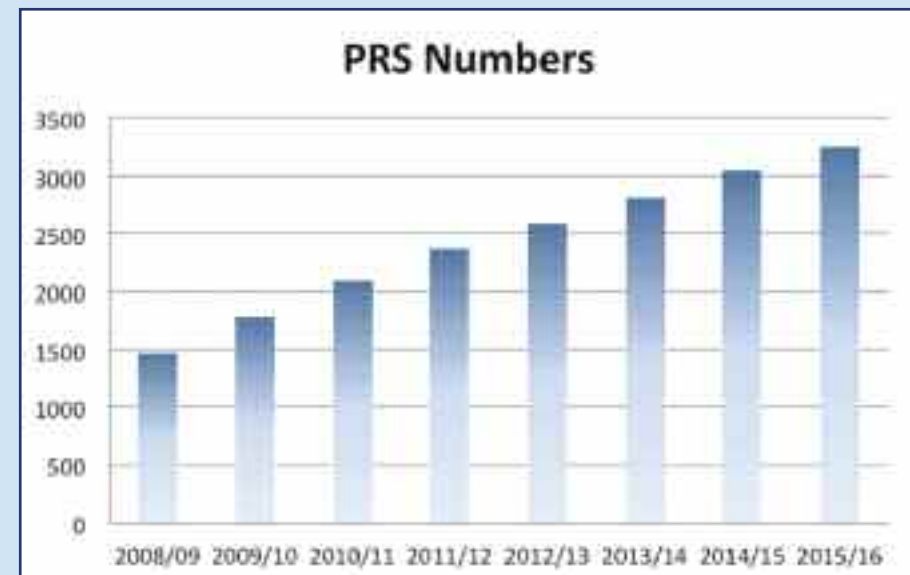
Table 8: WD Stock by Tenure<sup>22</sup>

Tenure	Total number	%
Council housing	10,759	24%
Registered social landlords	5,856	13%
Private rented sector	3,050	7%
Owner occupation	25,069	56%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,734</b>	<b>100%</b>

As is the trend across Scotland, recent years have seen strong growth in the numbers of Private Rented Sector properties in West Dunbartonshire. The table below illustrates that the PRS numbers have more than doubled since 2008/09. This growth, together with current national discussions over improved security for private tenants, of rent controls, and on a “Common Housing Standard” across all tenures, suggests that the PRS will be an area for particular scrutiny and action over the period of the plan.

Both the Scottish Government and the Peer review of the first draft LHS highlighted the importance of having a more effective approach across all sections of the Council to better understand the conditions prevailing in the PRS and to take measures to address any issues identified. Accordingly, the LHS now contains as a key action the adopting of a holistic approach to this sector.

Figure 1: Growth in PRS in West Dunbartonshire since 2008/09<sup>23</sup>



<sup>22</sup> WD Social and Economic Profile 2015 [https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4308902/social\\_\\_economic\\_profile\\_2015.pdf](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4308902/social__economic_profile_2015.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> WDC Environmental Health data

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

Some important characteristics of the West Dunbartonshire Housing stock profile include:

- 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.

Chapter 4 of the Clydeplan HND, Housing Stock Profile, Pressures and Management Issues, provides more detail on the stock profile and how it compares across the region.<sup>24</sup>

### 5.7 House Prices

House prices in West Dunbartonshire generally remain below the Scottish average, as do household incomes. Table 9 gives an indication of the West Dunbartonshire house prices by type and in comparison with the Scottish equivalents.

Table 9 Residential Property Prices 2016 - Average Sale Price

	Average Property Price		Detached		Semi	
	Jan 2015	Mar 2016	Jan 2015	Mar 2016	Jan 2015	Mar 2016
WD	118,737	100,469	245,163	224,839	136,953	107,990
Scotland	173,731	159,198	267,375	236,249	164,032	150,051
	Terraced		Flat			
	Jan 2015	Mar 2016	Jan 2015	Mar 2016		
WD	109,746	93,166	70,842	62,627		
Scotland	141,298	126,434	132,606	122,801		

Source Registers of Scotland[1]

Over the same period, in West Dunbartonshire the volume of house sales increased by 8.3%, though this compares with a Scottish increase of 18.2%.

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHND2\\_PostAppraisal\\_190515.pdf](http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHND2_PostAppraisal_190515.pdf) [1]RoS Quarterly House Price Statistical Report Jan- Mar 2016  
[https://www.ros.gov.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/40164/RoS-statistical-report-Jan-Mar-2016.pdf](https://www.ros.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/40164/RoS-statistical-report-Jan-Mar-2016.pdf)

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

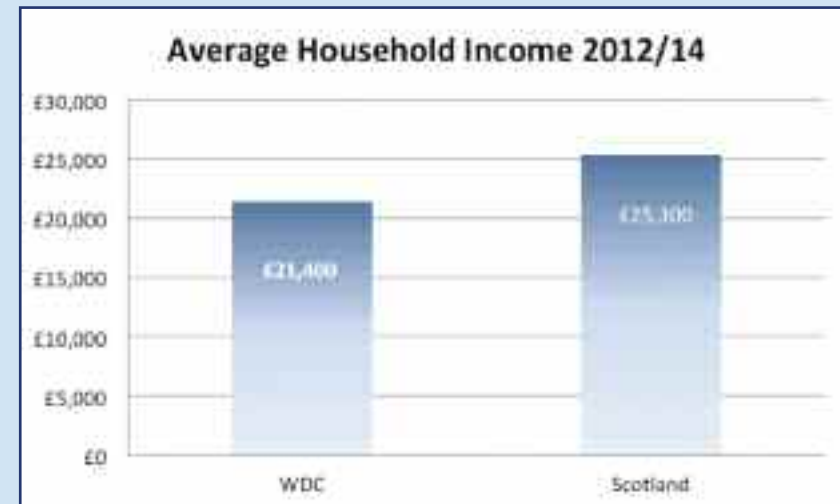
### 5.8 Annual Earnings and Affordability

The HNDA data reveals that incomes in Scotland have been declining since 2008, for those in the lowest 60% of earners, the corollary being that only those earners in the top 40% and above have seen incomes rise in the last 5 years<sup>25</sup>. While house prices in West Dunbartonshire are among the lowest in Scotland, this is also true of average earnings, with those in West Dunbartonshire among the lowest in the country.

Trend based analysis in the Clydeplan HNDA<sup>26</sup> using data at the local authority geography reveals that although house prices have been reducing, especially lower quartile prices. As incomes have also been reducing, relative affordability of housing worsened from 2008 to 2011 with a slight improvement between 2011 and 2012. In addition the ratios of income to price for cheaper housing are higher than for average income to price, indicating a general issue with the affordability of cheaper housing for those on lower incomes.

Generally across the HNDA area, social rents are considered to be affordable. The report finds that WD Council rents are one of the lowest in the Strathclyde conurbation and that the RSL rents here are indeed the lowest. Both RSL and LA average rents are significantly more affordable than those in the Private Rented Sector.

Figure 2 WDC/Scotland Income Comparisons<sup>27</sup>



The number of people who were in employment in West Dunbartonshire to April 2015 was 39,000 representing 66% of the working age population. This is a drop on last year's figures and is 6.9% below the Scottish average. These figures reflect the impact of the recession on the local economy with the reduction in job numbers especially affecting the Manufacturing and Construction Sectors.<sup>28</sup>

Across Scotland, first time buyers continue to face a substantial deposit barrier, estimated to be in the region of £20,000 or 64% of their annual income.<sup>29</sup>

25 HNDA Main Issues Background Paper TR05 : House Prices, Rents and Incomes Jan 2015 p74

26 [http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHNDA2\\_PostAppraisal\\_190515.pdf](http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHNDA2_PostAppraisal_190515.pdf)

27 Average Household Income by LA 2012/14 Scottish House Condition Survey <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tc%3A77-210656>

28 [https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4308902/social\\_\\_economic\\_profile\\_2015.pdf](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4308902/social__economic_profile_2015.pdf)

29 Clydeplan HNDA p64

## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

The Council commissioned research in 2014 on housing affordability at a local level.<sup>30</sup> The consultants employed a model to help assess the affordability of a range of housing tenures relative to the value of local incomes. Affordability was tested based on assumptions that households would spend 25% - 30% of their annual income on their housing costs. Key findings were:

- On average market rents are 65% above WDC rents
- There is only a marginal difference between WDC Local Housing Allowance and market rents.
- Comparing the main settlement areas in West Dunbartonshire, house prices are highest in Dumbarton whilst Clydebank has the largest proportion of low income households
- At a 30% affordability ratio, and depending on the size of the properties, 22 -31% of households would struggle to afford Council /RSL rents without subsidy while 33-63% cannot afford market rents
- Market sale is the least affordable tenure option, with just under 50% unable to afford a house at the lower end of the market
- Mid-market rent would only slightly improve affordability when compared to market rents (on average by about 4%).

It is considered that there would be value in carrying out an update of the Affordability Study in view of the changing economic position.

### 5.9

#### More Homes West Dunbartonshire

West Dunbartonshire Council welcomes the Scottish Government's *More Homes for Scotland* initiative designed to provide 50,000 new affordable homes over the next 5 years and recognises the important role Council new build programmes can make to achieve this target.

To maximise the benefit to West Dunbartonshire from this scheme, we will be working with our development partners to take forward opportunities under the banner "More Homes West Dunbartonshire." Together we aim to provide a broad range of high quality, affordable homes in safe and attractive neighbourhoods that meet the needs of our residents.

