

# Background Report

## Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy



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# **Section 1**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy**

This is Renfrewshire's second Local Housing Strategy covering the period 2011-2016. It replaces the previous Local Housing Strategy 2004-2009.

This Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how the Council and partners intend to jointly meet housing need and demand across all housing tenures in Renfrewshire. It:

- sets out the strategic vision for the future of housing across all tenures, taking account of national priorities;
- sets out how the standard of housing will be improved; and
- provides clear strategic direction for housing investment over the next five years.

### **1.2 LHS Development and Consultation**

This LHS is the result of research, partnership working and consultation activities over the last two years. A major part of the research work addressed housing need and demand and took place in partnership with seven other local authorities in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area. This involved the collation of information from all 15 housing associations operating in Renfrewshire.

Initial development of this strategy involved establishing short-life working groups of Council staff and partner organisations who examined national and local priorities and highlighted the key issues that we need to address through this strategy. We found that many of the themes of our last LHS remain relevant such as improving communities through regeneration, but other issues have become increasingly important such as carbon reduction activities and the importance of housing support in helping residents to sustain tenancies.

Formal consultation took place on a draft LHS during May – July 2011. Responses received helped shape the final content of this document. Appendix 1 highlights the full range of development and consultation activities, and summaries responses received during the formal consultation phase.

### **1.3 Context**

The strategy is being developed at a period of much uncertainty. The housing market and the economy have changed a great deal over the last three years. Renfrewshire has experienced a loss of output and employment whilst the continuing credit constraints have reduced house building and reduced the ability of households to access finance to buy new or improve existing homes. Policy developments, especially changes to housing benefit and welfare reform, will bring about further

changes to the housing market and the profile of those in housing need and the housing options available to them.

The scale and extent of the funding cuts and ongoing policy reforms will require the Council and its Partners to change traditional ways of doing things. It will be more important than ever that we continue to work closely to find imaginative ways of best utilising all available housing assets to achieve our housing outcomes and to enable local people to meet their living requirements and aspirations at different stages of their lives and provide the right type and mix of housing in the right places.

This LHS therefore sets out our ambition to enhance the cost-effectiveness of existing services that are highly valued by local people and to strengthen the important role that housing plays within the wider social, economic and environmental spheres. It also sets out our commitment to investigate the opportunities afforded by emerging Scottish Government's approach to housing in order that our action plan continues to be developed to play its full part in helping to realise these wider ambitions.

#### 1.4 Outcomes

Through our development and consultation work a number of key themes emerged. This allowed us to develop a set of outcomes that the Council and partners seek to achieve over the next five years.

Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy Outcomes	
Outcome 1	Residents live in good quality housing.
Outcome 2	Homes are energy efficient, fuel poverty is minimised and the environmental impact of housing is reduced.
Outcome 3	Regeneration and housing programmes are progressed to create stable mixed communities that are attractive places to live.
Outcome 4	People are able to live independently in suitable housing with appropriate support.
Outcome 5	Homelessness is prevented where possible and services meet the needs of people who become homeless.
Outcome 6	A range of housing options are available, routes into suitable housing are simplified and people have access to good quality information and advice.

This document sets out under each theme the main issues and how the Council, housing associations and other key partners will deliver actions that will help us meet these outcomes.

In **Section 2** we highlight the national and local legislative and policy drivers that help shape this LHS. **Section 3** outlines the main housing and population

characteristics in Renfrewshire, while **Section 4** summaries need and demand for housing in Renfrewshire including housing supply targets for the next 15 years. **Sections 5 to 10** detail some of the main issues facing housing and our approaches to tackling these, under the key themes of: House Conditions; Energy Efficiency, Fuel Poverty and Environmental Sustainability, Regeneration and Sustainable Communities; Independent Living and Support for Specific Groups; Homelessness and Access to Housing and Housing Options. **Section 11** sets out our priorities for Affordable Housing Investment and the resources available to achieve these and highlights other financial resources available to enable us to deliver actions. **Section 12** gives a brief summary of the monitoring and evaluation framework and includes indicators and targets for each outcome and includes indicators and targets for each outcome. **Section 13** sets out our action plan.

## **1.5 Equalities**

The Council has a statutory duty, primarily through the Equalities Act 2010, to eliminate unlawful conduct, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations, and to take into account the needs of people relating to age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and transgender.

We have taken account of information about the housing needs and requirements of a number of specific equalities groups within this document and where there are specific needs, we set out how we will address them. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for this LHS and can be found on the Council's website at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk).

## **1.6 Strategic Environmental Assessment**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a method of considering broad environmental impacts of any given public sector plan or strategy. Under the terms of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Council undertook an SEA screening report and concluded that the LHS has no significant environmental effects. The consultation authorities (Historic Scotland, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage) agreed with the Council's view. The Council therefore made a determination that the LHS 2011- 2016 does not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## Section 2

### National and Local Context

#### 2.1 National Context

The requirement to prepare a local housing strategy stems from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. In 2008, the Scottish Government issued new guidance about the role, expected coverage and content of Local Housing Strategies. The LHS is the main strategic document on housing, homelessness and related support issues. Other key areas that need to be addressed include private sector house conditions and tackling fuel poverty. LHSs should set out the requirement for new private and affordable housing and set the direction for housing investment over the next 5 years.

The new style LHSs are part of a package of policy changes, including changes to the planning system, designed to support the Scottish Government's aim to increase housing supply across all tenures. Scottish Planning Policy encourages and strengthens the link between assessed housing need, local housing strategies and development planning. The expectation is that in the preparation of local housing strategies and development plans there will be a closer alignment of these complementary work streams, to enable delivery of good quality housing of the right type and tenure in the right places.

#### 2.2 National Priorities

Housing and housing related government priorities have influenced the development of this Local Housing Strategy. These national priorities include:

- A commitment set out by the Scottish Government in “Homes fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Scottish Government's Strategy and Action Plan for Housing in the next Decade: 2011-2020” to increase the effective supply of housing and promote choice and flexibility.
- Improving housing quality: making sure all social rented sector dwellings meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in 2015; addressing and ensuring owners and private landlords are encouraged and assisted to maintain and improve the quality of homes that they own or let.
- Tackling homelessness; The Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003 provides the framework for the abolition of the priority need test by the end of 2012. This means that all unintentionally homeless people will be entitled to settled accommodation.
- Tackling Fuel Poverty.
- Addressing Climate Change, increasing renewable energy production and increasing energy efficiency.
- Reshaping Care for Older People including “Shifting the Balance of Care” from hospital i.e. supporting people to remain at home for as long as possible, rather than in care homes or hospitals.

- Welfare Reform; The UK government introduced the Welfare Reform Bill to Parliament in February 2011. The Bill legislates for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years including replacement of a suite of existing benefits with the “Universal Credit” and a number of changes to housing benefit.

### **2.3 Local Context - Links with other local strategies and plans**

Taken together Renfrewshire’s Community Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and the Council Plan outline the priorities of the Council and its community planning partners. The LHS sits firmly within this partnership framework and plays an important part in helping to deliver the vision for Renfrewshire.

*“In 2017, Renfrewshire thrives with learning, business and opportunity. Its people are fitter, healthier, more confident and productive. Vulnerable people are supported and cared for. The area thrives due to its safe environment, rich heritage, wealth of cultural events and eco-friendly towns and villages.”*  
(Renfrewshire Community Plan 2009-2017)

Housing is a basic requirement. Good quality housing improves the built environment of our towns and villages. It has a positive impact on general health and general wellbeing, on education and on the economic prosperity of local communities. Good quality housing has an important role to play in helping to tackle poverty and deprivation and in promoting equality of opportunity.

The LHS will contribute to achieving more than half of the local outcomes in the Single Outcome Agreement and the diagram on page 8 shows the full range of linkages.

Several other plans and strategies link in with the LHS and several sit directly below such as the Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015, Fuel Poverty Strategy 2010 and Private Sector Housing Strategy 2010. References are made to these strategies where we pull through key actions from them into this LHS. The full range of supporting documents used to develop this LHS are listed in appendix 3 and these are available on the Council’s website.

### **2.4 Recent Progress and Challenges Ahead**

Substantial progress has been made since the first Local Housing Strategy was approved in 2004 for Renfrewshire, including;

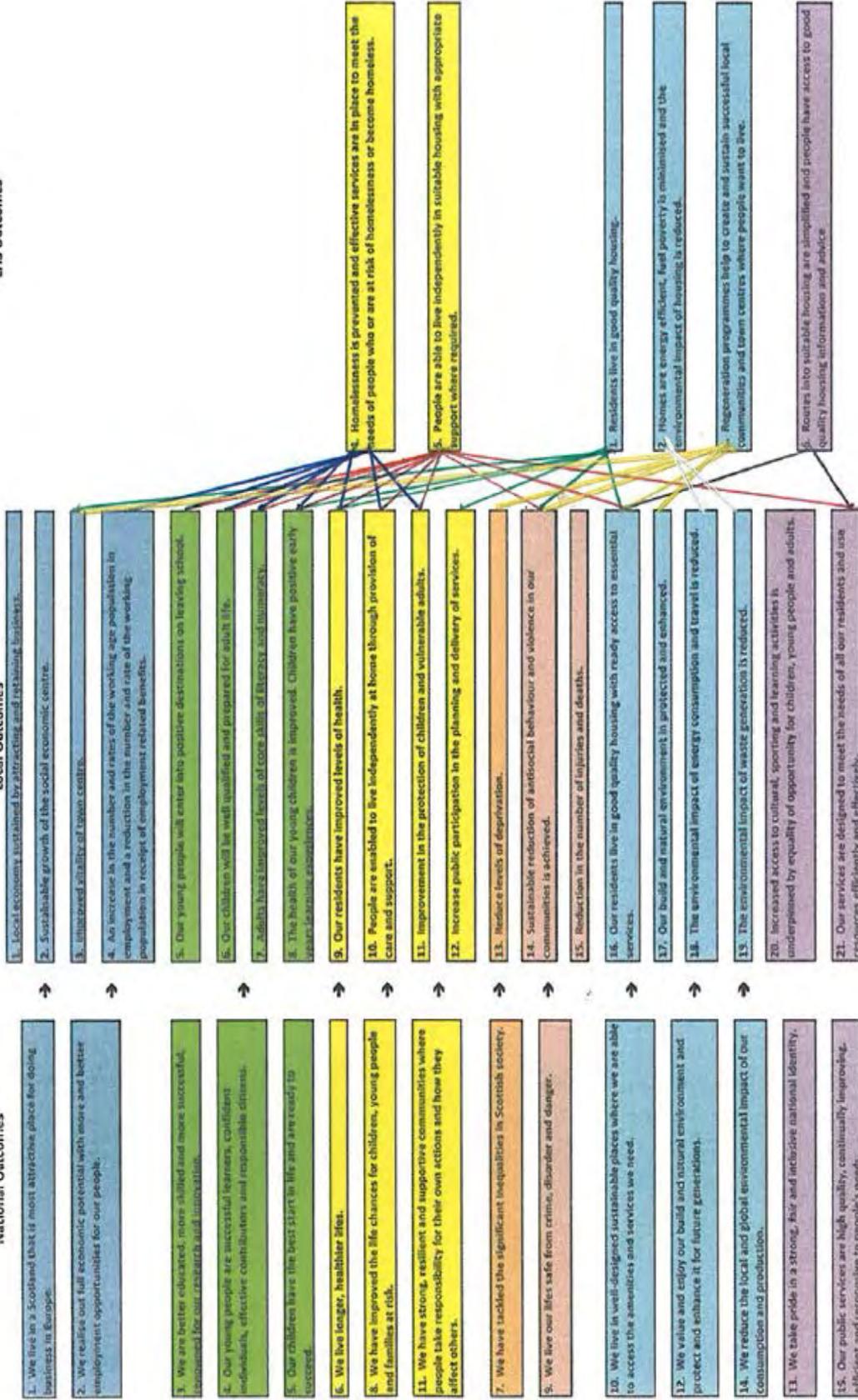
- 1,200 new affordable homes built and 200 town centre properties comprehensively improved or converted by housing associations;
- 5 new very sheltered housing developments completed, including one specially designed for people with dementia;
- 6 new supported housing developments completed, including the conversion of a former industrial building in Paisley town centre which now provides advice and information services for homeless people as well as supported housing;

- A £138m capital investment programme being implemented to ensure Council housing meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015;
- The priority need test abolished for homeless people in January 2011; and
- Allocation policy reviews implemented by the Council and local housing associations resulting in greater harmonisation across the sector.

LHS Outcomes

Local Outcomes

National Outcomes



## **Section 3**

### **Housing and Demographic Profile of Renfrewshire**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section details the housing stock and demographic profile, future projected trends as detailed in the housing need and demand assessment, and examines recent trends in the housing market.

#### **3.2 Housing Need and Demand Assessment**

A Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) was carried out across 8 local authority areas to help inform the development of Local Housing Strategies. Following Scottish Government guidance, the HNDA was undertaken at a housing market level<sup>1</sup>. Renfrewshire forms part of the Glasgow Clyde Valley Housing Market Area (GCVHMA), which covers 8 local authority areas. Together, the eight authorities worked in partnership to produce an HNDA for the whole of GCVHMA. Renfrewshire forms a distinct market in itself, but there are strong links to neighbouring areas (Map 1).

The HNDA also feeds into the Strategic Development Plan for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area and will form an evidence base for the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan due to be finalised in 2014.

Within the Renfrewshire area, there are five smaller sub-market areas (shown in Map 2 over on p10):

- Paisley and Linwood
- Johnstone and Elderslie
- Renfrew
- North Renfrewshire
- West Renfrewshire

The HNDA makes estimates about population changes using two different scenarios of population growth (a planning scenario and a lower migration scenario). Differences between the two relate to assumptions about the scale of growth; the planning scenario shows a more optimistic higher population growth, while the lower migration scenario shows a more modest growth. The Council has, in line with the favoured approach within the Strategic Development Plan, taken the view that the higher population growth scenario is the most appropriate scenario on which to base long term planning. However we also report the lower projections.

<sup>1</sup> Housing Market Areas can be defined as a geographical area which is relatively self-contained in terms of housing demand i.e. a large percentage of people moving house or settling in the area will have sought a dwelling only in that area.

The HNDA also makes an assessment of the requirement for new market and affordable housing (examined in Section 4) and the housing requirements of specific groups (as discussed in Section 8). The focus for this chapter is on the projected demographic changes.