West Dunbartonshire Council, as strategic housing authority, has the statutory lead role in setting out the investment priorities for the delivery of affordable housing supported within the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply programme (AHSP). The Council has worked with its partners to prepare its 2 yearly Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2017/2022 (SHIP) published in November 2016. The SHIP details how we plan to make best use of support funding from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. All houses provided through this programme will be built to "Housing for Varying Needs" (HfVN) and "Secured by Design" standards. In addition, all projects receiving grant support will need to meet the requirements of the recently introduced West Dunbartonshire Design Standard (see 6.5 below).

30 West Dunbartonshire Council Rent Restructure and Affordability Review Arneil Johnston September 2014



## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

In 2013, following successful applications to the Scottish Government's Innovation and Investment Fund, WDC developed the first new Council homes in the area in 25 years. To date the Council's New Build Housing programme has invested £8million in providing 121 houses for social rented homes across four sites. This programme has also attracted a further £5million grant funding from the Scottish Government. An additional site in Clydebank will provide 40 more homes during 2018. During the same period, our housing association partners have delivered 120 new homes with a further 86 due to be completed during 2016/17.

In the period 2016/17 - 2019/20 it is planned to deliver around 1,000 new Council and RSL homes across West Dunbartonshire.

Three exciting housing developments were recently announced which together will bring almost 300 new affordable homes to West Dunbartonshire in the coming years. The former St Andrews's High School in Clydebank will deliver around 100 new homes which will be a mixture of Council and Housing Association properties. Clydebank Housing Association has acquired the site of the old La Scala cinema to provide 44 new rented properties. In Dumbarton, Dunbritton HA has agreed a deal to develop 108 social rented homes at Dumbarton Harbour. All these projects are receiving funding support from the AHSP.

The Council has an ambition to continue to provide new council housing. The HRA Business Plan will be kept under review to continually assess the capacity to increase the Council provision and we will explore every option with our partners to maximise the delivery of new affordable

housing to help meet the More Homes Target. In particular, the Council wishes to increase its new house building programme and is exploring every avenue to see how this may be achieved. Other means to increase the supply of housing stock, such as building on the use of buybacks of previous right to buy properties will be considered as part of the *More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire* initiative. The Council is in discussion with the Scottish Government over accessing AHSP support funding to extend the scope of the buyback programme for both the Council and the RSL sector with a view to adopting a more strategic approach.



## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

### WDC New Build Housing at Brucehill, Dumbarton

37 new Council properties at Hillstreet Square and Napier Crescent, Brucehill, Dumbarton were completed in November 2015.

The Council, working with the main contractor, CCG Scotland Ltd, have developed:

- 16 one bedroom flats
- 6 four bedroom houses
- 6 three bedroom houses
- 6 two bedroom houses
- 2 two bedroom wheelchair bungalows
- 1 four bedroom wheelchair bungalow.

The new homes have been designed in-house by Consultancy Services and are the first to meet the new West Dunbartonshire Design Standard, meaning that they are more energy efficient and have better space standards than most other new housing. This project was shortlisted for in the prestigious Chartered Institute of Housing annual Excellence Awards in the Category “Excellence in Development of Rented Properties”.



## 5 Key Theme 1: Housing Need and Demand *(continued...)*

### 5.10 Strategic Housing Partnership

West Dunbartonshire Council and The Wheatley Group have entered into a memorandum of understanding over joint strategic ambitions to deliver an affordable housing programme. The strategic housing partnership has the following main objectives:

- to assist in the delivery of the Council's strategic housing objectives
- to facilitate the delivery of a minimum 10 year housing development programme
- to support the Council's regeneration activities
- to ensure that Resource Planning Assumptions (RPAs) are fully maximised to meet affordable housing supply targets
- to assist in the delivery of new build housing for social rent in areas identified through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan to address housing need.

The Council continues to welcome ideas to assist in the delivery new affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire.

#### Key Actions

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire including increasing the Council New Build Programme
- 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.

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing

**Key LHS Outcome:**  
All residents live in good quality housing regardless of tenure.

### 6.1 Introduction

Improving the quality of housing has been a constant focus of consecutive Scottish Governments' housing policy. Promoting good quality housing not only improves the health and well-being of residents but it is also a crucial factor in meeting the objectives of a number of other main LHS themes such as creating sustainable and supportive communities and housing need and demand.

This section demonstrates how we are currently promoting good quality housing in West Dunbartonshire and plan to improve on this in the future within the context of the Scottish Government's carbon emissions obligations under the Climate Change Scotland (2009) Act.

### Climate Change and Domestic Sector Emissions

The Climate Change Scotland (2009) Act sets an overall target of at least an 80% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions below 1990 levels. The interim target is 42% reduction by 2020. Annual targets are also set in batches.

According to Dept of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) data, the domestic sector accounts for approximately 38% of the emissions in WDC. Therefore a reduction in gas and electricity consumed in the housing stock will have a positive effect in reducing emissions in the area. This can be done through increasing the energy efficiency of the building fabric as well as teaching residents how to save energy.

It should also be noted that as part of the Climate Change Scotland Act, we as a local authority have a duty to, in exercising our functions, act:

- (a) in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in or under Part 1 of this Act;
- (b) in the way best calculated to help deliver any programme laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 53;
- (c) in a way that it considers is most sustainable.

In doing so, public bodies must have regard to this guidance.

The duties require public bodies to contribute to climate change mitigation and to climate change adaptation, and to act sustainably.

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

Mitigation can be defined as the implementation of policies and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or, where possible, enhance carbon storage. Adaptation can be defined as the adjustment in economic, social or natural systems in response to actual or expected climatic change, to limit harmful consequences and exploit beneficial opportunities. Sustainable development can be defined as development that aims to allow everyone to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

This section of the LHS outlines a number of areas where Housing can make a contribution to addressing climate change and environmental sustainability issues.

### 6.2 Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

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

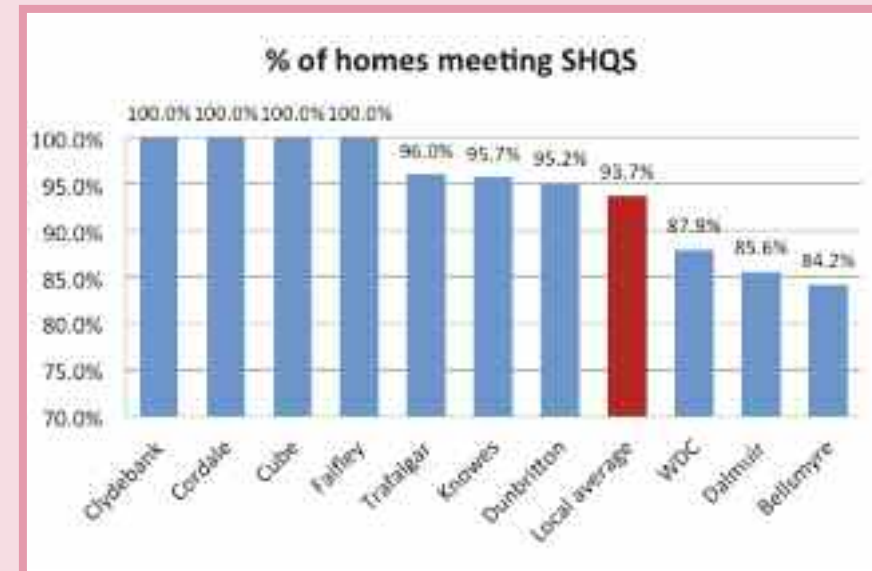
- Compliant with the Tolerable Standard
- Free from Serious Disrepair
- Energy Efficient
- Provided with Modern Facilities and Services
- Healthy, Safe and Secure

### 6.3 Current SHQS Performance

In March 2015, we achieved our 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 social housing providers in West Dunbartonshire have achieved an average compliance rate of 93.7%.

Figure 3: SHQS Compliance at 31/03/15



## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

### Exemptions

With respect to SHQS exemptions, our current identified list is those properties approved as surplus and scheduled for demolition. In recent years we have demolished 581 surplus properties and a further 474 are planned for demolition by 2020/21. A large proportion of these properties are vacant and the remaining tenanted properties are in active engagement with housing officers to agree suitable re-location transfers to alternative housing areas. This is anticipated to take up 2-3 years to complete and there is a committed approved budget to fund the home loss, disturbance and re-location costs.

### Abeyances

Our current abeyance list is 864 as reported at 31 Mar 2016. The main 4 elements contributing to this are:

1. **Secure door entry systems to common closes**
2. **Adequate loft insulation**
3. **Full/efficient central heating**
4. **Safe paths**

1 and 4 are in the main affected by owners refusal to agree to this element being installed and the costs associated with this. 2 and 3 are in the main affected by tenants' refusal to agree to provide access or clear the loft space and refusal to agree to the installation of a gas supply.

Our practice is to write to all tenants or owners, where involved and explain the importance and priority of completing this work for compliance with SHQS. We repeat this process a further two times, should we receive a written or verbal reply maintaining refusal, we record this whilst taking the opportunity to explain the importance of completing this work and establish if there is any assistance we can offer to encourage agreement for this to be done for example:

- **Help with loft clearances for insulation and explain the benefits of energy efficiencies**
- **Explain the benefits of central heating, better controls and the energy efficiencies of fuel switching to gas. Alleviate any fears with gas installation**
- **Explain the benefits of secure entry systems and controlling access**
- **Explain the benefits of renewal of paths, reducing trip hazards/safety concerns or uneven surfaces (if owner maintains refusal then the necessary repairs are referred to reactive repairs team).**

If there is no response after the written correspondence, we seek to contact by telephone to provide the same information and thereafter plan doorstep visits in an effort to make contact and encourage agreement to allow completion of this work. This process will continue and repeat in 2-3 years for those that maintain refusal. Should the tenant move on, we complete any element in abeyance through the void/re-let process.