## Housing Market Areas



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Map 1: Housing Market Area structure, Glasgow and Clyde Valley Housing Market Area (Source: Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority)

# Renfrewshire SHIP Sub-areas

## Legend

 Settlements

 Council Boundary

### SHIP Sub Areas

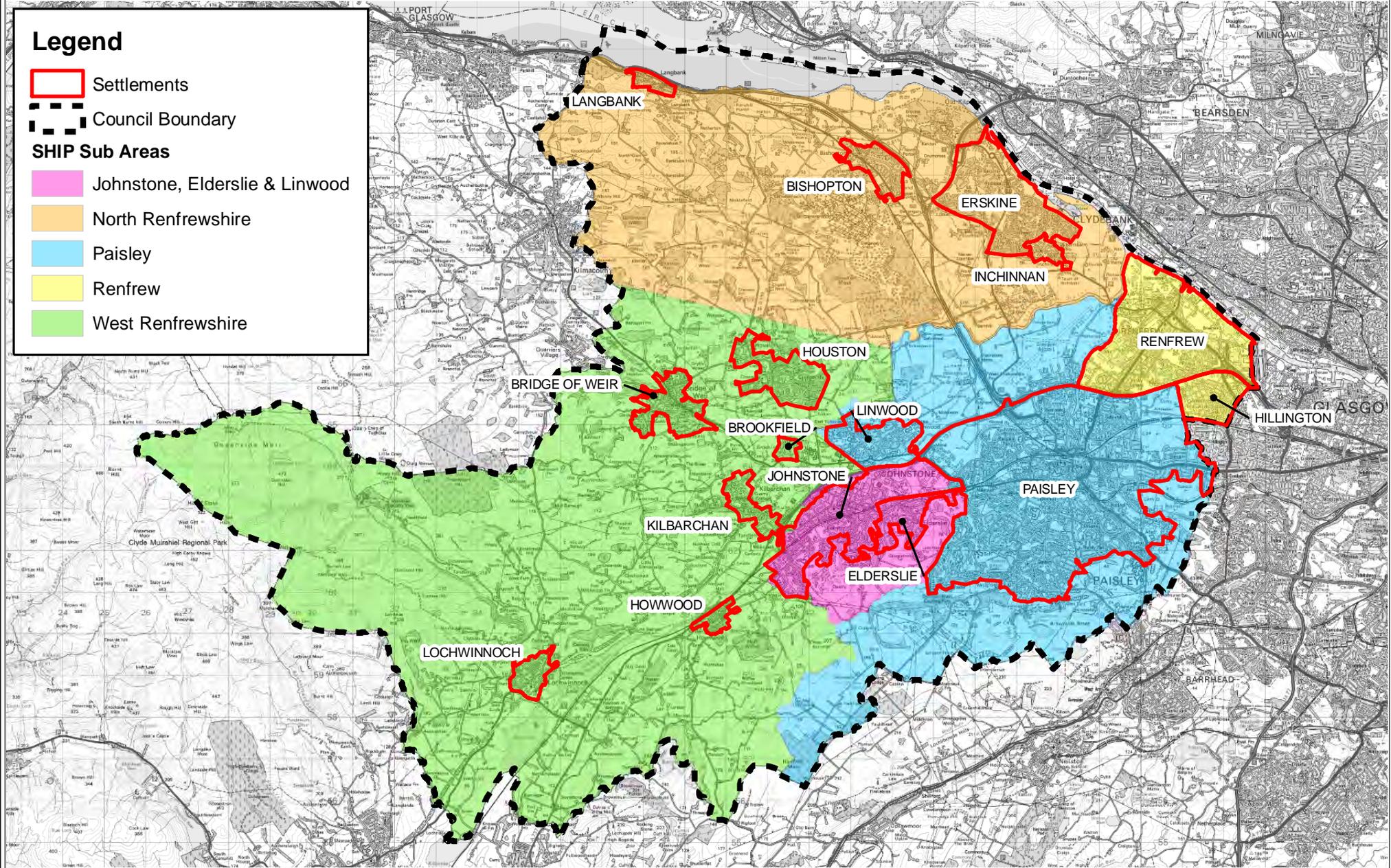
 Johnstone, Elderslie & Linwood

 North Renfrewshire

 Paisley

 Renfrew

 West Renfrewshire



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### 3.3 Demographic Profile

#### 3.3.1 Population and Households

Renfrewshire covers 261km<sup>2</sup> and is a predominantly urban area. It is the ninth largest local authority in Scotland with a population of 170, 250.

The box below highlights some key housing market and demographic fact about Renfrewshire.

#### **Key Facts**

- Renfrewshire's population has fallen by 1% since 2001 to just over 170,000. While very recent trends show the population level stabilising, longer term predictions point to a continued small decline in population.
- The number of households is increasing and now stands at 79,500.
- There are 82,200 dwellings; 68% are privately owned, 25% social rented and 7% private rented.
- The private rented sector has grown by just over 50% since 2004.
- Houses make up 56% of the stock while flats account for 44%.
- New affordable housing completions have averaged 180 per annum.
- Private sector new build starts in 2010 are down by 81% compared to the peak in 2005.
- Levels of house sales are down by 47% compared to 2003/04 levels.
- The average house price is £123,546 compared to a Scottish average of £158,217.
- Average weekly wages are slightly higher than the Scottish average.
- 16% of working age Renfrewshire residents claim key out of work benefits.
- 29,000 Renfrewshire residents live in the most 15% deprived areas in Scotland.

Renfrewshire's overall population change has been limited with a small decline, (just over 1% since 2001), primarily driven through net outmigration. This contrasts with a net growth in the Scottish population over this period.

**Table 1: Renfrewshire Population and households**

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Population	170,610	170,000	169,590	169,600	169,800	169,910	170,250

Source: General Register Office for Scotland – Annual MYES 2002-2010

Table 1 shows that compared to 2004, Renfrewshire's population has shown an overall small decline, but has recently started to stabilise and show a very small increase.

The HNDA projects Renfrewshire's population will experience further decline by 2025 of between 1 and 3% on 2008 levels and that this decrease will be largely due to continued out-migration. A key focus for the Council and community planning partners is to develop a strong economic base in the area to help retain and attract people to live and work in Renfrewshire. Housing provision has a role to play in this.

### 3.3.2 Population Age

Table 2 shows the breakdown of the population by age groups. Sixty-six per cent are working age, 17% are of retirement age and 18% are children. As with general population trends across Europe, Renfrewshire's population is ageing. The HNDA predicts that the proportion of the population aged 75 and over will increase by around 47% by 2025, while the proportion of those in the working age groups will decrease by up to 4.5%. Such trends highlight the importance of planning and providing housing and services for an ageing population.

**Table 2: Renfrewshire's population by age group, 2010**

Age	%
0-15	17.8%
16-64	65.6%
65-74	9.2%
75+	7.5%
Total	100.00%

Source: General Register Office for Scotland – Annual MYES 2002-2010

### 3.3.3 Households and Household Characteristics

While Renfrewshire's population has demonstrated a small decline, Table 3 shows that over the same period, the number of households has steadily increased.

**Table 3: Renfrewshire Households**

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Households	76,750	77,010	77,550	78,180	78,750	79,026	79,430

Source: General Register Office for Scotland – Annual MYES 2002-2010

The reason for this rise is largely due to people living in smaller households, as demonstrated in Table 4, which shows the breakdown of households, by type. It

shows that one adult and two adult households together account for 65% of the total number of households.

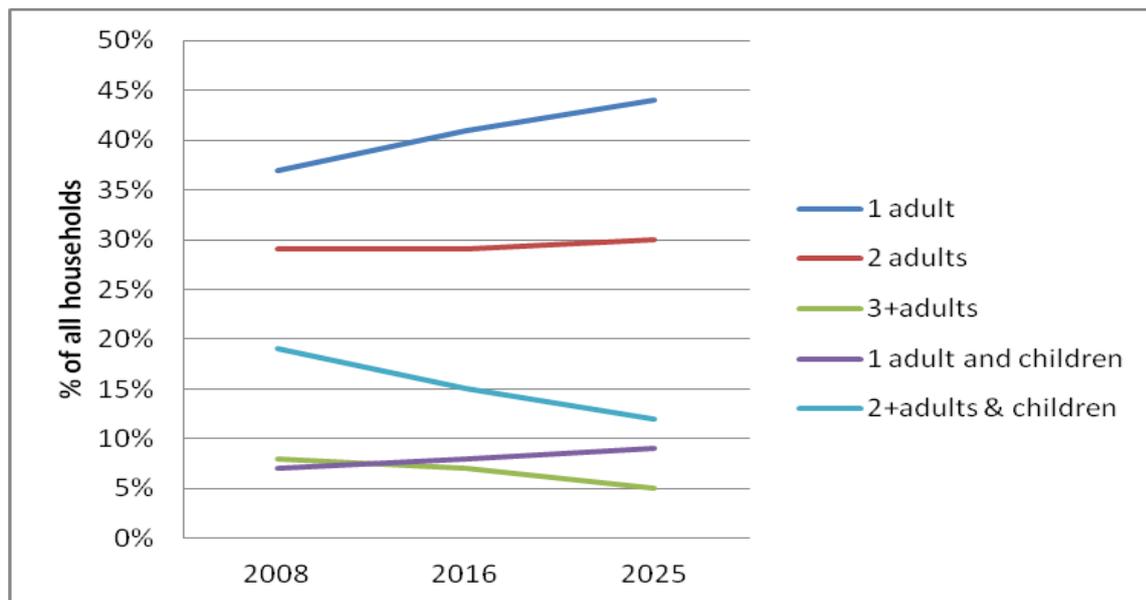
**Table 4: Renfrewshire’s Households by Type**

Year	2008
1 Adult	37%
1 Adult & Children	7%
2 Adults	28%
3+ Adults	8%
2+ Adults & Children	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: HNDA, p59

The total number of households is predicted to continue to rise, upto 85,000 in 2025. The trend of a rising number of smaller households will continue, linked to an ageing population, with the proportion of one adult households rising to almost 45% of all households. The proportion of larger families comprising 2 adults and 3 or more adults will continue to decrease. (Figure 1 below)

**Figure 1: Projected proportion of households by household type, 2008-2025 (planning scenario)**



Source: figures extracted from table A12, HNDA p59

### 3.4 Housing Stock Profile

The total housing stock in Renfrewshire is just under 82,200. This represents a growth of 2% since 2001. Table 5 shows the tenure breakdown of this stock.

**Table 5: Tenure of Renfrewshire’s Housing Stock**

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% of all stock
Owner Occupier	53,533	54,157	55,189	56,081	56,456	56,586	56,057	68%
Private Rent	3,595	3,780	3,748	3,949	4,338	5,027	5,529	7%
Local Authority	16,881	15,725	15,000	14,324	13,980	13,411	13,111	16%
Housing Association	6,644	6,786	6,998	7,100	7,206	7,295	7,309	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80,790</b>	<b>80,570</b>	<b>81,045</b>	<b>81,575</b>	<b>82,095</b>	<b>82,435</b>	<b>82,124</b>	<b>100%</b>

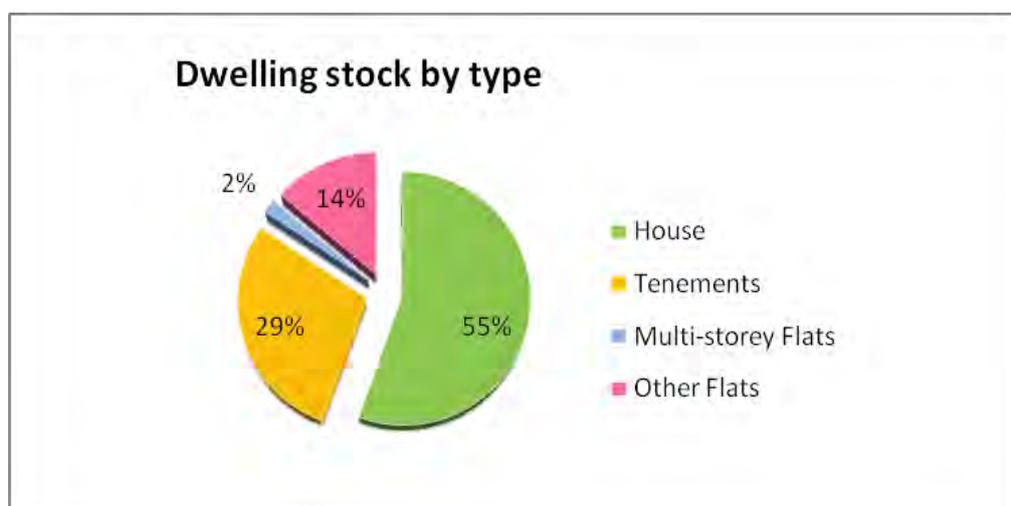
Source: RC, Planning, Annual Stock & Tenure Estimates. Private Rent figures were based on based on estimates from Council Tax list

Owner occupation continues to be the dominant tenure at 68% of the total stock. While the proportion of private rented sector properties remains small at 7%, this sector has grown by 54% since 2004. Social rented housing stock accounts for 25% of the total stock – a decrease from 29% in 2004, largely due to the loss of Council stock through Right to Buy and demolition.

### 3.4.1 Dwellings size and type

Houses account for just over half of the dwelling types, while flats make up 45% of the stock.

**Figure 2: Renfrewshire Dwelling stock by type at 2010**

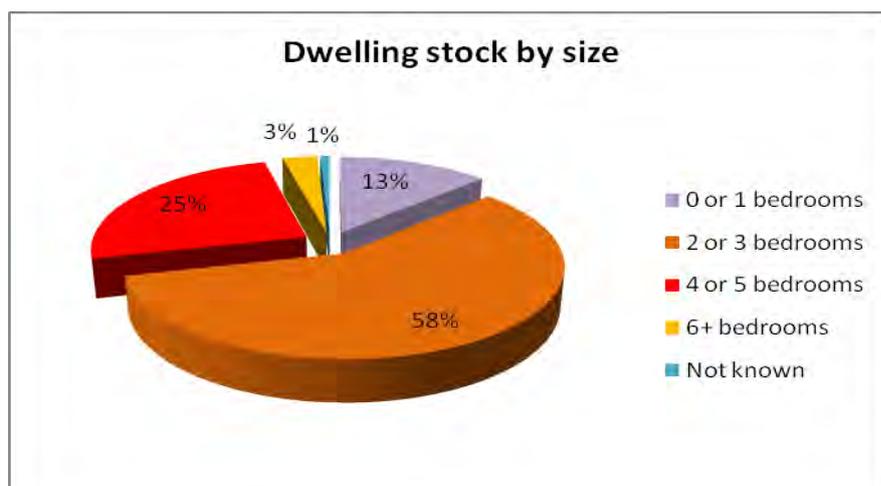


Source: RC Housing Trends Monitoring Report, 2010

Differences exist by tenure: in the social rented sector only 23% of the stock are houses, while the majority (75%) are flats. (Within the Council stock alone, 80% are flats and 20% houses).

Two and three bedroom properties account for the largest proportion of properties (58%), followed by 4 and 5 bedroom properties (25%).