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

Our first year of this approach has seen approx. 120 residents agree to have the element of works completed. We will continue to target this and seek alternative ways to gain agreements for leading to reductions and learn from other Local Authorities with success in this area.

### 6.4 WDC Housing Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Capital Programme

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

Using a sophisticated asset management database, the Council assesses the performance of its stock on a yearly basis. This assessment allows the Council to establish which properties are performing well across a number of indicators that look at demand, current costs and future costs.

This method has provided the Council with a robust information and evidence that informs strategic plans including the demolition programme, the Council's new build programme and the HRA Capital Programme.

The outcomes of the assessment including plans that stem from them are reported on an annual basis to the Housing and Communities Committee.<sup>31</sup>

West Dunbartonshire Council's ongoing social housing investment strategy is to prioritise the work required to maintain compliance with SHQS and focus appropriate energy improvement measures to those homes that do not meet the required Energy Efficiency rating in order to comply with EESSH. Using the information from the stock condition survey and the recommendations for lifecycle renewal of building elements, appropriate programmes of component renewals are planned to renew and replace elements before they fall below the required standard thus ensuring ongoing compliance. In addition the investment plan prioritises work to meet landlord obligations, health and safety and the Council's new house build programme.

The HRA Housing Capital Programme is refreshed annually and approves a five year resource to fund the overall programme, which is worked through the 30 year HRA Business Model.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The most recent report can be found here: AMP Report (pages 49-58)

<sup>32</sup> (HRA Housing Capital Programme 2016-21 report, approved at Council, 24 Feb 16)

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

case  
study

### HRA Capital Programme

In 2016/17 West Dunbartonshire will:

- Carry out 170 kitchen replacements and 120 new bathrooms
- Replace and modernise over 300 heating systems
- Renew windows and doors to 800 of our houses
- Carry out 300 roof replacements
- Provide insulated render for 250 of our properties.



In the 5 - year period to 2021/22, the WDC Housing Capital Programme will invest £114m in the Council's housing stock.



## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

### 6.5 West Dunbartonshire Design Standard

The Council introduced a pioneering new higher standard for new Council and Housing Association houses being built in West Dunbartonshire.

Approved by West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing and Communities Committee on 4th November 2015, the 'West Dunbartonshire Design Standard' applies to all new build projects supported by the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme. The policy will improve energy efficiency and also encourage higher standards in external layouts and increase space standards for halls and passages.

The West Dunbartonshire Design Standard requires these new houses to meet a higher standard than the statutory requirements. In particular, energy efficiency elements are improved under the new guideline. New homes constructed under this scheme will achieve an Energy Efficiency Rating of B, and an Environmental Impact Rating of B, where the average rating for a home in Scotland is D. This will not only be good for the environment in terms of Carbon dioxide emissions, it will mean significant energy cost savings for tenants. It is estimated that the energy bills will be less than half those of typical properties elsewhere. In addition to the energy efficiency improvements, the measure encourages higher standards in kitchen and bathroom design, accessibility, external layouts and in space standard for halls and passageways.

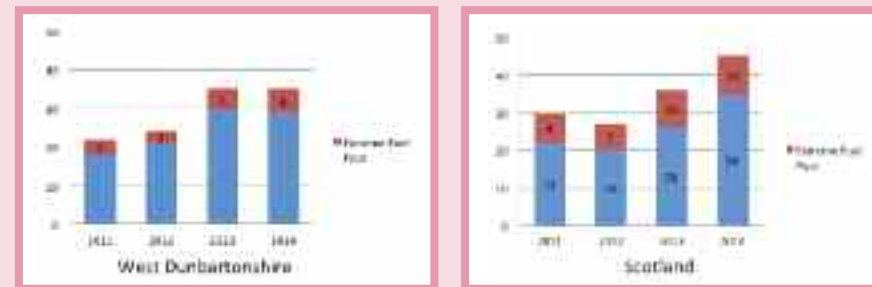
It is proposed that the Design Standard be under continuous review to

ensure that best practice and new ideas are incorporated, for example in the area of digital inclusion and by including wet showers as standard in all ground floor properties.

### 6.6 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). It is estimated that 35% (FP) and 10% (ExFP) of households in Scotland are living in fuel poverty (2014).

Figure 4: Percentage of Houses in Fuel Poverty



## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

### 6.7 Private Sector Stock:

A Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was completed by the Council in 2011. While this survey contained much detailed information on the Private Sector, it is now outdated. However, it is considered likely that the key issue for PS stock in West Dunbartonshire will continue to be energy efficiency (see table below).

Table 10 Private Sector Stock: Compliance with SHQS

	Total number	%
Tolerable standard	27,975	98.5%
Repair	28,172	99.2%
Amenities	25,421	89.5%
Energy efficiency	3,699	13.9%
Health/safe/security	20,613	72.6%
Total stock meeting SHQS	3,378	11.9%

Source: Private Sector House Condition Survey, David Adamson & Partners, January 2011

Although there is still no requirement for private sector stock to meet the SHQS, the direction of travel from the Scottish Government appears to be towards a common housing standard across all tenures.

### Below Tolerable Standard

Statistics from the Scottish House Condition Survey 2012-14 considers that 1% of owner occupied stock in West Dunbartonshire to be Below the Tolerable Standard. The Private Sector Housing Team and Environmental Health Officers work together to reduce and prevent BTS housing through a combination of information, advice and in some cases financial assistance. Enforcement action may also be taken as a last resort.

### Scheme of Assistance

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

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

### Home Improvements & Repairs

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

- advice on how to carry out repairs and maintenance
- site visits to assist in identifying works that are required

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

- choosing a contractor and signposting to other services to provide other specific advice, e.g. Citizens Advice Service, Money Made Clear etc.

Over the last five years the council's Scheme of Assistance has provided financial assistance and support to owners of just over £3.2m to help them install assessed need adaptations, improve the condition of their homes via approved general repairs or participation in HRA capital programme improvements, address substandard and BTS issues.

The Scheme of Assistance is to help Home Owners take responsibility for their own properties and for Councils to make the most effective use of the limited public funding directed towards home repairs.

The aim of the Scheme of Assistance:

- Encourage Home Owners to recognise they have the responsibility for maintaining their own homes
- Provide a fair and sustainable approach to providing assistance to help Home Owners repair and adapt their homes
- Effectively address disrepair in private housing.
- Maximise the impact of public resources by leveraging in Owners contributions and assist a far greater number than was possible under the council's previous grants focused approach
- Assist older and disabled residents in private properties

to live independently in their home for as long they choose to do so.

The Council plans to reappraise how existing powers can be most effectively used to ensure that necessary works are carried out in mixed tenure properties. In particular it is considered that the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 offers opportunities in this respect.

The Council's Private Sector website page provides signposts for private owners including to details of the Scheme of Assistance and Owner Engagement Charter:

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/>

The Council's Working4U service offers support with benefits and money/debt issues to all residents of West Dunbartonshire.

This includes advice on energy related issues:

<http://intranet.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/regeneration/housing-employability/working-4-u/money/>

### Under One Roof

West Dunbartonshire Council has contributed to the setting up of the Under One Roof on-line resource for owners of common property which was launched in September 2016. This website is for owners of all types and ages of shared residential properties and their advisers. It will help owners of: traditional stone tenements, newly built apartment blocks,

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

ex local authority tenements, four-in-a-blocks and converted houses. Advisers who will also benefit are property managers in all sectors, architects, surveyors, community organisations and advice workers.

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

It is envisaged that this website will be a valuable resource playing a huge part in helping to prevent properties falling into disrepair and leading to better maintained homes in the future.<sup>33</sup>

### District Heating

The Council, in conjunction with the Scottish Government via the Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP) has a joint funded District Heating feasibility study underway for all of our 19 multi-storey flat blocks to survey assess and recommend an appropriate strategic approach to developing DH schemes in these properties for the purposes of alternative heating options, lowering fuel costs to tenants and owners, more efficient heating and contributing to lower carbon consumption, impacting on fuel poverty and the effects of climate change.

The six areas for study are:

- Area 1) 3 MSFs West Bridgend
- Area 2) 6 MSFs Dalmuir
- Area 3) 1 MSF Mountblow House
- Area 4) 3 MSFs Littleholm Dalmuir
- Area 5) 1 MSF Kilbowie Court
- Area 6) 5 MSFs Drumry

In each area a feasibility study will show:

- Suitable locations within the area for an Energy Centre which will incorporate a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) boiler engine
- This will include an option appraisal for renewables where applicable
- The study will outline all costs associated with the energy centre and plant services
- A methodology will be presented for linking the energy centre to the individual properties within the towers, including interface and metering
- A full life cycle analysis for each project identifying capital, operating and maintenance expenditures, and annual revenues gained by the heat supplied from WDC
- Complete project information sheet and all associated drawings
- Cost and carbon saving reports
- Risk analysis report

33 Under One Roof <http://www.underoneroof.scot/articles/1301/About#Howtousethissite>

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

Once we have received the necessary feasibility study information on all 6 areas then we should be in a better position to consider a financial business case/value for money review and thereafter develop any necessary report to Council to consider the installation of any district heating system(s) in the areas above.

### 6.10 Empty Homes Strategy

New supply is not the only way to increase the supply of affordable housing. Increasingly, Councils are taking steps improve the provision of affordable housing

Scotland currently has over 27,000 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.

Addressing the issue of empty homes can:

- Increase housing availability
- Reduce the need for infrastructure development for new homes

- Improve community pride, wellbeing and sustainability
- Contribute to the regeneration of our town centres by encouraging more people to live there
- Reduce anti-social behaviour and allow other residents to feel safe in their neighbourhood
- Provide a source of income for property owners.

Since August 2012 the Council has employed an Empty Homes Officer as a joint post with Renfrewshire Council. The EHO works closely with other Council services particularly Environmental Health and Council Tax to help bring empty properties back into use.

An Empty Homes Strategy<sup>34</sup> has been published which aims to point out how the issues of empty private sector properties can be tackled and provides a sound base from which to build empty homes work upon.

Table 11 Empty Homes Progress

Empty Homes Project, West Dunbartonshire Council	
Properties brought back into use through direct engagement	2012/13 <sup>35</sup> 2 2013/14 6 2014/15 20 2015/16 15 to date
Work in progress to bring properties back into use	46
Work in progress, longer term	13

<sup>34</sup> West Dunbartonshire Empty Homes Strategy 2012 -2016. This strategy is being refreshed this year to cover the period to 2019.

<sup>35</sup> All figures are August - August (WDC Empty Homes Officer)

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

The Empty Homes Officer uses an approach to engaging with owners that involves:

- Advice and information
- Financial and practical assistance.

The process of making contact with the owner and the end result of getting the property back into use with empty homes work can be a long process due to problems getting owners to engage and then getting them to address the problems associated with their property. Some properties can come back into use from letters received from the EHO but without direct contact having been made.



### A Scotland without Fuel Poverty\*

An independent, strategic working group tasked with developing a vision for the eradication of fuel poverty in Scotland and producing recommendations for a new fuel poverty strategy reported to Scottish Ministers in October 2016.

The Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group Report contains 52 recommendations under 4 headings and will form the basis for debate on the issue in the coming period and provide the strategic framework for being developed during the timeframe of this plan'

\* A Scotland without fuel poverty is a fairer Scotland: Four steps to achieving sustainable, affordable and attainable warmth and energy use for all - the report of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities. The Scottish Government October 2016.

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

study

### Empty home brought back into use in Dumbarton

**Address: Meadowbank Street**  
**Total length of time empty: 3 years+**

The Empty Homes Officer (EHO) first got in touch in December 2013 after the property was highlighted to the EHO through a self referral.

The main reason the property was empty was because the owner needed advice on repairs/renovation.

The owner purchased this flat as empty in July 2013. It was one large ground floor 3 bedroom flat. The owner was thinking of converting this flat back into 2 one bed properties as it would have originally have been designed.

The EHO was able to help, and the main action resulting in was help with renovation.

The EHO advised the owner that one bedroom properties were in high demand in WD and that this would increase her letting potential with the properties. Initially the owner had wished to take the loan fund to help fund the conversion and a schedule of works was carried out. An application was submitted, but this in the end could not be



pursued by the owner as they were unable to secure the loan against their own property and not the flats due to it being in a different Local Authority area. The owner however managed to obtain funding elsewhere and used the schedule of works and quotes she had already obtained to proceed with the works. Renovation advice, together with builder's merchants and VAT discounts were passed on to the owner by the EHO.

#### Outcome:

As a result, both properties were let as a private rentals in May 2015. The owner thanked the EHO for her help and support along the way.

## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

On the 1 April 2013 the Local Government Finance (Unoccupied properties etc) (Scotland) Act 2012 became active, allowing Local Authorities to charge increased Council Tax on certain homes that have been empty over a year. On 6 February 2014 WDC approved these changes and began charging the increased rate on 1 April 2014. The Council retains some discretion in the application of these additional charges and the EHO works with owners in bringing these properties back into use. Money raised from this increase goes to the HRA revenue account. In 2014/15, a net benefit of £123,465 was generated for the HRA.

While the increased Council Tax arrangement is a useful incentive, it is considered that there is scope for more frequent use of enforcement measures and Compulsory Purchase Orders. However the Council is reluctant to carry out works notices due to concerns over recouping the money. The Council are also wary of going down the route of CPO to get a property back into use as this is very long and costly process which can leave the Council open to criticism. A housing reuse power would be welcomed by the Council however which could give Local Authorities a more specialised tool with which to target empty homes where all avenues of advice and assistance have been exhausted.

High numbers of empty properties can lead to deterioration in the quality and appearance of neighbourhoods and result in higher incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour in surrounding areas. There is a greater pressure on Council services to respond to these problems and having the power to act against these properties would give empty homes work a full set of tools with which to tackle these problems.

Financial assistance is available to Empty Homes owners in the form of the Empty Homes Loan Fund. The Council has £150,000 pot of money from the Scottish Government to enable them to offer loans of up to £15,000 to owners of properties that have been empty for over 6 months and currently do not meet the repairing standard. Once renovated to an acceptable standard, properties will be used as affordable housing for a minimum of 5 years. Rental income will run at approximately 10% below current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. This income will be used initially to pay off loans then subsequently as income to the landlord.





## 6 Key Theme 2: Promoting Good Quality Housing *(continued...)*

### 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 (ESSH) 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
- Adopt a holistic approach to addressing issues in the Private Rented Sector
- 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
- Expand the Empty Homes Strategy including in helping in Town Centre Regeneration programmes
- Review and update the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options

**Key LHS Outcome:**  
Homelessness is minimised through prevention and early intervention measures.

### 7.1 Background

Homelessness and homeless people's rights have come a long way since the 1977 Homelessness Persons Act. The emphasis has turned from helping just families and single people deemed vulnerable, to helping all people who are homeless. The phasing out of priority need, and the introduction of the support duty has given anyone who is homeless the right to support and accommodation.

The experience of homelessness significantly impacts on an individual's life in a magnitude of different ways. People who have been homeless are more likely to experience mental illness, addiction issues and legal /debt problems. They are more likely to have limited training and employment opportunities. And they have greater potential for becoming homeless again in the future.

The statutory responsibility for homelessness lies with local authorities

who have a duty to provide a strategy for dealing with homelessness. Homelessness strategies are now incorporated within the Local Housing Strategy. However some local authorities will still have their own Homelessness Strategy to ensure a full action plan is implemented. West Dunbartonshire is one of these local authorities who still provide a separate homelessness strategy. West Dunbartonshire: Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2016 is the third homeless strategy to be published. Work on a fourth is currently underway.

The strategic aims for the current homeless strategy are based around four main themes and build on the success of the previous Homelessness Strategies. 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 ensure a commitment to continue to develop and improve services to tackling homelessness through a partnership approach.

The delivery of Housing Options is a Scottish Government policy objective and is included in the Housing Regulator's Scottish Social Housing Charter. For the Council it is a service priority, which we have committed to in a number of housing, homelessness and related strategies and action plans. The Council has a statutory requirement to provide quarterly statistics (PREVENT 1) to the Scottish Government which are used to monitor

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

the development and impact of the Housing Options approach across Scotland.

More on Housing Options below (see 7.8)

Since 2013, the Council and our strategic partners have achieved the following:

Some Key Achievements since 2013...

- An 18% reduction in homeless presentations since 2012/2013
- There has also been a reduction in the number of presentations from young people throughout West Dunbartonshire
- The development of a Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and an action plan
- The introduction of a Common Approach to Tenancy Sustainment between West Dunbartonshire council and the local RSLs
- The Council opened its first support accommodation project Ashton View. Ashton View was opened to accommodate the increased numbers of homeless households with support needs
- The Council has worked closely with Alternatives to open up the Safe as Houses project. This project is designed to help people with a substance misuse problem

develop news skills and develop a healthy lifestyle before returning to independent living

- Introduction of subletting houses of tenants who are in prison. This prevents homelessness upon liberation
- Increased use of the private rented sector with the introduction of WDC Home Finder. This is a website where landlords can advertise their vacant properties to let for free
- West Dunbartonshire Council has had no breaches of unsuitable accommodation order
- Continued joint working through the West of Scotland Housing Options Hub. The hub is in the process of developing a training toolkit. Most Councils in Scotland have since signed up to be part of it
- The development of a short film discussing the homelessness journey of a number of people who have been homeless in West Dunbartonshire
- Introduction of the Mortgage to Rent Scheme.

### 7.2

#### The scale of homelessness in West Dunbartonshire

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. This has slowly reduced to 1122 in 2015/16. The figures used in this chapter have been taken from the Scottish Government HL1 statistics.

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

In addition to the reduction in homelessness applications, West Dunbartonshire Council has seen a reduction in number of homelessness assessments that are undertaken. This has reduced from 1570 in 2011/12 to 1101 in 2015/16.

The reduction in homelessness applications and assessments is in line with the Council's homelessness prevention agenda.

**Table 12: WDC homeless applications and assessments since 2011/12**

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Homeless applications	1,545	1,364	1,365	1,249	1,112
Homeless assessment	1,570	1,347	1,342	1,297	1,101

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures

### 7.3

#### Who is homeless in West Dunbartonshire?

##### Household Type, Age and Gender

Analysis of who presents to the council as homeless is looked annually by the council to determine any patterns of change and course of action to be taken. 75% of households who presented to West Dunbartonshire council in 2015/16 were single people. A fifth of the households had

children in them, most of who were single parents. When looking at all applications in 2015/16 just over half (56%) of the main applicants were male. However when you look more closely at the households type you can see that there are clear differences. Two thirds of the single person households were male, whereas 93% of the single parent households were female. This is a similar pattern to previous years.