**Figure 3: Renfrewshire Dwelling stock by size at 2010**



Source: RC Housing Trends Monitoring Report, 2010

Again there is a tenure split: social rented housing tends to be smaller with 35% of existing stock being bedsit or 1 bedroom properties compared to 13% of all properties. Only 3% of properties in the social rented sector have 4 bedrooms or more.

### **3.5 Housing Trends**

#### **3.5.1 Affordable Housing Sector**

The 15 housing associations in Renfrewshire (5 locally-based and 10 national associations) and Renfrewshire Council together own 21,000 properties or 25% of the total housing stock in Renfrewshire.

Right to buy sales (RTB) and demolition of low demand Council housing has reduced the number of Council houses by almost 4,000 since the last LHS was approved in 2004.

Levels of Right to Buy sales have in the past played a major role in increasing levels of owner occupation. However levels of sales have gradually fallen since 2003 as the total available stock decreases and discount levels for new tenants were reduced by the 2001 Act. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 places limitations on RTB of new supply social housing and for new social rented tenants and consequently RTB sales are expected to reduce further.

Limited demolition of obsolete Council stock will continue in the future, but at a much lower rate as existing regeneration programmes are nearing completion. New build developments by housing associations have increased the social rented supply in their ownership by almost 10% since 2004 and much of this stock has been for particular needs, for example very sheltered housing for the elderly.

Affordable housing completions have averaged around 180 units per annum over the past 6 years. Unlike the private sector, affordable housing completions have kept momentum due to Scottish Government expenditure through the Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP). Future levels of funding though are uncertain at this

point, but given the current climate of public expenditure cuts, the Investment and Innovation Fund proposals announced for 2011/12, and the move away from local AHIP allocations, it is likely that affordable housing completions will not be able to keep pace with past completion rates.

We are therefore likely to see a stabilisation of levels of affordable housing stock over the next few years.

### 3.5.2 Private Sector – Owner Occupation

Renfrewshire, like the rest of the country has seen a large growth in owner occupation over time with 68% of households now owns their own home – up by 2% since the last LHS in 2004.

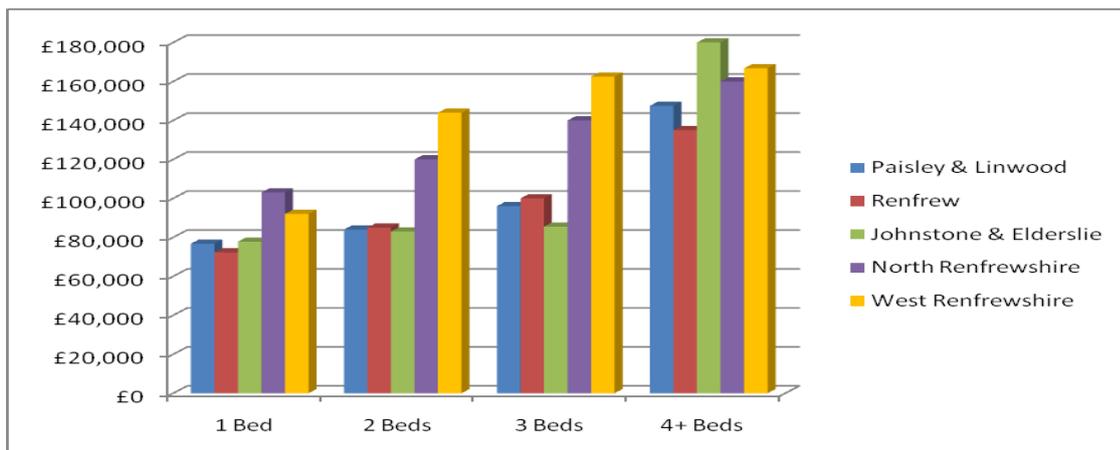
This sector was one of the first areas to be affected by the UK- wide recession and associated credit crunch, showing evidence of falling house prices, falling developer activity, a reduction in mortgage lending and consequent fall in sales activity.

### 3.5.3 House prices

Renfrewshire has experienced trends similar to the rest of Scotland with a peak in house prices in mid 2008, falling to a low point in March 2009 and since recovering some ground.

The average house price in Renfrewshire in the last quarter of 2010/2011 was £113,987 compared to the Scottish average of £146,253<sup>2</sup>. However average prices hide significant variation between the sub-areas and by house types. Properties in North and West Renfrewshire fall nearer the Scottish average prices while those in other areas can be significantly lower.

**Figure 4: Median Property Price (Size by Sub-area 2009)**



Source: Sasines data analysis 2009

<sup>2</sup> Source: Registers of Scotland Statistical News Release February 2011

Figure 4 shows properties in Paisley and Linwood are generally the cheapest where the median price for a one, two and three bedroom property is less than £100,000.

West Renfrewshire is generally the most expensive area, with properties costing approximately 50% more than the same size property in Paisley and Linwood.

Differences exist by house type. Predictably across all sub areas detached, then semi-detached house types are the most expensive with flats the least expensive. Again, West Renfrewshire is the most expensive area where the median price for a detached house is £180,000.

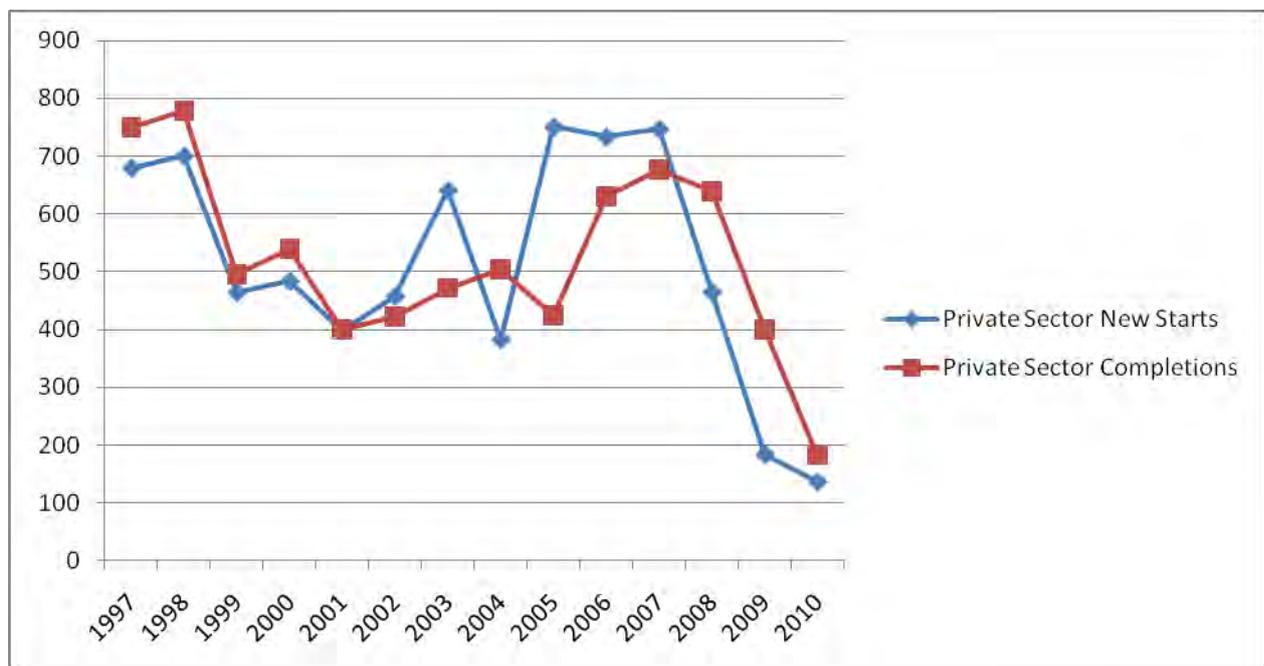
Generally, the 3 most populous sub-areas of Paisley and Linwood, Renfrew and Johnstone and Elderslie are the cheaper areas for almost all property types and sizes with North Renfrewshire and West Renfrewshire significantly more expensive and closer to or exceeding the Scottish average.

In terms of “entry level” housing, the lower quartile price for a 1 bed room property across Renfrewshire in 2009 was £62,500 and £69,000 for a 2 bedroom property.

### 3.5.4 Private Sector New Build activity

Nationally and locally, access to finance for both purchasers and developers has significantly reduced housing market activity; new housing starts and completions are at some of the lowest levels in the last 10 years. Renfrewshire has followed national trends in this respect. For example, in Renfrewshire in 2010 there were only 136 new build starts – a fall of 81% from a peak level in 2005.

**Figure 5: Private sector starts and completions in Renfrewshire 1996-2010**



Source: Scottish Government statistics – private sector starts and completions by Local authority (calendar year)

As the market begins to recover it will be important for us to ensure that private sector development is facilitated and encourage in regeneration areas where development has not progressed as expected due to market conditions. This is discussed more fully in Section 7.

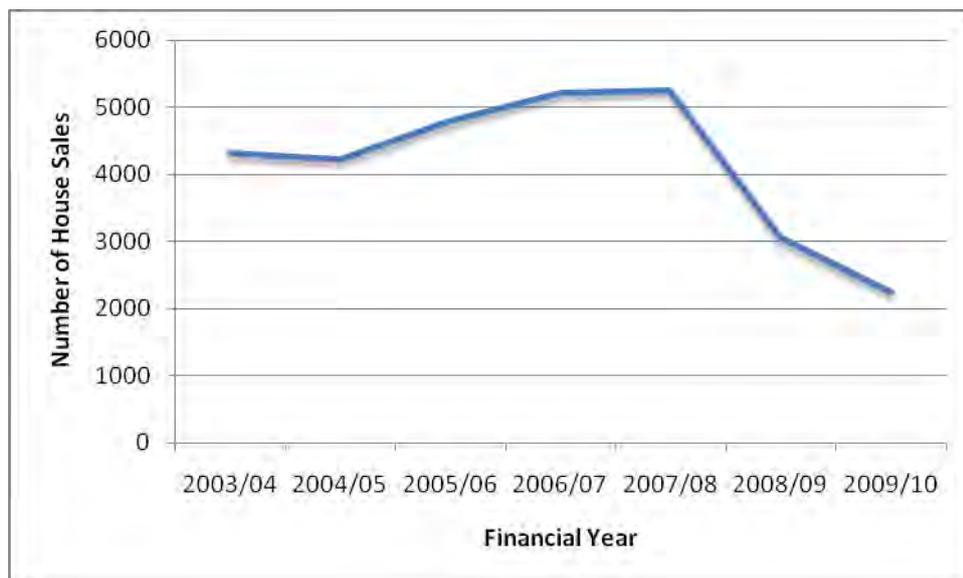
### 3.5.5 Access to mortgage finance and house sales

Although interest rates remain low, access to mortgage finance remains difficult for many households. First time buyers in Scotland typically require an average 21% deposit to access mortgage products<sup>3</sup>, equivalent to around £12,000 on an entry level priced property in Paisley and Linwood. Evidence suggests that the average at which first time buyers in Scotland buy their own home is 28<sup>4</sup>, although without parental help it is much older and estimated to be average age of 37 in the UK.

For those owners looking to move, stricter lending criteria means many products have a higher loan to value ratio, affecting the ability of those with little or no equity to secure a mortgage for a new property.

The credit crunch and lack of access to mortgage finance is evident in falling house sales across the country. Sales in Renfrewshire fell from 4,310 in 2003/04 to 2,249 in 2009/10 (Figure 6 below).

**Figure 6: Volume of House Sales in Renfrewshire 2003/04 to 2009/10**



Source: Register of Scotland, Quarterly Statistics Time Series

Many owners who wish or need to move find themselves struggling to sell their properties, and this has played a part in the growth in the private rented sector discussed below.

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Housing Market Review House Prices: Scottish Government Centre for Housing Market Analysis, Oct 2010

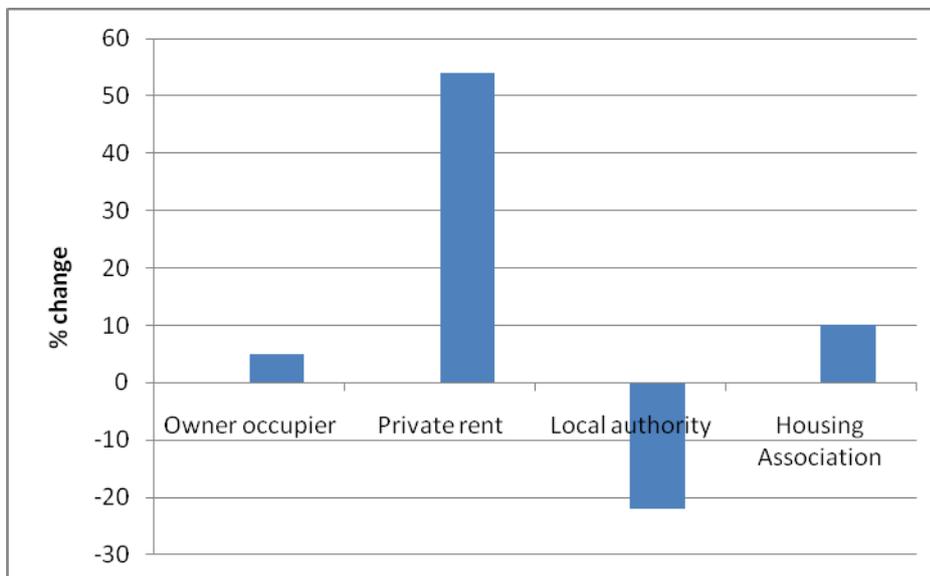
<sup>4</sup> Council for Mortgage Lenders, Scotland factsheet 2010

### 3.5.6 Private Sector – Private Rented Sector

There are around 5,500 private rented sector properties, accounting for 7% of the total housing stock. Figure 7 demonstrates the scale of growth in this sector since the last LHS was developed - up by over 50% from just under 3,600 in 2004. There are approximately 4,000 registered landlords.

In the past private rented sector properties tended to be concentrated in Paisley town centre, mainly pre 1919 tenemental properties. This concentration still remains, however the growth in the sector has seen an expansion of private rented properties across all parts of Renfrewshire, particularly other areas of Paisley, Renfrew, Johnstone and Elderslie and Erskine (although overall numbers remain small in Erskine). Private rented properties now include more new build properties and ex Right to Buy stock. Letting agents report an increase in “reluctant landlords” i.e. those who rent their properties as they are unable to sell in the current depressed housing market.

**Figure 7: % change in tenure of all stock, Renfrewshire 2004-2010**



Source: RC Renfrewshire Housing Trends 2010

Available data and anecdotal evidence<sup>5</sup> suggests that in Renfrewshire:

- The private rented sector is used by a wide cross section of the community including;
  - a mobile population (who may travel to Renfrewshire for work);
  - the migrant community (particularly Polish people);
  - students based at university or college within Paisley; and
  - those who cannot, for whatever reason, access owner occupation

<sup>5</sup> From RC Legal, Housing and Property and Environmental services, reported in the findings of the Local Housing Strategy Working Group: Private Sector Housing.

- The landlord profile appears to be landlords who have one or two properties as opposed to landlords with a larger portfolio.
- On average rents are least expensive in Paisley and most expensive in North and West Renfrewshire.
- The difference between average private sector rents and social housing rents is relatively small compared to differences in other local authority areas. Table 6 shows a comparison of private sector rents compared to the Local Housing Allowance (private sector Housing Benefit entitlement) and rents in the social rented sector.

**Table 6: Monthly private sector and social rented housing rents, and local housing allowance levels.**

	LHA rate (monthly equivalent)  August 2011	Average Range of social housing rents	Average Current Private Sector rents*		
			Paisley	Renfrew	Johnstone
1 bedroom	£350	£200-£290	£352	£350	£380
2 bedroom	£444	£250-317	£456	£497	£460
3 bedroom	£524	£270-400	£484	£513	£532

\* Source: snapshot of properties advertised for rent (July 2010) and from information from Ciytlets rental report Q4 2010

Currently around 57% of those in the private rented sector claim Housing Benefit<sup>6</sup>. Changes to the welfare system have in effect reduced the number of properties that are affordable to those who need housing benefit to pay their rent. Previously around 5 in 10 properties were affordable; now it is around 3 in 10.

The impact of these changes has still to be felt but there may increase the number of people experiencing rent arrears in the private sector and the number of people seeking alternative accommodation in the social rented sector. However, another change may be that landlords reduce their rents so that those on housing benefit can afford them. It is too early to tell the impact, but trends will be closely monitored by the Council.

Further changes to the housing benefit and welfare system will be phased in up to 2014. These potentially have a significant impact on the scope of the private rented sector to meet housing need. This is examined further in Section 10.

<sup>6</sup> Housing Benefit Changes: Scottish Impact Assessment, Scottish Government Communities Analytical Services January 2011

### **3.6 Renfrewshire Economic Context**

Between 1998-2008 Renfrewshire's economy contracted with the loss of 2,500 jobs. Official Labour Market Statistics report that 75,500 or 67.2% of people of working age in Renfrewshire are currently economically active.<sup>7</sup> This is a reduction from 72% in 2004.

Eighteen per cent of working age people in Renfrewshire claim key out of work benefits, such as Job Seekers Allowance and Employment Support Allowance – 2% more than the Scottish average and 4% more than the UK average.

The median full time wage for employees working in the area is £516 per week, which is slightly higher than the Scottish median of £488.20 per week.<sup>8</sup> Median earnings for residents based in Renfrewshire are also slightly higher than the Scottish median (£516 per week compared to £488.20 per week).

While the number of jobs has declined in Renfrewshire, there has been a growth in the number of registered businesses; up 500 from 1998 to 3,700 in 2008.

While the country is now officially out of recession, slow economic growth is predicted. In addition the UK government's austerity measures are likely to lead to further job losses, at least in the short-term.

### **3.7 Summary**

The current economic climate has had a significant impact on the local housing market. Lack of access to mortgage finance has restricted the ability of some households to enter and move within the owner occupied market. Uncertainty over the future labour market opportunities and concerns about job security are likely to impact on the housing choices people make. For example, in the short-term potential homeowners may look to alternatives to owner – occupation such as renting. First-time buyers may choose to stay in the parental home for longer, to build up the required level of deposit.

The private rented sector continues to experience growth and remains relatively affordable, both in comparison to equivalent social housing rents and in comparison to other areas in Scotland. However welfare reform changes may impact on the ability of the private sector to continue to meet the needs of those reliant on welfare benefits.

In the medium term, the housing market is expected to recover and it is highly probable that as the market recovers, owner occupation will continue to be the tenure of choice meet the majority of housing needs. There is more uncertainty though about whether past growth trends continue. It may be that this sector has reached a plateau and levels of owner occupation will stabilise, with growth being taken up by the private rented sector. Changes to Right to Buy legislation and the completion of demolition programmes mean that levels of affordable housing will remain relatively stable.

<sup>7</sup> NOMIS, March 2011

<sup>8</sup> NOMIS, February 2011

## Section 4

### Housing Need and Demand

#### 4.1 Introduction

This section sets out the key outputs from the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) in relation to the need for new affordable and market housing. These estimates of need inform our supply targets which are set out in Section 5.

#### 4.2 New Housing Needs

Future population growth and household change are key drivers in the need for new housing. The previous chapter highlighted a projected growth in the number of households. But population and household change is only one element in determining new housing needs. Other important variables include the affordability of housing, current and projected housing supply, and the availability of suitable land for housing.

The HNDA sets out estimates of the level of need for housing in the affordable and private sectors, taking into account these factors. Affordability levels are based on the assumption that a person should spend no more than 25% of income on their housing costs. Projections of need assume that there are no further interventions in the market.

##### 4.2.1 Private Sector Requirements

The projected requirements for new private sector housing in Renfrewshire in the period 2008-2020 are set out in Table 7. These are based on the more optimistic level of population growth (the “planning scenario”):

**Table 7: Private Sector New build requirements to 2025**

Renfrewshire	2009-20	2020-25	Total 2009-25
Total for time period	8,200	2,700	10,900
Equivalent per annum	745pa	540pa	681pa

Source: HNDA, Figure 5.9 p111

N.B Private sector figures are assessed in the Housing Market Area system. The results are then approximated to local authority level. The appropriate time period for establishing demand is 2020, and 2025.

##### 4.2.2 Affordable Housing Requirements

Affordable housing refers to housing which is made available at a cost below full market value. It is predominately made up of the social rented sector and the “intermediate sector” such as low cost housing for sale and mid-market rent accommodation.

The HNDA estimates the need for new affordable housing in Renfrewshire between 2011 and 2016 is between 770 and 920.

**Table 8: Affordable housing requirements 2011-2016**

Renfrewshire	Lower migration scenario	Planning scenario
2011-2016	770	920
Equivalent per annum	154pa	184pa

Source: HNDA Technical Appendix 06, Table 9.2A p.67 and Table 9.2A p. 139

Across the 5 sub-areas in Renfrewshire, the HNDA shows that Paisley and Linwood, Renfrew, North Renfrewshire and West Renfrewshire have a need for affordable housing, whilst the findings point to a potential surplus of affordable homes in Johnstone and Elderslie. This situation will require careful monitoring.

In terms of the split of affordable housing requirements between social rent and intermediate tenures, the HNDA estimates that the intermediate sector could meet the needs of a maximum of 50 households per year. There are however a number of caveats with this estimate as detailed in the HNDA. In addition the ability of the intermediate sector to meet affordable housing needs is dependent on a number of factors including; the availability of government grant to help finance the development of intermediate housing; access to mortgage finance and household choice – i.e. even if a household could afford an intermediate product we do not know if they would *choose* it. We therefore need to treat the estimate of the scope of the intermediate sector to meet affordable housing needs with caution.

Finally it should be noted that these projections are only an estimate of the overall shortfall (or surplus) of affordable housing; they do not make an assessment of stock quality and condition or the suitability of existing affordable housing to meet needs or any mismatch between existing size and type of stock compared to needs. The latter continues to be an issue for Renfrewshire with the majority of social rented stock being flats, while the expressed preference is for houses and/or own door flats. This issue is explored later in Section 7 Regeneration and Sustainable Communities.

### **4.3. Housing Supply Targets**

Using the estimates of need for affordable housing and private housing as a base on which to plan, we have set the following housing supply targets. These in turn inform the amount of land allocated for housing in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

**Table 9: Housing supply targets**

	<b>2011-2016 (5 years)</b>	<b>2016-2025 (9 years)</b>
Affordable housing	150pa	150pa
Private sector housing(land supply)	745pa	632pa
Renfrewshire	895pa	782pa

Source: Housing Need and Demand Assessment and Statistical information from Planning and Transport

#### **4.3.1 Private sector targets**

Targets for private sector development relate to the land allocated for private housing development. Our aspiration for Renfrewshire is one where there is strong economic growth with people attracted to live and work in the area. Therefore our targets are based on the more optimistic population growth scenario set out in the HNDA, resulting in a generous target for the allocation of land. Wider market conditions will dictate the scale of private sector development actually achieved.

#### **4.3.2 Affordable housing targets**

Our target for new affordable housing is 150 units per year. This compares to an average completion rate of around 180 units per year over the past five years. Our target strikes a balance between meeting identified needs and our assessment of likely levels of new build taking into account developments with existing grant approval and those we think could be brought forward for development over the next five years.

Section 11 Resources and Affordable Housing Investment Priorities sets out our priorities for investment, and actions that will contribute towards achieving these priorities.

#### **4.3.3 Land Supply**

Planning Authorities, through the preparation of Development Plans, are required to identify a strategy to deliver a supply of land for the provision of a range of housing in the right locations across tenures. Local development plans should allocate land on a range of sites which is effective or capable of becoming effective to meet the housing land requirement up to year 10 from the predicted year of adoption, ensuring a minimum of 5 years effective land supply at all times.

Renfrewshire Council will continue to carry out regular monitoring of housing completions and review supply of housing land through the annual Housing Land Audit.

## Section 5 House Conditions

### Strategic Outcome 1 Residents Live in Good Quality Housing

#### 5.1 Introduction

Poor quality housing can blight local areas, lower perceptions of areas and can lead to an increase in vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Research also confirms that poor quality housing can adversely affect health, including mental health and general well-being. Good quality housing situated in the right locations also contributes to economic growth in a region. Improving housing conditions is therefore a priority for this LHS.

This section sets out how we intend to improve the quality of social rented housing and support owners to improve the quality of their homes, including plans to address the Below Tolerable Standard properties within Renfrewshire.

#### 5.2 Housing Stock Quality

The Scottish House Condition Survey shows that just under half (43%) of dwellings in Renfrewshire have urgent disrepair compared to 37% of all dwellings in Scotland. Levels of disrepair are highest in the public sector in Renfrewshire (53%), well above the Scottish figure of 39% (see table 10). As the Council and RSLs work through the Scottish Housing Quality Standard improvement programme, this figure will improve.

**Table 10: Key features of Renfrewshire housing stock quality**

Estimates for key features of the housing stock	Renfrewshire	Scotland
% dwellings with any disrepair*	81%	79%
% of dwellings with disrepair that have urgent disrepair **	43%	37%
% private sector dwellings with urgent disrepair	40%	36%
% public sector dwellings with urgent disrepair	53%	39%
Median annual household income – with disrepair	£18,100	£17,500
Median annual household income – with urgent disrepair	£17,300	£17,700

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey. Local authority report 2007-2009, midpoint of 2008.

\* Any disrepair - any disrepair, no matter how small, to any element of the dwelling

\*\*Urgent disrepair - any disrepair which if not rectified would cause the fabric of the building to deteriorate further and/or place the health and safety of the occupier at risk. Urgency of disrepair is only assessed for external and common elements.

### 5.3 Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) Housing

The tolerable standard is a list of minimum requirements a residential property must meet in order to be fit for habitation. The 2002 local private sector stock condition survey found that there were some 1,200 below the tolerable standard (BTS) properties in Renfrewshire, or 1.6% of the stock. The majority of these BTS properties were located in private tenement flats in the centre of Paisley. The reasons for failure relate to external disrepair, often accompanied by internal timber decay or structural damage.

Due to the prohibitively high cost, the Council has not undertaken a further private sector house condition survey since 2002 but more recent evidence, including a survey of Council stock in 2010 and the Scottish House Condition Survey indicates that BTS housing remains a private sector matter.

The Scottish House Condition Survey also suggests that much of the private housing stock in BTS/serious disrepair consists of houses. This finding must be treated with a great deal of caution because of the small sample involved. However, the extension of the Tolerable Standard definition in 2009 to include thermal insulation and electrical safety requirements may have led to some increase in the numbers of privately owned houses classified as BTS. Measures to promote the installation of loft and cavity wall insulation outlined in the next section will help address these additional BTS failures.

On the other hand, the Council is aware that there may be other reasons for an increase in poor quality private houses. These include the increase in the numbers of older owners, the ageing of ex-RTB stock and the expansion of private renting which now extends across a wider range of property types and locations than in 2002. We therefore plan to investigate how we might better monitor and review rates of BTS and serious disrepair.

More immediately, our own local knowledge and administrative records indicate that the very poorest quality housing in Renfrewshire continues to be concentrated in older private sector tenement properties in inner urban areas. A key priority associated with the Paisley town centre regeneration, is therefore the improvement of a number of tenement flats in Orchard Street, Paisley.

To date the principle approach in Renfrewshire to tackling BTS inner city stock has been housing association led comprehensive tenement improvement, backed up by grant funding for owners. Between the first LHS in 2004 and 2011, 194 BTS properties were improved through housing associations acquiring and improving tenement buildings (e.g. Seedhill Road and Gordon Street in Paisley and Paisley Road in Renfrew).

The Council and our housing association partners will continue to work together to seek to access investment funding to progress comprehensive tenement. However, the very high cost of comprehensive tenement improvement works alongside reductions and revisions to the Scottish Government's funding for housing<sup>9</sup> means it

<sup>9</sup> The introduction of the Scottish Government's Housing Innovation and Investment Fund in 2011-2012 and the Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP) is discussed in section. 11

has become more challenging to continue to pursue a housing association led area-based approach to deal with concentrations of BTS housing. An application in 2011/12 to secure funding for Orchard Street was unsuccessful.

These challenges mean that our future programme for dealing with BTS/ serious disrepair dwellings will look to make more use of Housing Renewal Area designations, backed up by targeting of advice and assistance to owners through our Scheme of Assistance and where appropriate the use of the Council's enforcement powers such as works notices and maintenance orders.

#### **5.4 Housing Renewal Areas**

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced Housing Renewal Areas (HRA) which replace Housing Action Area (HAA) designations. Local authorities can designate an HRA on either or both of the following grounds:

- where a significant number of the houses are sub-standard, or
- where the appearance or state of repair of any houses is adversely affecting the amenity of the area

Designating an HRA lets a local authority secure an improvement in the condition and quality of housing in the HRA. This may be through carrying out works to, or demolition of, houses.

The Council in partnership with local housing associations has made use of the previous HAA designation framework to tackle areas of disrepair - most recently in Gordon Street in Paisley town centre. In the future HRA designations may be used where it is considered this is most effective and appropriate route to improve properties. Any such decision will be dependent on the availability of funding and will be taken in conjunction with relevant Council departments, local housing association partners and following consultation with the communities concerned.