**Figure 13: Household type of homeless applications 2015/16**

Households type	number	%
Households with children	43	4%
Households without children	62	6%
Single parent families	175	16%
Single persons	846	75%
Total	1,126	100%

Source: AVD Computing System

Over a third of people who presented to West Dunbartonshire as homeless were aged between 16 and 25. From the table below it can be seen that the number of young people aged 16 to 17 has decreased from 82 to 55 since 2011/12. The decrease is more significant for young people aged 18 to 25 in the same timescale.

The number of young people who present as homeless in West

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

Dunbartonshire is a concern for the council, and one which the Council is working to address. Although overall the number of males and females aged 16 - 25 is split evenly, on closure inspection over 70% of 16 and 17 year olds who presented were female.

Table 14: Age of applicants between 2011/12 and 2015/16

Age	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
16 - 17	82	5%	59	4%	57	4%	55	4%	55	5%
18 - 25	500	32%	474	35%	422	31%	372	30%	326	29%
26 - 59	911	59%	790	58%	840	62%	768	61%	702	63%
60+	52	3%	41	3%	46	3%	54	4%	39	3%
All	1,545	100%	1,364	100%	1,365	100%	1,249	100%	1,122	100%

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures

### 7.4 Homeless Assessments

When someone presents as homeless they are assessed under the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 1987. Over the years there have been amendments to the 2003 act. Since 2012 applicants are no longer subject to the priority need assessment making it more fair and accessible to everyone. In 2015/16 1101 households underwent a homeless assessment. Of these households 81% were assessed as homeless or potentially homeless. 10% withdrew their application

and 6% resolved their application. Only 1% was assessed as not homeless. There has been a reduction in the number of people assessed as not homeless and an increase in the percentage of households assessed as homeless. One reason for this is the prevention work that the caseworkers undertake to avoid a household becoming homeless. The number of cases lost prior to assessment has increased from 8 to 19 since 2010/11. As a snapshot to assess the scale of homelessness in West Dunbartonshire as of 31st March 2016 there were 487 homeless households, including 113 dependent children.

Figure 15: Homeless assessment decisions 2015/16

Assessment decision	number	%
Homeless/potentially homeless	888	81%
Not homeless	14	1%
Resolved homelessness	66	6%
Lost contact before assessment	19	2%
Other	2	0%
Total	1,101	100%

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

### 7.5

#### Why do people become homeless?

There are many reasons why people become homelessness. A third of households assessed as homeless in 2015/16 in West Dunbartonshire were asked to leave their home. This resulted in the homelessness presentation. At a closer look it can be seen that 51% of those who stated their homelessness reason as being asked to leave were aged 16 - 24. Over half (61%) of these young people were male.

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, 85% of these households were female.

### 7.6

#### Housing Outcomes

Almost half of all homeless applications resulted in a tenancy with either West Dunbartonshire council or a housing association. There were a high number (16%) of cases where the contact with the applicant was lost before duty was discharged but an assessment was carried out. 45% of the lost contact cases were people aged 16 to 24.

Table 16: Housing Outcomes

Housing outcome	number	%
Scottish Secure Tenancy	511	48%
Private rented tenancy	28	3%
Hostel	0	0%
Bed & breakfast	0	0%
Returned to previous/friends/ vol org	83	8%
Women s Refuge	1	0%
Residential care/nursing home/shared/supported	1	0%
Other known	37	3%
Other not known	20	2%
No duty owed to applicant	213	20%
Contact lost before duty discharge	164	16%
All	1,058	100%

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire HL1 figures

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

### 7.7 Support Needs

Since June 2013 all local authorities must carry out a housing support assessment on all unintentionally homeless households who require it. They must also ensure that support is offered to that household. IN 2015/16 54% of unintentionally homeless households had a support assessment carried out. Just over a quarter had support provided to them under the housing support regulations.

West Dunbartonshire provides an in-house housing support service to any household who require it. When a household presents as homeless they will be asked questions relating to support needs during their homeless assessment. The case workers have a check-list. Depending on what that household scores they may be referred to our Ashton View project. The staff at this project are trained support workers and will carry out a full housing support assessment.

Table 17: Homelessness Assessments by Support Needs

	All assessed	Assessed as homeless	%	Young Person 16-24 assessed as homeless	%
Mental health	234	204	25%	33	16%
Learning disability	37	34	4%	17	8%
Physical disability	65	60	7%	9	4%
Medical condition	173	157	19%	27	13%
Addiction	147	129	16%	15	7%
Basic housing management skills	280	244	29%	107	51%
Total	936	828	100%	208	100%

Source: West Dunbartonshire HL1 AVD system

From table 17 it can be seen 51% of young people had a support requirement for housing management skills. This figure is in line with previous years. A quarter of households assessed as homeless had a mental health support need and 16% had an addiction related support need.

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

### 7.8 Key priorities for the future

#### Temporary and Supported Accommodation

West Dunbartonshire Council has developed a Temporary Accommodation Modelling tool that is used on a regular basis to look at the stock of temporary and supported accommodation against who is homeless in the area. The model takes into account the type of households who are homeless, ages of applicants, gender, support needs, etc. The model is due to be updated this year to include a more in-depth look at future provision in light of welfare reform. This model will ensure we have the right type and supply of temporary and supported accommodation. The outcome from the model will also influence the forthcoming Homelessness Strategy.

At present, West Dunbartonshire Council currently has over 200 temporary furnished flats managed by Council homelessness officers.

In addition, the Council has their own supported accommodation project for homeless people with prescribed support needs. The success of this project has led to a planned extension increasing the capacity of the project from 8 spaces to 22 spaces.

#### Homelessness Prevention

Prevention of homelessness is a sustainable and cost effective option and is a key priority moving forward. It results in a reduction in homelessness as people receive support advice about sustaining their current accommodation or, where appropriate, securing alternative accommodation. Local Authorities record their prevention activity through using a national framework called the Prevent 1 which was developed by the Scottish Government. Data is sent quarterly to the Scottish Government alongside the HL1 dataset. From the table below it can be seen that 485 households received prevention of homelessness assistance during 2015/16, with 241 or 49.7% of these approached resulting in a homelessness application.



## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

Table 18: Prevent 1 Outcomes 2015/16

Outcomes	number	%
LA tenancy	28	5.8%
Private rented assured tenancy	0	0%
Moved in with friends/relatives	5	1%
Other (known)	12	2.5%
Not known	8	1.6%
RSL (Housing Association) tenancy	6	1.2%
Private rented short assured tenancy	9	1.9%
Home ownership bought own home via other means	0	0%
Prison	0	0%
Lost contact with applicant	42	8.7%
Remained in current accommodation	134	27.6%
Made homelessness application to local authority	241	49.7%
All	485	100%

Source: Scottish Government - West Dunbartonshire Prevent 1 Figures

### Housing Options

Delivery of a comprehensive Housing Options service is a key delivery priority for West Dunbartonshire Council.

### Why Housing Options and Prevention?

- Reduction in homelessness as people receive advice about sustaining their tenancy
- Homeless people receive prompt and easy access to help and advice
- Prevention of homelessness is a sustainable and cost effective option
- Balance between proactive and reactive services
- Housing information and advice is given out to allow client to make informed choices. This can lead to tenancy sustainment and reduction in homelessness.

Housing Options should not be confused with a housing advice service, although housing advice will be one of its components. Nor should it be confused with an approach which simply gives housing options advice to customers applying for housing with West Dunbartonshire Council. It is a much more holistic and person-centred approach which is triggered by anyone approaching the Council with a housing problem and facilitates a sustainable housing solution which may require focusing on other non-housing related needs.

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

The Scottish Government guidance makes clear that Housing Options should be a comprehensive approach which can involve multiple and varied actions to achieve sustainable housing outcomes for individual customers. It may be that a significant amount of footfall will be limited to the provision of straightforward advice. However, there will be instances where activities are more complex and a range of additional assessments (risk and or support assessments) and joint working with other services and organisations will be required.

Other key elements of Housing Options include:

- A clear commitment on standards of service and service outcomes
- Streamlined processes and improved customer experience
- A person centred approach with clear equalities statements
- Provision of clear and balanced advice allowing clients real choice
- An assurance that advice will be provided by appropriately trained and skilled staff
- Clearly defined timescales attached to the various activities
- Clarity on complaints procedures
- Ongoing performance and standards monitoring
- Advice is tenure neutral, and is given on the whole range of housing tenures as well as supported accommodation
- A strong link to homelessness prevention measures such as arbitration and money advice.

### Who is the housing options client group?

Anyone with a perceived housing need, regardless of their circumstances may benefit from a HO assessment. Someone who engages with HO may not identify with any specific 'need group'. A number of key customer groups in terms of Housing Options approaches can be identified:

- people who have experienced family or relationship breakdown
- young people
- looked after young people
- people leaving the armed forces
- people being discharged from hospital
- liberated prisoners
- people fleeing abuse of violence
- people with addictions issues
- people with financial difficulties
- people with mental health issues
- refugees.

In many instances customers will display more than one of the above need characteristics, and as such, might be considered clients with complex needs.

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

### Welfare Reform

Welfare Reforms have created additional difficulties and anxieties for homeless households in West Dunbartonshire. Benefit sanctions are routinely applied to vulnerable people, many of whom have learning disabilities, poor mental health and a range of complex social and health care needs. Our forthcoming refreshed Homelessness Strategy will set out the significant changes that will be required to ensure the continuing viability of our temporary and supported accommodation. In particular, we have assessed that there is a need to increase supplies of supervised and supported hostel type accommodation to more effectively meet the needs of single people; both as a response to welfare reforms and to improve outcomes. Further consideration will be given to the impact of shared room rates and implications for households under the age of 35 and what potential action can be taken to assist.

Welfare reform is a key challenge for the whole area. It is vital that the homelessness service works in partnership with internal and external partners to mitigate the changes.

### 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 2017-2022 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

## 7 Key Theme 3: Homelessness and Housing Options *(continued...)*

- 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).

## 8 Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities

**Key LHS Outcome:**  
We provide good quality neighbourhoods and housing services where all people feel safe and secure

### 8.1 Overview

We will continue to develop all of our housing estate based services by working in partnership with tenants and residents groups to provide good quality neighbourhoods and housing related services that make people feel safe, secure and involved.

Our housing service is part of a much broader holistic partnership with other related housing organisations, community safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Services (ASB) which all have a key role in providing safe and sustainable communities.

Our partner housing associations own around 6,000 homes in West Dunbartonshire and deliver a factoring service to many more. They too recognise their role in fostering good relations between our communities and we work closely with them to deliver local services.

We are committed to ensuring that our services are provided on an equal and fair basis to all groups within our communities. The strategic and operational interaction between the Council and locally based social housing providers assists in:

- developing local letting plans
- helping to support individual housing option plans
- supporting broader housing sustainability objectives.

Our approach is delivered across all housing sectors and is designed to work with residents and local communities regardless of their housing tenure. The service plays a prominent role in tackling social and environmental issues within mixed tenure and multiple landlord housing estates and are keen encourage all housing providers to play a full part in promoting the well-being of the communities which they serve. Housing Operations are integral to developing the *Your Community* initiative<sup>36</sup>, a new way of delivering services to local areas and involving communities.

The Housing Operations service has been the subject of a recent review and restructure. The new service will have approximately 97 staff incorporated within 3 geographical area based teams and the Area Co-coordinator will have overall responsibility for delivery of related operational services within a geographical patch of between 2000 and 5000 Council tenants as well as services to owners and communities.

36 <http://www.wdcp.org.uk/your-community/what-is-your-community/>

## 8 Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities *(continued...)*

### 8.2 Tenancy Sustainment:

Tenancy sustainment is a key part of any local authority or RSL homeless approach. Over the last few years the Scottish Government has seen tenancy sustainment be an important role of all housing providers.

One of the Charter outcomes is:

*“tenants get the information they need on how to access support options to help them to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations”*

West Dunbartonshire Council and its local RSLs have developed a Common Approach to Tenancy Sustainment. There is a performance framework as part of this that is looked at annually. 87% of Council tenancies created in 2014/15 were sustained in 2015/16.

Our new operational framework focusses on the following actions:

- 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.

During 15/16 we significantly increased our resource base within WDC estates management and caretaking enabling us to reduce housing officer and caretaking patch sizes to more manageable levels which we anticipate will have a huge positive impact on our communities. We have reconfigured these resources within a new management structure which will focus on geographical responsibility and closer interface and cohesive management structures across a range of disciplines. This has also involved modernisation of our ICT infrastructure including procuring hand held devices for officers working in the community.

### 8.3 Housing and Community Justice

West Dunbartonshire Council supports the view expressed by the Scottish Government in the ongoing redesign of Community Justice to prevent and reduce further offending and securing better outcomes for people with convictions, victims and communities. The Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan will be published in March 2017. A new national agency (Community Justice Scotland) will be established

## 8 Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities *(continued...)*

to provide assurance to Scottish Ministers on the collective achievement of community justice outcomes across Scotland.

The Scottish government has acknowledged that the solution is not simply a matter of being offered a home although this is the first step. Ex-prisoners on liberation often find it difficult to cope with a tenancy, while facing up to debt, drug and alcohol problems. Reducing re-offending is not just the duty of the criminal justice system but also of other important bodies such as housing, health, benefits, education and training and employment. By these agencies making themselves accessible to offenders and working together in partnership, then the community is much safer and stronger and re-offending is reduced.

At a local level, strategic planning and service delivery is expected to become the responsibility of local community justice partners. There will be a statutory duty on statutory community justice partners to produce a local plan for community justice and will have a requirement to engage and involve the Third Sector in the planning, delivery and reporting of services and improved outcomes. The partners include housing, Education, National Health Service, children's services, Fire and Police, etc. There will also be National Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework for Community Justice in Scotland.

Whether at the point of arrest, upon receipt of community or custodial sentence, or transition back to the community, needs must be understood and addressed. Equal access to universal services such as housing, employment, welfare and health and well-being services are key to

securing an individual's attempts to desist from offending.

Housing Services will continue to work closely with the Community Justice organisations and services to deliver outcomes which will help meet the outcomes of the new model. These are:

### *Structural (what we deliver as partners)*

- **Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice**
- **Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way**
- **Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending**
- **People have better access to services they require including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability**

### *Person-centric (changes to users)*

- **Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety being addressed**
- **People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities**
- **Individuals' resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced**

## 8 Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities *(continued...)*

The Community Justice Priorities are:

- **Improved Community Understanding and Participation**
- **Strategic Planning and Partnership Working**
- **Effective Use of Evidence-Based Interventions**
- **Equal Access to Services**

The Community Justice National Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework contains a range of performance measurements. The indicators here have major implications for housing service delivery and cover all Priority areas, of particular interest are:

- **Development and existence of a Housing Protocol across key Community Justice Partners**
- **Evidence of collaborative risk management planning**
- **Percentage of people being released from custody who have suitable accommodation**

A joint working Protocol is in preparation which will seek to set out the roles and responsibilities with regard to homelessness prevention and other housing matters. The Protocol will demonstrate engagement with a range of partners including WDC, Scottish Prison Service, Police, Housing Associations, DWP, HSCP and Voluntary Sector partners.

A good example of a partnership approach is the joint work being done at Low Moss Prison between the Council Homeless/Housing Services of

West Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire, Argyll & Bute, Inverclyde, Glasgow City and Falkirk. A protocol is being developed for prisoners who are in danger of losing their tenancy, or are threatened with homelessness in Prison and upon release. The new protocol will look at preventing homelessness by giving appropriate advice and assistance to prisoners and help reduce the cycle of re-offending by providing appropriate support and assistance within this multi-agency approach.

### **Gender Based Violence**

There are also a range of services delivered across the council to assist and includes a Violence Against Women partnership group with a fully developed Strategy and Action Plan to ensure adequate and effective service delivery to prevent gender based violence in the longer term. We have housing support contracts in place with local Women's Aid services, which provide support and accommodation to women and their families experiencing domestic abuse. Over the course of this strategy we will further explore the role housing and housing providers have in tackling and eradicating Gender Based Violence in West Dunbartonshire. WDC will work to strengthen working arrangements with the two local Women's Aid groups in Clydebank and Dumbarton & District.



## 8 Key Theme 4: Sustainable and Supportive Communities *(continued...)*

### Key Actions

- 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.
- 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 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.

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs

**Key LHS Outcome: People with particular needs have access to suitable housing with any necessary support to optimise their independence and wellbeing.**

### 9.1 Overview

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.

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.

With regards to addressing particular housing needs, 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 Housing Sector - through the Council - and the HSCP are able to build upon existing robust and effective mechanisms for engagement, working together closely across many service areas on issues of joint interest. There is a shared recognition that the wider housing sector must be involved in supporting the delivery of the health and social care integration agenda. In particular, all housing associations have a role to play.

The Strategy seeks to ensure 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.

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

### 9.2 HSCP

#### Strategic Plan and the Housing Contribution Statement

As a key partner, The Health and Social Care Partnership's describes and supports within its Strategic Plan the Local Housing Strategy's commitment to provide clear strategic leadership on housing priorities for older people by:

- Aiming to ensure appropriate information and advice is available to make informed choices and that older people are assisted to remain in and make best use of existing stock
- Seeking to invest in new housing which meets the needs of older people and to provide low level preventative support.

Additionally there is a significant cohort of younger adults with complex health conditions who also require a strategic approach to their housing needs and we will extend our activities to this group; the approach to meeting their needs is outlined within this document.

The HSCP Strategic Plan also highlights key areas where the Housing Sector (through the office of the Council as strategic housing authority) and the HSCP will be working together in the coming period to continue to:

- 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.

The Housing Contribution Statement 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.

In this way, the Housing Contribution Statement acts as the 'bridge' between the Local Housing Strategy and the Strategic Plan for West Dunbartonshire. It will do this by:

- Briefly articulating the role of the local housing sector in the governance arrangements for the integration of health and social care
- Providing a short overview of the shared evidence base and key issues identified in relation to housing needs and the link to health and social care
- Setting out the shared outcomes and service priorities linking the Strategic Plan and Local Housing Strategy
- Setting out the current and future resources and investment required to meet these shared outcomes and priorities, and identify where these will be funded from the integrated

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

budget and where they will be funded by other (housing) resources

- Providing an overview of the housing-related challenges going forward and improvements required.
- Covering key areas such as adaptations, housing support and homelessness, including articulating the housing contribution across a wide range of groups including older people and those with disabilities, mental health and addictions.