#### **5.5 Property Owners and the Scheme of Assistance**

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 reinforces that the primary responsibility for repairing and maintaining homes must rest with the property owner and that public money to support owners' and private landlords undertake repairs should only be considered in very limited circumstances.

The Council's Scheme of Assistance and the accompanying Private Sector Strategy were approved in April 2010. The Scheme of Assistance and the accompanying strategy seek to secure the creation of a modern, flexible and attractive private housing sector and to:

- to help owners to improve the condition of privately-owned houses, and contribute to area regeneration;
- to assist people with particular needs living in private housing to overcome the obstacles they face in maintaining and improving their houses;

- to help owners overcome the barriers to maintaining and investing in property in common ownership; and
- to contribute to improved quality and management in the private rented sector.

The implementation of the Scheme of Assistance will be a learning process throughout Scotland. The Council therefore plans to develop measures to monitor the impact of its Scheme of Assistance in conjunction with other local authorities through the Scottish Housing Best Value Network.

Figure 8, below summarises the variety of support available to homeowners in Renfrewshire through the Scheme of Assistance. Mostly, this is about helping property owners take responsibility for their own properties through the provision of information, advice and non-financial assistance. For vulnerable people such as older people, disabled people and those on low incomes, we have or are working on various ways to help them improve their home, which for the present includes the provision of grants for adaptations.

**Figure 8: Scheme of Assistance**



## 5.6 Care and Repair

Care & Repair Renfrewshire provides advice and assistance to older and disabled homeowners and private tenants on all housing condition issues. It works with

households to help them carry out any necessary repairs, improvements and adaptations to allow householders to maintain their independence and remain in their own homes comfortably, warmly and securely. It can co-ordinate major repairs and adaptations to individuals' houses. In 2010/11 Care and Repair completed 116 installations in Renfrewshire.

Care & Repair also provides a Small Repairs Service, which undertakes small maintenance jobs that would be too small to be of interest to most contractors, but which can be of great help to older residents and can, in some cases, avoid the need for more major repairs in the longer term. Just over 1,749 small repairs were completed in 2011/12.

Care and Repair services will continue to provide an important service in improving the quality and condition of private sector housing in Renfrewshire.

## **5.7 Improving the quality of Council and Housing Association properties**

All houses in the social rented sector must meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015 and must continue to meet this standard thereafter. To meet the standard, properties should be:

- Compliant with the Tolerable Standard.
- Free from serious disrepair.
- Energy efficient.
- Provided with modern facilities and services.
- Healthy, safe and secure.

Importantly, there is also a requirement for this standard to be maintained by social landlords thereafter.

The average SHQS compliance rate of housing association stock throughout Renfrewshire is 81%. All housing associations in Renfrewshire have plans in place to meet the SHQS by 2015.

A Council stock scoping survey was undertaken in 2009. At that stage it was reported that 96.4% of Council stock failed the SHQS standard.<sup>10</sup> Between 2011 and 2014/15 the Council plans to invest £138 million in its housing stock. This programme of works is well underway and includes internal works such as improving kitchens, providing efficient heating systems, improving energy efficiency and repairing and improving the external fabric of the stock.

Right-to-Buy sales have resulted in high levels of social rented housing in buildings that are in mixed public and private ownership. The drive to meet the SHQS by 2015 means the Council and housing associations will ask owners to participate in programmes over the next four years. Non-participation of owners in common repair

<sup>10</sup> Renfrewshire Council : Housing Asset Management Strategy : May 2010

and improvement projects represents a significant risk to the full delivery of SHQS. Guidance was issued by the Scottish Government in March 2011 on the treatment of non-compliance where agreement to carry out works cannot be obtained from owners, or access to properties cannot be secured. Both the Council and housing associations anticipate requiring abeyances because of difficulties in securing owner participation.

The Council has taken cognisance of this and the Scheme of Assistance makes provision for owners in SHQS common works. Limited grant funding for a proportion of the costs is currently available to private owners participating in the SHQS programme across the social rented sector.

Through the Scheme of Assistance, the Council will assist owners with advice and information on funding their participation. For example, Renfrewshire Credit Union can provide access to loans at competitive rates for regular savers. The Council will encourage owners to start saving on notification of impending works and will recommend that owners seek independent financial advice.

## **5.8 Areas of Mixed Tenure**

As a consequence of right to buy legislation a large proportion of Council stock is in blocks of mixed ownership.

For the past few years the Council has used the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004 as the main means of organising works to blocks of flats where properties have been sold. The Act provides a procedure to allow owners to vote on items of maintenance and to instruct repairs to be carried out where a majority are in favour. Works can also be instructed by any owner if they are needed in the event of an emergency, and the costs recovered from the other owners. In 2010 the Council engaged with around 2,500 owners regarding common repairs.

The procedure is time-consuming and labour-intensive for relatively small items or maintenance and there are still difficulties in recovery of costs even when the procedure is followed correctly. In order to reduce costs and improve the level of maintenance, the Council is developing a full property management or “factoring” service for blocks in mixed tenure. A pilot project covering 35 tenement blocks with 42 owners started in April 2011.

The introduction of a property management service potentially allows the Council to assess conditions in blocks at the outset and help plan repairs and maintenance throughout the year. This has benefits for all owners in the tenement and prevents minor repairs developing into serious repairs.

The Council anticipates further developing this scheme following completion of the pilot.

## **5.9 The Private Rented Sector**

The private rented sector plays an important role in the housing market in Renfrewshire. Section 3 highlights the significant growth in this sector over recent years, which now accounts for 7% of all housing stock.

The Council's strategy toward the private rented sector is to help owners and landlords to invest and maintain in their property and to improve management standards.

The Council established a Private Landlord's Forum in 2007 in order to build a good working relationship with private landlords and letting agents in Renfrewshire. This continues to meet to discuss a number of issues including changing legislation affecting the sector, landlord accreditation, benefit changes, the Private Rented Housing Panel and many other topics. Feedback received from landlords suggests that the Forum is well received and of value to those working in the private rented sector.

The Council also produces a variety of documents specifically for private landlords including a regular newsletter highlighting current issues, such as changes in government policy and advice and assistance available to landlords. Information on these and other matters is also available and updated on the Council's website.

The Council will continue to work to ensure that all landlords are registered in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2004). Landlords have to be assessed as "fit and proper" under this Act before being allowed to register.

If a private landlord is renting out property without being registered, the Council can send a rent penalty notice (RPN) to that landlord, meaning that the tenant does not need to pay rent until the landlord registers. The Council actively seeks to identify non-registered landlords through for example, cross checking with housing benefit data and utilising information received from relevant staff and the public. To date the Council has served 96 rent penalty notices on unregistered landlords in Renfrewshire.

In addition to registration, the Council actively encourages landlords to become accredited landlords and the Council entered into a partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland in October 2009. Landlords wishing to become accredited must be registered under the national landlord registration scheme, must subscribe to the standards set for management and condition of properties and must agree to undertake a minimum of one training session per year. As at April 2011, 500 properties were managed by accredited landlords.

It is anticipated that the landlord registration scheme, promotion of the accreditation scheme, highlighting good practice and providing training will help to raise awareness among private landlords and tenants of their rights and responsibilities, and improve both the quality of rented accommodation and management practices.

The Council intends to carry out a survey of private rented tenants to gain a better understanding of housing conditions within the sector in Renfrewshire and reasons

why tenants choose to rent privately. Results of this will help us plan to meet housing needs and to identify if there are quality issues that need to be addressed.

### **5.10 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

There are 117 licensed HMO's<sup>11</sup> in Renfrewshire (as at November 2011). Many of these are associated with the University of the West of Scotland (which has provision for over 600 students within Paisley).

Generally, the licensed HMO's in Renfrewshire are well managed and in themselves pose no real issue. However there are concerns that a number of households, particularly migrant workers, are living in poor quality housing that is not licensed.

Proposed welfare reform changes are likely to increase the demand for shared accommodation from young people under 35 who will only be eligible for a single room rate i.e. a room in a shared property rather than a one bedroom property. As landlords respond to this demand we may see a rise in the number of HMOs in the next few years.

The Council will pursue unlicensed HMOs to help protect the interests of tenants. The Private Rented Housing (Scotland) Act 2011 increases the penalty for unregistered HMOs to £50,000.

### **5.11 Private Sector Resources**

Renfrewshire Council Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) funds grant assistance from the Council to help owners address disrepair, tolerable standard failure and provide disabled adaptations. This budget was, in the past, a direct grant from the Scottish Government. In 2009/10, the methodology of the grant allocation was changed and from 2010/2011 PSHG is no longer ring fenced but is part of the general grant settlement to local authorities.

Funding investment in private housing is likely to remain under pressure for the next five years. Resources need to be prioritised to ensure that mandatory grants for homeowners are available (i.e. grants to provide adaptations for disabled people) and that grants are available to support other Council priorities (e.g. tackling BTS housing, tenement improvement, SHQS, and Care and Repair) are maintained where possible.

<sup>11</sup> A HMO is a house or a flat where 3 or more unrelated tenants live and share facilities such as a toilet, washing facilities or cooking facilities.

**Key Actions:**

1. Investigate alternative ways to progress tenement improvement programmes.
2. Promote the Scheme of Assistance to support owners to maintain their properties.
3. Review the Scheme of Assistance, including financing arrangements, by 2015.
4. Prioritise grant assistance for disabled adaptations.
5. Complete implementation of the SHQS investment in Council and housing association stock by 2015.
6. Provide assistance, including grant assistance where appropriate, to secure owners cooperation in SHQS investment programmes.
7. Evaluate the pilot property management (factoring) service and, dependent on findings, extend the service throughout Renfrewshire.
8. Promote the Landlord Accreditation Scheme through the Private Landlords Forum.
9. Undertake private rented tenants' survey to gain a better understanding of private sector issues.

## Section 6

### Energy Efficiency, Fuel Poverty and Environmental Sustainability

#### Strategic Outcome 2

**Homes are energy efficient, fuel poverty is minimised and the environmental impact of housing is reduced.**

#### 6.1 Introduction

This section looks at the inter-related issues of fuel poverty, energy efficiency and carbon emissions in Renfrewshire. It examines the incidence of fuel poverty in Renfrewshire, carbon emissions from housing and the energy efficiency of the housing stock. It then sets out priority actions that will help address the identified issues.

#### 6.2 Fuel Poverty

A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime it needs to spend more than 10% of its household income on fuel. Whether a household is fuel poor depends on a combination of:

- Household incomes
- fuel costs; and
- the energy efficiency of a property

Those most at risk of fuel poverty include low-income households, pensioner households, those living in private rented housing, those living in older and larger properties and properties with a poor energy rating.

The Council and its partners have committed considerable resources to tackling fuel poverty in support of the Scottish Government target to eliminate fuel poverty as far as is reasonably practicable by November 2016. However, both nationally and locally, rising energy price rises have made the challenge of tackling fuel poverty more difficult.

Large increases in the price of domestic fuel have pushed many more households into fuel poverty, despite investments in housing stock quality, insulation improvements and the provision of energy advice and income maximisation programmes over the last few years.

Scottish House Condition Survey<sup>12</sup> estimates suggest that since 2002 the proportion of fuel poor households living in Renfrewshire have increased by 8% to 21% and that

<sup>12</sup> Scottish House Condition Survey Local Authority Report 2007-2009.

some 17,000 households in Renfrewshire currently live in fuel poverty. Over the same period the comparable Scotland wide figure increased by 14% to 28%. In addition, 3% of households living in Renfrewshire are in extreme fuel poverty, which means that these households are required to spend more than 20% of their income on fuel.

Recognising the difficulties of eradicating fuel poverty completely, we have set a target to keep levels of fuel poverty in Renfrewshire at least 5% below the national average.

### **6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Emissions**

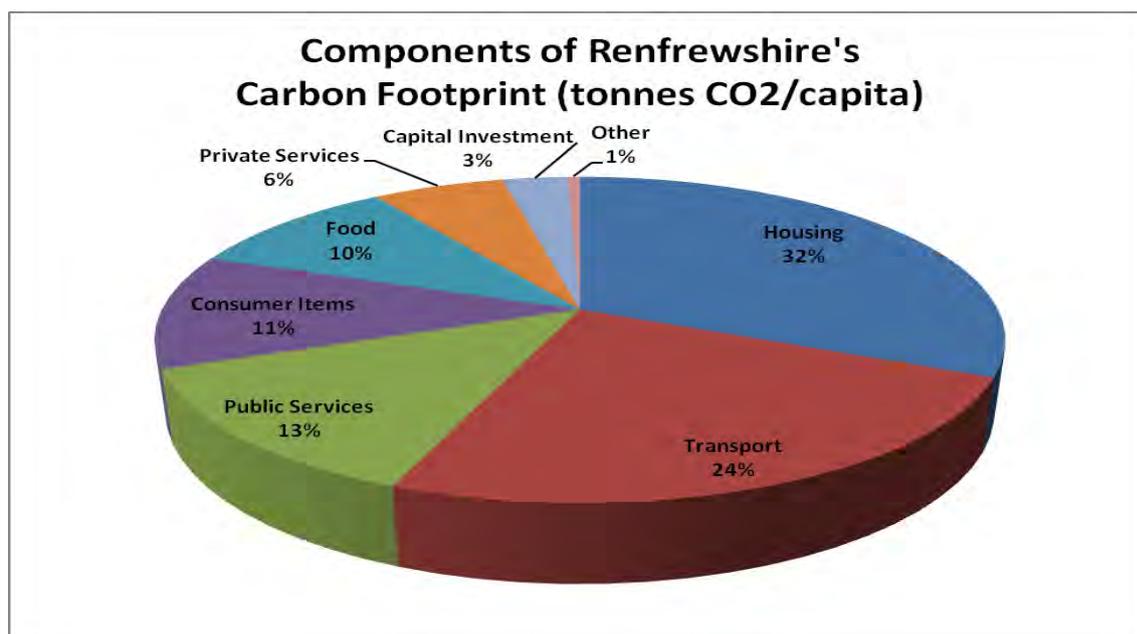
Globally, there is increasing concern about climate change. Most predictions indicate that in Scotland, winters will be warmer and wetter. Heavier winter rainfall is expected to become more frequent, potentially causing more flooding. Summers will be warmer and drier with the occurrence of more extreme weather events, such as heat waves, and flooding.

This worldwide concern about the effects of climate changes has been reflected in the setting of a number of global and national targets. Relevant Scottish targets include those set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requiring that carbon emissions be reduced by 80% by 2050, with an interim target of 42% by 2020.

#### **6.3.1 Housing's contribution to carbon emissions**

Housing is a key contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The diagram below shows that in Renfrewshire 32% of carbon emissions can be attributed to housing (heating of homes and water, cooking, lighting, and running household and home entertainment). Action to reduce carbon emissions from housing will therefore be essential if we are to meet national and local targets.