This strategy describes how the Council and its partners mean to address issues relating to housing support and installation and maintenance of equipment or adaptations; ensuring a consistent and robust approach across both private and rented housing. The delivery of this partnership approach will contribute to reduced waits for OT assessment and equipment and adaptations and the development of new models of care at home such as extra care housing in conjunction with 3rd Sector and Local Housing Associations develop housing with care options for all care groups.

The definition then of “Housing Support Service” for the purpose of the Strategy is any service which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to a person for the purpose of enabling that person to occupy, or to continue to occupy, accommodation as their sole or main residence. It does not include any service which involve the installation or maintenance of equipment or adaptation; or any service which is provided to a person as, or in conjunction with, personal care or personal

support services provided in the person’s place of residence.

The Housing Sector is key contributor to the delivery of the HSCP’s Commissioning Consortium approach across third and independent sector providers of social care and housing. This uses a commissioning model to identify need across local communities and ensure the most effective and appropriate interventions and services are available within those communities.

The HSCP Strategic Plan provides an overview of the health and social care needs of the West Dunbartonshire population pooled from deeper background sources (i.e. its joint strategic needs assessment). As part of the approach to commissioning through the HSCP’s Commissioning Consortium, the Council’s Housing Section and the HSCP have developed an evidence base in respect of the health and social care needs of the West Dunbartonshire population - and this fills the gaps in HNDA information. Together, these documents will form the basis of the commissioning and procurement approaches moving forward.

The HSCP works with the Housing Sector in developing the new build housing programme; in regeneration planning; and, in particular, contributes to the preparation of the biennial Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The SHIP commits all partners to supporting the policy of shifting the balance of care from institutional settings to tenancy based support in the community and funding from secondary to primary community settings.

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

A review of older people's housing models, need and demand in West Dunbartonshire carried out in August 2015 highlighted a shortfall in extra care housing or very sheltered housing<sup>37</sup>. The findings of this report have informed the approach to meeting the housing needs of older people.

Progress 2015 - 2016 on priorities linked to Addressing Particular Housing Needs:

- The Council's Housing Services worked in partnership with the HSCP in the development of the supported accommodation project at 18 Davidson Road, Alexandria.
- Housing Services funded the refurbishment work which was carried out by the Council's Direct Labour Organisation. The office accommodation and the four ground floor flats have been leased to Richmond Fellowship and the project welcomed its first four residents in early December, 2015. It is intended that over time the remaining eight flats within the building will be leased to Richmond with a view to facilitating the discharge of a further eight long term clients. This project provides housing support to enable individuals to move to more independent living within their own homes.
- While all new housing provided through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme must meet the Housing for Varying Needs accessibility standard, consideration is given to

provision of other forms of specialist housing on a scheme by scheme basis. For example, five of the Council's first 121 new houses built through the AHSP were specially designed to full wheelchair standard for the intended tenants. During 2014/15, 33 older people's housing units were delivered by the RSL sector through Bield Housing Association.

- The Council's Housing Service not only responds to urgent requests for re-housing, but is also involved in the planning process for individuals at the Points of Transition - young people leaving care, individuals having to leave their own homes for a variety of reasons and older people who can no longer remain in their homes due to mobility/ medical difficulties. This involves very close partnership working with officers across the HSCP to ensure that individuals at Points of Transition are re-settled successfully. Council Housing officers are now included in the Community Planning Partnership's Youth Services Review Improvement Group (which is convened and chaired by the HSCP) with a view to developing a comprehensive inter-agency approach which will address the needs of the most vulnerable young people.
- This year (2016/17) £906,000 will be spent providing aids and adaptations to assist people to remain in their own homes. The Council will carry out aids and adaptations to approximately 400 of its own housing stock during 2015/16

37 Specialist Housing Provision - A review of older people's housing models, need and demand in West Dunbartonshire Patrick Rodger, Stirling University/West Dunbartonshire Council August 2015 (Unpublished)

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

from £656,000 of the budget. A further 130 major adaptations jobs will be carried out to private sector homes from £250,000 of the budget.

- Grants for disabled adaptations are a major mandatory part of the Private Sector Housing Grant allocation in West Dunbartonshire (38.6% in 2015/16). The HSCP's Occupational Therapy team prioritise applications, which are currently submitted and progressed through the Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair service who provide valuable support and advice to private sector applicants.
- To meet the needs of younger adults with complex needs this plan is committing to scope the development of supported housing solutions for this specific group. Within West Dunbartonshire, the Action for Children Preparation for Life project is the only housing support project specifically designed to provide accommodation for young people under the age of 21 years. However, this project is not always suitable for younger adults with complex needs.
- It has been identified that there is a gap in service provision given that it is not considered appropriate to place young vulnerable adults in supported projects designed to cater for older adults who may themselves have well established complex needs. The Homelessness section is keen to develop

more appropriate housing solutions for this particular client group but successful outcomes rely on very close partnership working between the Council's Housing Section and the designated support providers. Discussions are on-going and will continue to determine how best to utilise the existing accommodation options more effectively (e.g. the provision of temporary furnished accommodation with appropriate 24 hour support packages).

A budget for housing related functions as described within the legislation have been delegated by the Council to the Partnership Board and as such are reported and monitored through the Integrated Joint Board.

### 9.3 Gypsy/Travellers

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

In 2013 the Council adopted an equality outcome on better meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers.

There has been an increased level of engagement with residents of the Dennystoun Forge site. This has resulted in improvements to the site at

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

Dennystoun Forge to bring hard standing, fencing and dry storage to an acceptable standard during 2016/2017. This better engagement has resulted in improved performance in respect of the Scottish Housing Regulator return, a trend we hope will continue.

The rental income from site had been transferred to the Housing Revenue Account, in line with other Council Tenants, and work is underway to update the residency agreement in line with good practice. New arrangements have been put in place whereby the Housing Officer for the vicinity will be responsible for the management of the site and will work with tenants on all tenancy related issues.

The Council is also exploring the possibility of a utilities company providing power directly to the site, bringing residents into line with other Council tenants, and helping to tackle any fuel poverty.

During 2016/2017 the Council will assess the possibility of providing a transit site within West Dunbartonshire. The proposed Local Development Plan has identified an opportunity to enable the Dennystoun Forge site to expand. The Council contributed to a joint study to inform the development of Local Housing Strategies for the Glasgow, Clyde Valley and Ayrshire authorities in 2016<sup>38</sup>. Among the recommendations of this report is that more robust monitoring should take place of the housing circumstances of the Gypsy/Traveller community and that the discontinued bi-annual national site count be reinstated.

### 9.4 Travelling Showpeople

On average there are between 3 and 6 licences applications per year for circuses/funfairs run by Showpeople visiting West Dunbartonshire. The normal practice is for people to set up at sites they are using for the shows, and this has not created issues for Showpeople or local residents. The LHS arrangements will have no net effect on Travelling Showpeople visiting West Dunbartonshire.

### 9.5 Asylum Seekers and Refugees

West Dunbartonshire Council is a participant in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme; strong partnership working on this scheme has contributed to fostering good relations and equality of opportunity, and this experience will inform not just future relocations, but wider work with all communities in West Dunbartonshire.

### 9.6 Vulnerable Young People

West Dunbartonshire's current Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) for 2015 - 2018 continues to be the key delivery vehicle for all children's services planning, review and improvement across the Community

## 9 Key Theme 5: Addressing Particular Housing Needs *(continued...)*

Planning Partnership; it continues to reflect the agreed priorities<sup>39</sup>. The ICSP incorporates key strategic priorities and outcomes for children and young people as set out in West Dunbartonshire’s Single Outcome Agreement and a suite of agreed strategic priorities across all services where children and young people are affected. At its heart is a shared commitment of partners to “Getting It Right for Every Child” (GIRFEC) in West Dunbartonshire and the delivery of partners corporate parenting responsibilities and their commitment to improving outcomes for looked after children and young people.

We work with care leavers who are prepared, encouraged and supported to leave care on a planned basis. By following a Care Leaver housing protocol we hope to ensure that the young person is assisted to live in the most appropriate housing that is sustainable. This also helps to ensure that the young person does not present as homeless.

The Council has also prepared a paper (Youth Housing - Giving Young PPL the Best Start in Life) on housing’s role in helping young people with their transition into adulthood<sup>40</sup>.

### Key Actions<sup>41</sup>

- **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.**

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/performance-and-spending/local-government-benchmarking-framework/children-s-services/>

<sup>40</sup> Youth Housing - Giving Young PPL the Best Start in Life can be on the LHS website page here: <http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/housing/local-housing-strategy/>

<sup>41</sup> These are the actions reflected in the HSCP Strategic Plan currently out for consultation.



# 10 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

## 10.1

The Scottish Government provided comment on the first draft of the LHS against the agreed review criteria. It was also subject to peer review, whereby an officer from another Council evaluated the draft LHS in view of current Scottish Government Guidance. The feedback from these reviews has helped shape this version and is detailed in the Consultation Summary.

## 10.2

The Local Housing Strategy will contain an Action Plan for monitoring progress on achieving its objectives. The Action Plan will contain a series of indicators to assist in measuring performance against agreed timescales and will be prepared using the Council's Covalent performance management system.

## 10.3

Progress on the delivery of LHS outcomes is monitored through:

- A monthly performance report to the Council's Housing Management Team
- An Annual Progress Report to Housing and Communities Committee and a presentation to the WDTR0
- An annual report to the CPWD Management Board on the SOA which contains key LHS elements
- The performance arrangements in respect of the HSCP Strategic Plan
- Regular liaison with housing associations operating in

West Dunbartonshire and the Scottish Government at the quarterly Housing providers Forum.