**Figure 9: Components of Renfrewshire's carbon footprint**



Source: Stockholm Environment Institute (2008)

New build housing will increasingly be built to higher levels of energy efficiency, thus reducing carbon emissions, with the phased introduction of increasingly tighter building regulations. The biggest challenge in reducing carbon emissions is from **existing** housing.

#### 6.4 The Energy Efficiency of Existing Housing Stock

The energy efficiency of the housing stock as measured by the National Home Energy Rating (NHER) <sup>13</sup> is shown in Table 11 compared to the Scottish average. An energy rating of 7 and over is considered good.

**Table 11: NHER profile of all Renfrewshire Stock**

National Home Energy Rating	0-2	3-6	7-10
Proportion of Properties in Renfrewshire	1%	40%	60%
Proportion of Properties in Scotland	3%	45%	52%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2007-09

Table 11 above shows that compared to Scotland, Renfrewshire has a slightly greater proportion of dwellings with a good NHER rating.

In Renfrewshire, like Scotland as a whole, the public stock is more energy efficient than the private stock (Table 12). This can be accounted for by the nature of the

<sup>13</sup> **NHER** (National Home Energy Rating) rates dwellings on a scale of 0(poor) to 10 (excellent). "Good" is 7 or more. The NHER is the most commonly used in Scotland as it considers all energy use and allows for regional and geographical climatic variations.

stock in different tenures. Much of housing association stock is relatively new, while older owner occupied stone buildings found in the more rural parts of Renfrewshire such as Lochwinnoch and Kilbarchan are harder to insulate using traditional methods such as cavity wall insulation. This is also the case with privately owned tenement flats and properties in non-traditional social housing such as multi-storey flats.

**Table 12: NHER profile by tenure**

	Private Stock NHER rating		Social Stock NHER rating	
	0-5	6-10	0-5	6-10
Renfrewshire	26%	74%	10%	90%
Scotland	37%	63%	18%	82%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2007-09

Notwithstanding those hard to treat properties, there is still potential to improve the energy efficiency of privately owned homes. The Home Energy Database is a national database which tracks energy characteristics of the housing stock. From the sample of private homes in Renfrewshire in this database (around 17,000) it suggests that 1,600 have unfilled cavities and almost 3,000 have under insulated lofts. A key priority is to ensure that where possible all homes have insulated cavity walls and lofts.

## 6.5 Tackling Fuel Poverty and Improving Energy Efficiency

Our approach to tackling fuel poverty seeks to address the factors and causes of fuel poverty, where the Council and partners have most influence, targeting those most at risk. To help focus our actions we developed a new Fuel Poverty Strategy in June 2010. This sets 4 more detailed outcomes we wish to achieve:

- Outcome 1 People have access to good quality, easily accessible, fuel poverty and energy efficiency advice.
- Outcome 2 The energy and fuel efficiency of the housing stock in Renfrewshire is improved.
- Outcome 3 People do not live in fuel poverty.
- Outcome 4 Householders are assisted and encouraged to use their energy efficiently to reduce their fuel costs.

The Fuel Poverty Strategy Action Plan sets out the steps the Council and partners will take to reduce fuel poverty. Key actions revolve around; advice and assistance on efficient fuel use; addressing wider poverty issues through benefit campaigns and promoting physical improvements to improve insulation. Actions undertaken so far include:

- Establishing a formal partnership with the local Energy Savings Scotland; advice centre (ESSac) to improve access to local energy savings advice and promotion of the Energy Assistance Package;
- Accessing grant funding for area based home insulation schemes
- Improving website information; and
- Holding awareness raising events, including linking in with money advice activities

A Fuel Poverty Steering Group consisting of Council staff, housing association partners, Citizens Advice Bureau, Care and Repair representatives and the local Energy Saving Scotland advice centre will ensure actions are continuously progressed.

Improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock is a key action that will help tackle fuel poverty. It is also widely recognised as the easiest and most cost-effective means of reducing carbon dioxide emissions from housing<sup>14</sup>. Improving the energy efficiency of housing in Renfrewshire is therefore a key aim of this LHS.

### **6.5.1 Improving energy efficiency in the social rented stock**

Improvements to the energy efficiency of social rented stock will continue to be made as social landlords undertake work to meet the requirement of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015. This sets out minimum energy efficiency standards. At July 2011 only 45% of Council stock met the energy efficiency criteria of the SHQS. The majority of housing associations stock currently meets the SHQS.

The Council's programme of works started in April 2010 and will bring significant energy efficiency improvements over the lifespan of this LHS. In relation to heating, insulation and energy efficiency, key Council commitments include:

- All homes that do not have central heating will have an efficient system installed;
- Partial central heating systems upgraded to a full efficient system;
- Boilers coming to the end of serviceable life will be replaced with modern energy efficient units;
- Cavity wall insulation where possible; and
- 200mm loft insulation in attic spaces.

Through the SHQS heating programme, almost 6,000 Council properties will benefit from heating replacement/upgrading. The programme will install or upgrade whole house gas central heating with efficient condensing boilers and where possible connect houses to the gas grid to enable the delivery of gas systems. Modern "wet"

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Action/energy-efficiency-policy/ActionPlan>)

electric systems, or other efficient options, will be installed if gas supply is not available. In difficult to treat properties alternatives are being considered such as air source heat pumps.

The Council and partners will continue to seek access to as much grant funding as possible to complement SHQS/energy efficiency improvements. For example, the Council has successfully accessed CERT (the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target Scheme), Energy Assistance Package funding and secured a substantial sum of money through the Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP). This is a fund, which focuses on difficult to heat properties in economically disadvantaged areas, and the grant will be used to over-clad two multi-storey blocks in Gallowhill, Paisley.

### **6.5.2 Improving the energy efficiency of the private sector stock**

Currently there are limited powers to require homeowners or landlords to make energy efficiency improvements to their properties, however the Scottish Government have set out plans to develop regulations by 2015 that would require action to improve energy efficiency where necessary and where advice and support have been unsuccessful.

Until regulations are in force, our approach to improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes revolves around the Council and partners influencing voluntary action, promoting energy efficiency, promoting the grants available to private owners and landlords and accessing as much grant funding as possible on behalf of residents in Renfrewshire.

The Council will seek to continue to access any area based government insulation schemes such as the Home Insulation Scheme, on behalf of Renfrewshire residents. In 2010/11, the Council successfully secured access to the Scottish Government's area based Home Insulation Scheme (providing discounted insulation measures) and Universal Home Insulation Scheme (providing free insulation measures). These area-based schemes are designed to improve the energy efficiency of homes through the promotion of cavity wall and loft insulation and other energy saving measures. The two schemes together encompassed almost 24,000 homes of all tenures in the Paisley area. A second Universal Home Insulation Scheme is planned to start in early 2012 and will cover the whole of Renfrewshire. Participation in these kinds of schemes will increase the number of cavity wall insulations and properly insulated lofts.

The Council and the local Energy Savings Scotland advice centre will engage in joint publicity and awareness raising campaigns, including promoting the Energy Assistance Package (this provides grants for efficiency improvements for certain categories of people in the least energy efficient houses).

Other main actions will include:

- Effectively engaging private landlords through Renfrewshire Landlords Forum to encourage landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties;
- Encouraging landlords to take part in the Landlord Accreditation scheme, that requires landlords to meet core standards, one being heating, insulation and energy efficiency;

- Working in partnership with the Energy Savings Scotland advice centre on projects that will focus on improving the energy efficiency of homes that are hard to treat;
- Optimising opportunities for promotion of the Government's Energy Assistance Package to all residents in Renfrewshire;
- Operating a Council tax rebate scheme for owners who undertake energy efficiency improvements; and
- Promoting the financial benefits of making improvements and sources of help and advice.

CERT (Carbon emission reduction target) is due to be replaced towards the end of 2012 by the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO). The full details of this are not yet clear but it is expected that these schemes will place more emphasis on hard to treat properties. The Council will exploit all available sources of funding available from ECO to help support private sector housing energy efficiency improvements.

### **6.5.3 Increasing the use of renewable technologies**

In addition to improving energy efficiency, action will be taken to increase energy generated by renewable means. This will include:

- Awareness raising campaigns about renewable technology and the domestic feed in tariff.

Domestic feed in tariffs were introduced in the UK in April 2010 as an incentive to increase the number of people using renewable technology. This scheme requires energy suppliers to make regular payments to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources such as solar electricity (PV) panels or wind turbines. The scheme guarantees a minimum payment for a set amount of time (20-25 years) for all electricity generated by the system, as well as a separate payment for the electricity exported to grid. As at June 2011, 28 householders in Renfrewshire had installed photovoltaic panels and were in receipt of this tariff. The Council will work with the Energy Savings Scotland advice centre to promote the benefits of this including targeted campaigns that will offer best prices on the technology. It should be noted though that the UK government has made proposals to cut the feed in tariff by half starting in December 2011. This could affect the financial viability for many households considering installing this technology.

- The Council will pilot the use of renewable technology such as air source heat pumps and solar panels in its housing stock and assess the benefits and applicability for wider use. We will learn lessons from existing social housing development that utilise renewable technology.
- The Council and community planning partners will explore opportunities for further increasing the use of renewable heat/energy on a wider scale in Renfrewshire.

For example, the Council has a gas fired district heating system covering a number of mixed tenure blocks in the Calside area of Paisley. Now dated, a technical feasibility study has been commissioned into the options for its replacement. It is hoped that any new system could be powered through renewable sources such as biomass or ground source heat pumps.

The Renewable Heat Incentive operates like the domestic feed in tariff i.e. it provides an incentives to any organisation that installs a renewable heating system<sup>15</sup>. The Council and partners will seek to identify opportunities to utilise this scheme.

We will quantify the impact that energy efficiency and improvement programmes within the housing stock has on reducing carbon emissions from housing.

## **6.6 Sustainable new development**

The previous sections dealt with existing housing. New housing also has a role to play in creating environmentally sustainable communities.

Building Standards regulations will demand increasingly high levels of energy efficiency through the staged implementation of new building standards from 2010 to 2016. By 2016, the aim is that new buildings will result in net zero carbon emissions. The Council will ensure that new developments conform to these standards.

The planning system will be of key importance in enabling the development of well designed, energy efficient, good quality housing in sustainable locations. The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will promote the efficient use of land and buildings, directing development towards sites within or on the edge of existing settlements, where infrastructure, services and transport options already exist. Development plans will address a range of sustainability measures aiming to ensure that the siting and design of new housing takes account of the setting, design, integration, layout, orientation, impact on drainage, flooding, and the surrounding landscape and ecology.

<sup>15</sup> A renewable heating system creates heat using renewable sources such as the sun and ground and “renewable” fuels such as sustainably harvested wood and other plants.

**Key Actions:**

1. Work in partnership with the local Energy Advice Scotland advice centre to promote energy saving and the Scottish Government's Energy Assistance Package.
2. Promote the use of micro renewable technology amongst private householders.
3. Pilot the use of renewable technology in suitable existing Council stock.
4. Identify opportunities and sources of funding for the use and generation of renewable energy/heat in Renfrewshire.
5. Quantify the reduction in carbon emissions from energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock in Renfrewshire.
6. Ensure the Local Development Plan considers sustainability issues as a high priority.

**Section 7**  
**Regeneration and Sustainable Communities**

**Strategic Outcome 3**

Regeneration and housing programmes are progressed to create stable mixed communities that are attractive places to live.

### **7.1 Housing and Regeneration**

The Council and its partners recognise the role that good quality housing can play in making neighbourhoods attractive places for people to live. Good quality housing in a safe and attractive neighbourhood has a positive impact on health and general wellbeing and contributes to the economic vitality of local communities.

One of our aims is to break the link between poor quality housing and economic and social disadvantage and to ensure that all households in Renfrewshire are able to access good quality housing which meets their needs and which is affordable. Significant improvements have been delivered across many neighbourhoods over the last ten years. Unpopular high density council housing has been demolished and replaced with well designed lower density housing. Some local regeneration programmes are not yet complete and we need to continue to target public and private investment to create and support mixed and sustainable communities.

This section considers existing local regeneration programmes, looks at the need to improve our town centres, highlights the importance of focusing housing redevelopment activity on key brownfield sites as well as linking housing regeneration activity with wider programmes to tackle poverty and deprivation more generally.

### **7.2 Progressing Local Regeneration Programmes**

For the last ten years, the Council has been working with housing associations and other partners to address an imbalance between supply and need/demand within the Council sector. The oversupply of unpopular high density flats – mainly tenement and multi-storey flats – has been tackled through an ambitious programme of demolition and new build. Capital investment in new housing has been complemented by area-based initiatives to improve the quality of local environments, to improve management standards and to tackle antisocial behavior.

Around 3,700 obsolete Council properties have been demolished over the last 10 years and just over 1,000 new lower density homes have been built in the regeneration areas including around 800 houses built by housing associations to meet identified housing needs.

A study<sup>16</sup> was undertaken for the Council and Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association to assess the impact of recent regeneration activity in Shortroods in Paisley. This confirmed the positive benefits arising from the demolition of obsolete flats in the areas and replacement of these with new housing association houses. This included positive benefits for residents (who particularly like having their own back and front door home and access to a garden) as well as a positive impact on the local sense of community.

### 7.2.1 Area Development Frameworks (ADFs)

A key element of the regeneration strategy was the introduction of Area Development Frameworks (ADF) for the larger regeneration areas in partnership with Planning, Environmental Services, community representatives, RSLs and other partners. The ADFs sought to address both redevelopment and management issues and to ensure that the physical and social regeneration of areas were considered in a comprehensive way. They deal with: estate management; re-provisioning of housing stock; opportunity sites; environmental improvements; social and economic initiatives. ADFs were implemented for eight areas and Estate Management Agreements (setting out services standards and delivery arrangements) were developed with partner agencies (housing associations, Police, local communities) for eleven regeneration areas.

**Table 13: Area Development Frameworks**

ADF Area	Date Approved	No. Properties Demolished	New Build Completions to 2011		Private New build Target
			Private	Affordable	
Ferguslie Park, Paisley	2002	443	0	38	70
Foxbar, Paisley	2002	306	0	32	150
Moorpark, Renfrew	2002	353	81	78	180
Shortroods, Paisley	2002	516	0	140	130
Johnstone West*	2003	305	36	30	275
Glenburn, Paisley	2003	372	84	84	130
Blackhall, Paisley	2006	271	0	60	50
Paisley West End	2009	0	0	0	tbc
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,566</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>985</b>

\*Excludes green belt element of SW Johnstone Community Growth area

<sup>16</sup> "Shortroods Regeneration area -Tenants Survey Research Report", May 2010, Research Resource

The majority of the housing targets have been achieved, as outlined in table 13 and will be consolidated over the next five years by a number of housing investment projects:

- New affordable housing (83 homes, 21 of which will be for sale on a shared equity basis) is being developed by Sanctuary Housing Association at **Shortroods**
- A mix of family houses and grouped amenity flats for older people (37 homes) is being developed by the Council at **Blackhall**
- Family houses (33 homes) are being developed by Link Housing Association at **Johnstone West** and plans for further provision will be considered as part of the Johnstone West Community Growth Area

We will develop detailed plans to deliver the priorities set out in the ADF for **Paisley West End**.

There has however been slow progress with respect to private sector development. As shown in table 13, around 200 new private homes have been built in ADF areas, but this is well below the targets set for these areas. While this was identified as an issue prior to the recession, continuing pressures within the housing market have meant that attempts to market these Council-owned sites have been temporarily suspended pending recovery in the housing market.

Feedback from private developers suggests that, even when conditions improve, these sites are still unlikely to be the most attractive to developers who will be looking to minimise risks and avoid the additional costs and constraints which can be associated with the more difficult brownfield sites. Work is therefore required to identify any underlying issues which may make developers hesitant to develop these sites and to identify ways of encouraging developers to build housing in these areas and lever in private investment.

Private sector targets for each of these areas have been reviewed and new targets are shown on table 13. These targets take account of current information about the effectiveness of sites within each area, in line with work undertaken to inform the new Local Development Plan. It should be noted that these are overall targets for each of the ADF areas and that final completion may stretch beyond the timeframe of this LHS.

Completion of local regeneration programmes in the ADF areas is important in order to consolidate and protect previous investment and to promote the development of mixed tenure communities. Research evidence suggests that mixed tenure communities bring positive benefits which include reducing concentrations of poverty, improving perceptions of local areas, and making areas more sustainable.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> JRF (2006) Foundation, Analysis Informing Change. Mixed Communities  
Tunstall, R and Fenton A (2006), A Review of Mixed Income, Mixed Tenure and Mixed Communities: what do we know?

## 7.2.2 Other regeneration areas

In addition to the ADF areas, a number of smaller areas of housing regeneration have been identified which did not require full Area Development Frameworks: Thrushcraigs; Johnstone Castle; Millarston; Gallowhill; Lochfield Road; Seedhill/Auchentorlie; and Linwood.

Redevelopment is now complete in three of the areas listed in table 14 - Rankine Street, Lochfield Road and Linwood – which are primarily social rented sector developments designed to replace obsolete Council housing.

**Table 14: Other Regeneration Areas**

ADF Area	Date Demolition Started	No. RC Properties Demolished*	New Build Completions to 2011	
			Private	Affordable
Johnstone Castle	2001/02	110	44	0
Thrushcraigs, Paisley	2002/03	246	0	0
Gallowhill, Paisley	2002/03	86	0	0
Rankine Street, Johnstone	2003/04	99	0	65
Lochfield Road, Paisley	2006/07	32	0	12
Seedhill/ Auchentorlie, Paisley	2006/07	90	0	0
Linwood	2006/07	170	0	190
Millarston, Paisley	2008/09	306	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,139</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>267</b>

Source: Renfrewshire Council Demolition Monitoring Reports

Plans are being taken forward for a number of other areas:

- Provision was included in recent Strategic Housing Investment Plans to implement mixed tenure developments at **Thrushcraigs** and **Millarston** in Paisley and this remains a priority. It will be important to learn lessons from the early ADF areas and consideration is being given to how these mixed tenure projects should best be taken forward with a mixture of private and public sector funding to achieve the desired policy outcomes and minimise grant requirements. Redevelopment of the **Seedhill/ Auchentorlie** site similarly remains a priority and this will complement recent investment by Williamsburgh Housing Association in the comprehensive improvement of adjacent pre-1919 tenements.
- New affordable housing (71 houses) is being developed by Sanctuary Housing Association in **Gallowhill** on a gap site where Council tenement flats were demolished a number of years ago. This is part of a wider regeneration strategy for the Gallowhill area which will provide a much needed boost to the

supply of low density social rented housing in the area. Following consultation with the local community, the Council is implementing plans to demolish one of three multi-storey block and to carry out major improvement works to the other two blocks. Flats in one of the blocks (Glencairn Court) will be converted to amenity standard, a single story extension will be constructed to provide a social space for tenants and priority will be given in letting these properties to older people and people with mobility needs. A local lettings initiative, based on choice-based letting principles, will be piloted in the area. The regeneration strategy include a site for new private housing to bring further tenure mix and housing options to the area.

- Within the Council stock in **Ferguslie Park** there are pockets of empty properties which are difficult to let. Tenants voted in 2009 to reject a proposal for stock transfer to Ferguslie Park Housing Association and the Council is now planning to carry out internal improvement projects in Ferguslie Park as part of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard improvement programme. However, this needs to be balanced against projected future demand for these properties and the Council will be consulting with local residents in late 2011/ early 2012 to identify localised issues which contribute to difficulties letting and sustaining tenancies in the area and to identify action to tackle these problems.
- Renfrewshire Council and Linstone Housing Association own and manage housing in the **Johnstone Castle** area. Both partners are committed to working together to develop joint arrangements for collecting and monitoring information about demand and sustainability which could inform early intervention where required. Opportunities for further joint work in the delivery of housing management services in the area will also be explored.

### **7.2.3 Future Regeneration Areas/Maintaining Sustainable Communities**

Early signs of neighbourhood decline can become evident in high refusals for social housing and housing becoming “difficult to let”. The Council and local housing associations regularly review localised demand and monitor the sustainability of housing. Plans are in place to promote better joint working between partners on these issues in areas where both the Council and a local housing association have similar housing stock. Through these exercises it is anticipated that a small number of additional localised regeneration initiatives may be identified and promoted over the lifetime of this Local Housing Strategy. Partners will take preventative action where possible to tackle the early signs of neighbourhood decline before problems become more difficult to deal with and will consider joint management initiatives which may help to address localised issues.

We will also identify long term empty private sector housing which may be contributing to neighbourhood decline in these areas and we will try to work with owners to bring these back in to use.

### **7.3 Affordable Housing Stock Mismatch and Making Best Use of Existing Affordable Housing**

Section 4 outlined the requirements for new affordable housing based on the recent Housing Need and Demand Assessment which was undertaken across Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area and which provides detailed projections for Renfrewshire. It is important to be clear that these projections do not take account of the house type or condition of existing housing and its ability to meet housing needs and demands.

Within the social rented sector in Renfrewshire, 75% of dwellings are flats and this figure increases to 80% in the Council sector. The spatial pattern of Right to Buy sales over the last three decades – concentrated in the most popular areas and comprising a disproportionate number of houses – means that in many areas there is now no effective choice with respect to house type in the social rented sector. The Council let just under 1,100 properties in 2010/11 across Renfrewshire and only 80 of these properties were back and front door houses, yet houses and own door flat are the clearly expressed preference of waiting list applicants.

There is also some evidence of a mismatch between the size of properties available and the size of properties required by applicants on the waiting list. Properties with three or more bedrooms account for around one-fifth of the total social rented stock and only a very small number become available for rent each year, yet the Council has a small but significant number of households requiring larger accommodation.

Pressures are also evident with respect to smaller one-bedroom properties, given trends towards smaller single person households. However, while there may be affordability concerns (both with respect to rent and heating costs), many single people express a preference for a home with an extra bedroom. (For example, single people who have children who stay over with them part of the week and older people who want a spare room to enable family to stay with them from time to time.)

While tensions around these issues will intensify as the Welfare Reform measures restricting housing benefit entitlement are implemented, strategic housing capital investment programmes must maintain a long-term perspective and our preference in Renfrewshire is for new mainstream housing which mainly consists of two or more bedrooms and houses as opposed to flats where possible.

Regeneration programmes will continue to address these issues of mismatch, ensuring that new build stock on cleared sites includes an appropriate mix of house types and sizes as well as tenure. Consultation exercises have highlighted the importance of this to local people who want to see a range of housing options available within local communities which mean that people do not have to move out of the area to meet their housing needs.

Using existing social housing to meet identified needs will become ever more important in times of constrained public expenditure. Conversions of existing general needs stock to suit specific groups as outlined in 7.2.2 is one approach being progressed. Chapter 10 outlines other actions we will take to make best use of stock, such as promoting mutual exchange schemes.

## 7.4 Tackling Poverty and Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) annual update for 2010 shows an increasing prevalence of income and employment deprivation in Renfrewshire and more people are experiencing income deprivation than at the highest point in 2004.

The 2010 annual update estimates that 28,070 people experience income deprivation (16.5% of Renfrewshire's population) and reported an increase in Renfrewshire's share of the 15% most income deprived datazones in Scotland (from 4.3% to 4.5%).

The majority of existing regeneration areas still feature in the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland and increasingly the most deprived areas are those with a larger proportion of social rented housing. Half of the 41 most deprived datazones in Renfrewshire in the 2009 SIMD were in ADF areas (see Map 3 on page 46).

There are social as well as economic consequences for people living in the most deprived communities. The risk of being a victim of both property and violent crime is higher for adults living in the 15% most deprived areas<sup>18</sup> and one in nine young men from the most deprived communities will spend time in prison when they are 23 years old.<sup>19</sup> Life expectancy for men and women in Renfrewshire is slightly less than the Scottish average but there is a gap in life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas in Renfrewshire of at least 20 years for men and nearly 12 years for women reflecting poor health outcomes for those who live in areas of deprivation.

The prolonged effects of the economic downturn are leading to lower incomes for very large numbers of households across the income spectrum. However, young people and the most vulnerable members of our communities are at greatest risk. Welfare Reform is likely to exacerbate poverty for the most vulnerable individuals, families and communities – it is estimated that the impact of benefit changes will be an annual loss of between £19m and £23m for households in Renfrewshire. These changes are taking place at the same time as partner agencies face reduced budgets.

The Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership is structured around the five national strategic objectives for Scotland of Wealthier and Fairer; Smarter; Healthier; Safer and Stronger; and Greener plus children's services and adult protection and is responsible for delivery and co-ordinating action to meet the objectives of the Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan. It has highlighted the need for a joined up approach across agencies and support services as well as active engagement with people who are experiencing poverty.

Partners will continue to seek to maximise funding from external sources to complement housing services and programmes in the most disadvantaged areas

<sup>18</sup> Scottish Government 2009/10 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

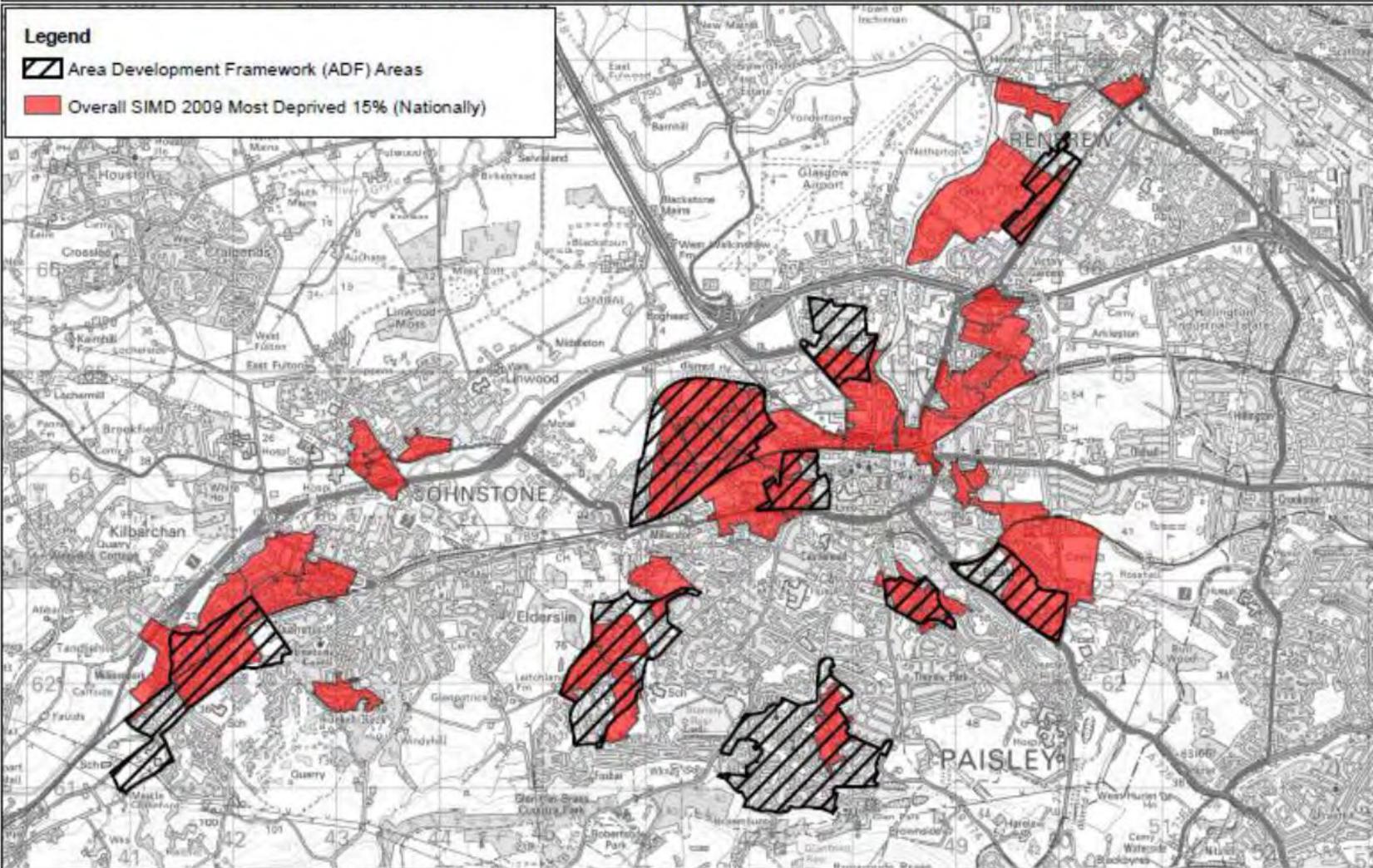
<sup>19</sup> Hilary Ross (2008), 'Justice reinvestment: what it is and why it may be an idea to consider in Scotland', CjScotland

and will adopt a multi-agency approach in order to make best use of existing resources and achieve the best possible outcomes for local communities.