## 10.4

Key elements of the SHIP also form part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and will be components of the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Government.

# 11 Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations

## AHSP Affordable Housing Supply Programme:

The principal Scottish Government grant funding for Council and housing association new build development.

## ARC

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

## BTS

Below Tolerable Standard: Term used to define houses failing to meet a minimum repairs standard as set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

## CHP

Combined Heating and Power schemes (usually a form of district heating project).

## Clydeplan

New name for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority.

## CPWDCommunity Planning West Dunbartonshire:

The initiative bringing West Dunbartonshire Council together with partner organisations to plan, provide for and promote the well-being of the area.

## ECO

Energy Company Obligation: a new measure promoting energy efficiency.

## EESHS

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing: A measure introduced by the Scottish Government to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.

## Equity

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

## Extra Care Housing

Housing which has all the features of the sheltered housing but also includes a dining room, other social facilities, specialist bathrooms and 24 hour access to housing support and personal care services.

## Fuel Poverty

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

## G&CV SDPA

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority: The joint planning authority covering the eight local authorities in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area which is responsible for production of the Strategic Development Plan. Now called Clydeplan.

## HCS

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

# 11 Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations *(continued...)*

## Housing Contribution Statement

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

## HLA

Housing Land Audit: a comprehensive annual account of the current housing land supply. All housing sites with a capacity of 4 or more are identified, organised by tenure and planning status.

## HMO

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

## HRA

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

## HMP

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

## HNDA

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

## HSCP

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

## IIF

Innovation and Investment Fund: the national fund introduced in 2011/12 which offered grant support to provide affordable housing under three distinct funding streams.

## LDP

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

## LHA

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

## LL&TTNP

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

## MMR

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

# 11 Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations *(continued...)*

## Priority Need

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 defined those to be regarded as in priority need. This was expanded by the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003. Priority Need was phased out by 2012, with anyone unintentionally homeless being allocated permanent accommodation.

## Points of Transition

Young people leaving care, individuals having to leave their own homes for a variety of reasons and older people who can no longer remain in their homes due to mobility/medical difficulties.etc

## PSHG

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

## RoS

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

## RSL

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

## RtB

Right to Buy: First introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and subsequently extended, this gave most tenants of local authorities and

RSLs the right to purchase their homes at a discount. RtB has now been abolished.

## SAP

Standard Assessment Procedure: A government energy rating for homes.

## Scottish Social Housing Charter

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

## Stage 3s

Stage 3 Adaptations: Funding from the SG More Homes Division to housing associations for disabled adaptations.

## SEA

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

## Section 5s

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

## SG HS&ID

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

# 11 Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations *(continued...)*

## Sheltered (or Supported) Housing

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

## SHQS

Scottish Housing Quality Standard:

A housing standard required to be met by all social housing landlords by 2015.

## SOA

Single Outcome Agreement: This sets out the local priorities for action by the Council and Community Planning partners in the context of the Scottish Government's national aspirations.

## Supported Living

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

## Telecare

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

## Tenure

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

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

## Very Sheltered Housing

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

# 12 List of Key Background Papers

The production of this LHS has been informed by a host of strategies, policies and papers, both at a local and national level, principally:

## WDC Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/strategic-plan-2012-2017/>

## WD Community Planning Partnership

Single Outcome Agreement 2014- 2017

[http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/136670/wd\\_soa\\_2014-17.pdf](http://www.wdcp.org.uk/media/136670/wd_soa_2014-17.pdf)

## WD Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2015 - 2016

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

## WD Health and Social Care Partnership Housing Contribution Statement May 2016

<http://www.wdhsc.org.uk/media/1559/wdhscp-housing-contribution-statement-2016.pdf>

## Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan - Proposed Plan 2016

[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)

## Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2 2015

[http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHND2\\_PostAppraisal\\_190515.pdf](http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/GCVHND2_PostAppraisal_190515.pdf)

## West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (Proposed Plan) 2015

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

## WD Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016 2011

[http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/753598/lhs\\_final\\_november\\_amended\\_electronic\\_version.pdf](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/753598/lhs_final_november_amended_electronic_version.pdf)

## WDC Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2015/16 - 2019/20 2014

[http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4176853/wdc\\_ship\\_2015\\_final.pdf](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4176853/wdc_ship_2015_final.pdf)

## WD Economic Development Strategy 2015 - 2020: Sustainable Growth for All

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4310257/sustainable-growth.pdf>

## Scottish Government Homes Fit for the 21st Century 2011

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/340696/0112970.pdf>

## Scottish Government Joint Delivery Plan for Scotland 2015

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00477306.pdf>

## Scottish Government Draft Planning Advice: Housing and Infrastructure 2016

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00494177.pdf>

## Scottish Government Local Housing Strategy Guidance 2014

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458185.pdf>

## Scottish Government A Place to Stay, a Place to Call Home: A Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland May 2015

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/05/5877>

## Scottish Government 2015 Infrastructure Investment Plan

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491180.pdf>

# 12 List of Key Background Papers

## Scottish Government More Homes for Scotland 2016

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/reform/more-homes-scotland>

## Scottish Government Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2005/05/31133334/33366>

## WDC Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2016

[http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/2619064/homeslessness\\_strategy\\_2013-2016.pdf](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/2619064/homeslessness_strategy_2013-2016.pdf)

## WDC Housing Land Audit 2015

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4309114/hla2015.pdf>

## WDC Equality Mainstreaming Report & Equality Outcomes 2013-2017

<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/council-wide-plans-and-strategies/equality-diversity-and-fairness/mainstreaming-report-and-equality-outcomes/>

## Gypsy and Travellers Local Housing Strategy Evidence Review - A Joint Study for the Glasgow, Clyde Valley and Ayrshire Authorities 2016

## An Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland Craigforth 2007

Specialist Housing Provision - A review of older people's housing models, need and demand in West Dunbartonshire Patrick Rodger, Stirling University/West Dunbartonshire Council August 2015 (Unpublished)

Youth Housing 4U - A Youth Housing Statement for West Dunbartonshire WDC Draft July 2016

## WDC Housing Operations Service Review 2015/16

National data sources such as the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and the Registers of Scotland (RoS ) have provided invaluable information throughout, and the relevant references to these sources are contained in the document.

# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan

## 1. Housing Need and Demand

*Ensuring people have access to affordable housing, which is in the right location and is suitable for their needs.*

### Action

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire including increasing the Council New Build Programme
- 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
- Exceed the annual Housing Supply Target of delivering 80 Social Rented homes and 150 new Private Sector homes
- Deliver 1000 new affordable homes within the lifespan of the strategy by delivering on the More Homes initiative with an emphasis on promoting accessibility
- 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.



# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

## 2. Promoting Good Quality Housing

*All residents live in good quality housing regardless of tenures*

### Action

- Ensure the Council's housing is fit for the future through the Better Homes initiative
- Maintain SHQS compliance and minimise abeyances
- Comply with EESSH by December 2020
- Contribute to meeting the vision for lower carbon consumption and improving energy efficiency
- Target HRA funding at improving energy efficiency of Council Homes
- 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 (EESSH) 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)

# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

- 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
- Adopt a holistic approach to addressing issues in the Private Rented Sector
- 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
- Continue to engage with owners in mixed tenure blocks and ensure all measures available are utilised in these areas
- Expand the Empty Homes Strategy including in helping in Town Centre Regeneration programmes
- Refresh the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy

## 3. Homelessness and Housing Options

*Homelessness is minimised through prevention and early intervention measures*

### Action

- Ensure that the aims and objectives of West Dunbartonshire's Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 are completed
- Develop/Implement a new West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2017-2020 that incorporates the temporary accommodation; (should this be 17/22?)
- Carry out a review of supported/temporary accommodation and Housing Support

# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

- Introduce a housing options approach
- Undertake a review of supported and temporary accommodation in West Dunbartonshire
- Strengthen partnership with WD HSCP/Employability Service partnership
- 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 partners in line with redesign of service 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).

# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

## 4. Sustainable and Supportive Communities

*We provide good quality neighbourhoods and housing services where all people feel safe and secure*

### Action

- Reduce the number of empty homes in the social rented sector
- Improve tenancy sustainability, including improving pre-tenancy advice e.g. on income maximisation, to achieve sustainment and reduce the number of terminations for non-positive reasons and set geographical targets
- Improve rent collection and set targets for income maximisation and recovery of arrears
- 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

# 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

- 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 and multi-agency partnership framework Work within a multi-agency partnership to tackle domestic abuse
- Housing Services will fully contribute to the development and implementation of the Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan, to be published March 2017.

## 5. Addressing Particular Housing Needs

*People with particular needs have access to suitable housing with any necessary support, to optimise their independence and well-being*

### Action

- 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

## 13 Local Housing Strategy Action Plan *(continued...)*

- 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.



## Contact details

Housing and Employability  
Housing Development and Homelessness  
Council Offices  
Garshake Road  
Dumbarton  
G82 3PU  
Telephone: 01389 737000  
Email: [housing.strategy@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:housing.strategy@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

## Other formats

This document can also be provided in large print, Braille or on audio cassette and can be translated into different community languages.  
Please contact:

Corporate Communications  
Council Offices  
Garshake Road  
Dumbarton  
G82 3PU.  
Tel: 01389 737000

本文件也可應要求，提供或提供大號特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

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ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆੜੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਢੰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

اسی طرح اس کا نسخہ دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف اور آڈیو ٹیپ کے ذریعے بھی دستیاب ہے۔

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