The Council and housing associations work with other statutory and voluntary agencies to assist households in some of the most disadvantaged communities through a range of initiatives designed to tackle the effects of poverty and deprivation. Examples of specific initiatives include:

- Action to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. The Anti-Social Investigations Team (ASIST) and Renfrewshire Wardens operate across all tenures and all parts of Renfrewshire. Targeted policing programmes take place in specific areas, such as Paisley West End to deal with particular localised problems.
- The Investing in the Future Project provides diversionary activities such as the Youth Bus, Gym Bus and Street Football and gives disaffected young people in deprived areas a chance to engage in positive activities. Youth Officers from the ASIST team engage with young people in Renfrewshire about the impact of anti-social behaviour. Such activities have helped to reduce incidences of youth disorder and vandalism in targeted areas.
- Health initiatives such as the “West End is Healthier and Safer” tackle particular problems such as the effect of alcohol misuse on local communities. Plans for 15 allotment spaces on the site of demolished tenement blocks will help give local residents access to healthy eating.
- Housing association Wider Role projects include: Twilight Basketball and Youth Outreach Project; Minor Landscape Employability and Training Project; Financial Advice Project and a Money Matters, Fuel Poverty Advice Project.
- The Council is working with framework contractors to deliver a range of community benefits through the SHQS investment programme including local employment and apprenticeship opportunities, sponsorship of local activities, community groups and sporting activities.

### Overlap of 15% most deprived areas (SIMD 2009) and Area Development Framework Areas



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 Renfrewshire Council

Printed by: C. Pollock  
 Print date: 16/11/11  
 Department: Planning and Transport



## 7.5 Town Centre Regeneration

Community consultation exercises consistently highlight the importance of our town centres to local people. This is in line with national and local policy which increasingly emphasises the role of town centres as economic and cultural centres and as drivers of social and economic wellbeing and sustainability.

- Like many other town centres and local high streets in Scotland, Paisley has faced challenges in recent years as a result of changing retail patterns and the effects of the economic downturn. In addition to improving the retail character of the town centre, the Action Plan for **Paisley town centre** seeks to improve the fabric of the built environment and increase the number of people living in the town centre. Increased residential use contributes to the vitality of town centres by introducing new populations, creating demand for services and improving perceptions of community safety. Two newbuild and one conversion project have been completed by housing associations within the last three years providing over 60 new affordable homes. There is scope for some further small scale affordable housing investment to help lever in private finance and create additional affordable housing options, which could potentially include mid market rent, within the town centre.
- Tackling BTS housing was highlighted as a priority in the last LHS. Comprehensive tenement improvement projects have been completed in recent years at several key strategic locations in Paisley town centre using the Housing Action Area framework. These have delivered high quality housing – similar to newbuild standard internally - and have protected and enhanced the external fabric of properties which are of historic importance to the town. They have drawn upon a mixture of grant funding streams and private finance, involved joint working between local housing associations and the Council and secured the participation of private owners. Plans were well underway to progress a further project at Orchard Street/Causeyside Street in the heart of the town centre and Heritage Lottery Funding and Historic Scotland funding had been programmed to support this project in addition to Housing Association Grant and PSHG funding. However, changes to the national framework for affordable housing in 2011/2012 have meant that it has not been possible to move forward with this project. Partners remain committed to improving the properties at Orchard Street/Causeyside Street and will review funding options with a view to achieving the improvement of these properties within the lifetime of this LHS.
- An Area Development Framework was approved for the **West End of Paisley** in 2009. This sets out a strategy for improvement over a five to ten year period. Around 50 tenement flats have been demolished at Sutherland Street and Linstone Housing Association has secured funding from the 2011/12 Innovation and Investment Fund to improve two empty Council-owned tenement blocks in neighbouring Brown Street. To help deliver this project and consolidate management arrangements, proposals include the transfer of properties in an adjacent block to Linstone as they become vacant. The West End is an area of mixed tenure and mixed use. In addition to the need for physical renewal (housing redevelopment as well as the improvement of existing housing, shops and the local environment), crime and anti-social

behaviour, particularly the perception of community safety, are significant issues. Partners will work with other public and voluntary agencies and with local communities to tackle these issues. They will seek to improve estate management standards and the quality of the local environment, encourage new households to come and live in the area and provide support to help vulnerable people to help them sustain tenancies in the area. Provision was included in recent Strategic Housing Investment Plans for affordable housing investment in the West End and this remains a priority over the lifetime of this LHS.

- Masterplanning exercises are being undertaken for **Johnstone town centre** in the context of the Council's Building Better Communities Programme. New housing provision will be a key component of redevelopment plans for this area.

## **7.6 Brownfield Development – Creating Mixed and Sustainable Communities**

Our aspiration is for mixed and sustainable communities across Renfrewshire. This means not only that we should seek to diversify tenure in areas of low demand social rented housing, but also that we provide tenure options and a mix of price ranges in large scale housing developments which would otherwise provide only private housing.

Two Community Growth Areas have been identified in Renfrewshire to meet long term housing demand across the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area. These are large scale developments and require a mix of housing (tenure, type, size) if they are to deliver our aspiration for sustainable mixed communities.

**South West Johnstone Community Growth Area** is expected to deliver 500 new homes, just under half on existing Green Belt land and the rest on brownfield sites within the Spateston, Corseford, Cochrane Castle and West Johnstone areas. There are significant infrastructure constraints (flooding risks), retail issues and open space management issues which need to be addressed. Under the Scottish Sustainable Communities initiative, the Scottish Government funded a 'charrette' community masterplan exercise for the area in November 2011. A design team worked with public and local professionals and the local communities to create a masterplan for the area over the next ten years. Housing investment will be key to redevelopment of the area and partners will seek over the lifetime of this LHS to achieve an appropriate mix of high quality and well designed new housing in the area.

**Bishopton Community Growth Area** is expected to provide around 2,500 new homes. The Royal Ordinance Factory (ROF) site was identified as particularly suitable site for development on this scale because of its location close to a local railway station, potential direct access to the motorway network and reuse of a contaminated brownfield site which would secure its remediation. This will be a mixed development, including commercial, retail and leisure facilities as well as housing, educational provision and community facilities. Details of the affordable housing element (including phasing) have still to be finalised as part of the Section 75 Agreement before work starts on site but it is intended that 25% of the total new

housing will be affordable housing. Bishopton is in the North Renfrewshire housing sub-area where there is particular pressure on the supply of affordable housing. Partners will therefore work closely to maximise the opportunities for new affordable housing as part of this large scale development.

**Key Actions:**

1. Update the SHIP each year and progress affordable housing projects as detailed in the SHIP and in line with identified needs.
2. Develop ways of encouraging private developers to build housing in regeneration areas and other key brownfield sites in Renfrewshire.
3. Develop and implement detailed plans for the implementation of the ADF for Paisley West End.
4. Improve the monitoring and sharing of localised housing information between partners and develop joined up approaches across services to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
5. The Council and housing associations will continue with initiatives to enhance neighbourhood housing services and support households in disadvantaged areas.
6. Work with partners to develop housing projects which would increase the number of people living in town centres.
7. Review options to deliver the tenement improvement project at Orchard Street/ Causeyside Street.
8. Develop and implement a masterplan for the South West Johnstone Community Growth area, including provision for some limited new affordable housing.
9. Maximise opportunities for new affordable housing in the Bishopton Community Growth area.

## Section 8

### Independent Living and Support for Specific Groups

#### Strategic Outcome 4

**People are able to live independently in suitable housing with appropriate support**

### 8.1 Introduction

This section looks at the housing and support needs of specific groups, and sets out how we plan to meet these needs. In order to provide solutions that are flexible and targeted it is important to understand the varying needs of specific household groups. The Housing Need and Demand assessment set out the broad range of housing issues concerning key specific groups. This chapter looks at our approach to supporting these groups within the Renfrewshire context: **older people**, people with **physical disabilities**, people with **learning disabilities**, people with **mental health** issues, people with **addiction** issues, and **vulnerable young people**, particularly those leaving care. The needs of **Gypsy Travellers and Ethnic Minorities** are also considered. **Homelessness** is covered separately in section 9.

The 2004-09 LHS aimed to expand the supply of housing suitable for people with particular housing needs and a substantial proportion of affordable housing completions over the last 5 years has delivered new housing for older people, people with disabilities, and supported housing for homeless households with complex needs, mental health issues, addiction issues and vulnerable young people.

It remains a priority of this LHS to continue to expand the supply of housing suitable for specific needs. However, given the difficult financial climate we will need to look at means other than new build to increase supply such as conversion or remodelling of existing stock or using existing private sector housing.

Housing development is not always required. The right support in mainstream accommodation can meet many needs and can play a vital role in helping people to live independently, sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness. To maintain the health and well being of communities it is important that, existing housing is good quality, well maintained and is located in safe and attractive communities.

The focus of national and local policy has been in “shifting the balance of care” from NHS and institutional settings to community based support. A key theme in local policy and reflected in this LHS is to enable people to remain in their own home whenever practicable through the provision of appropriate intervention and support. Such support provided by the Council and partners includes housing support, home care, day care, community meals, adaptations, community alarms and telecare services.

## 8.2 Older People

### 8.2.1 An Ageing population

By 2025 it is estimated just over 18,000 Renfrewshire residents will be aged 75 and over – an increase of 47% over 2008 levels. The Scottish Government's "Wider Planning for an Ageing Population"<sup>20</sup> document states that the majority of older people own their own homes and it is likely that most of them (though not all) will wish to remain as owners. The document also highlights the main impacts of population ageing:

- changing demands for housing supply and housing stock;
- higher levels of health, care and support needs;
- support for people to remain at home; and
- adaptations to housing stock.

The Council and partners have been working to develop and reshape housing provision and housing related services for older people in response to these changes. Progress since the last LHS includes:

- Increased the supply of specialist accommodation – bringing the total provision of very sheltered/extra care housing to 212 units (including 10 units specifically designed for dementia sufferers) (definitions of each of these categories are contained in the "Glossary of Terms" p.105)
- A Housing Strategy for Older People. The key theme of this is to maximise the capacity for older people to live independently for as long as possible.
- Review of sheltered housing to modernise services implemented.
- Existing mainstream Council stock within four multi-storey blocks in Paisley converted to amenity standard with provision of social space, which offers many of the benefits of sheltered housing.
- Telecare services developed and extended.

In late 2010 the Scottish Government announced the establishment of a "Change Fund" which is available to local partnerships to redesign services and shift the balance of care for older people. Renfrewshire's allocation is around £2m for 2011/12. Plans for the use of this fund in Year 1 (2011/12) include £200,000 to provide telecare safety packages to more than 100 vulnerable people. Telecare service(s) provide a 24 hour responder service which can provide comfort and assurance to elderly people and their carers. Other plans include increasing support to carers to help maintain people in their own homes, further developing community rehabilitation and enablement services to help prevent inappropriate hospital admission and facilitate early discharge home, and increased support for

<sup>20</sup> "Consultation on Wider Planning for an Ageing Population – Housing and Communities", Scottish Government June 2010.

tenants in extra care housing developments to enable them to remain in extra care housing longer as opposed to moving to a care home setting.

## 8.2.2 Specialist Accommodation for Older People

Table 15 shows the current number of units of social rented specialist accommodation for older people in Renfrewshire.

**Table 15: Specialist Accommodation for Older People 2010**

	Very Sheltered/Extra Care	Sheltered
<b>Local Authority</b>	0	304
<b>Housing Association</b>	212	429
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>733</b>

Source: Council & Housing Association Records 2011

The scope to build new specialist accommodation is likely to be limited over the next five years. The focus will therefore be on; maximising best use of existing stock; ensuring existing specialist accommodation continues to meet the needs of older people; and developing models of new build that do not require revenue funding.

The Council will extend the existing model of amenity conversion in high rise blocks to one other block in the Gallowhill area of Paisley. This model of housing provides all the key aspects of sheltered housing – safety, security, communal social space and living with peers – without warden provision. A local lettings initiative will ensure properties are allocated sensitively and that best use is made of the stock, including allocations to younger people with mobility difficulties. At least one local housing association is actively considering this model. We will also develop options for providing housing support to residents within these blocks. This will become more necessary as the population within these blocks become older and potentially frailer.

Further new amenity housing will be built during 2012/13 in a new Council build development in Paisley. This will consist of 15 flats with a communal social space for residents.

We will address the issue of low demand within some existing Council and housing association sheltered housing complexes. Some units are unpopular primarily due to the location and outdated/ non-traditional design i.e. bedsits. We will explore the feasibility of remodelling these units to something more suitable to the needs and aspirations of older people. There may also be potential to investigate options to remodel sheltered housing complexes to make them more flexible for a variety of uses, however in the current financial climate this might prove extremely difficult to achieve in practice.

We will review the Extra Care model of housing. This model is still relatively new and is able to accommodate people who would otherwise require residential care, largely because their housing is unsuitable for them. Before considering any new developments, the Council and partners need to be convinced that it will achieve the anticipated outcomes of reducing the use of acute services and provides services at

best value. Cognisance also needs to be taken of the significant revenue costs of providing care and support in these complexes.

There are private sector housing options specifically for older people in Renfrewshire, for example retirement flats built by McCarthy and Stone developers.

However, there is little provision for older owners on lower incomes and/or with little equity in their current home. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan makes provision for a new development of shared equity housing for older people but this will require further discussion with the Scottish Government because of the current rules around shared equity developments which focus mainly on first time buyers.

### **8.2.3 Older People with Dementia**

Predictions of dementia in older people point to a steady growth of its incidence over the next 25 years. In Renfrewshire there are approximately 1,800 people with dementia and this is expected to rise to 1,984 by 2014 and to 2,544 in 2024<sup>21</sup>. Services are currently meeting demand but it is recognised that the predicted increases will be challenging. Health services will need to ensure early diagnosis. The Council and its partners provide day care, homecare and residential care for people with dementia. Ten specialist dementia units were built as part of a new very sheltered housing development in Johnstone in 2010. There are no plans for any similar new developments within the lifetime of this LHS, however should opportunities arise in the future for such, we will review the operation and effectiveness of this specialist accommodation to help inform longer-term planning.

## **8.3 Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment**

In Renfrewshire – 30,824 households or 39% of all households report that they have one or more persons in their household with a long term limiting illness/disability (this will include many older people).<sup>22</sup> This is a wide definition and while it provides an order of the magnitude of the number of households directly affected by disability, it does not give an indication of the number of adaptations or new fully accessible homes required.

Around 1,400 people are registered with a visual impairment and a further 280 are registered blind or partially blind (Renfrewshire CHP Development Plan 2010-13).

### **8.3.1 Property Adaptations and Equipment– supporting people to maximise their independence**

For many disabled people, relatively minor adaptations such as handrails will be sufficient to allow to them to stay in their home for longer and maximise their independence.

<sup>21</sup> Renfrewshire Community Health Partnership development plan 2010-13.

<sup>22</sup> Scottish Household Survey

Renfrewshire Council and housing associations fund a range of adaptations for people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments (such as alterations to bathrooms, bedrooms, stairs, doorways and steps and installation of additional lighting) following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist or specialist Sensory Impairment worker.

The Council and housing associations carry out over 500 adaptations per year to their stock. The Council also provides grant assistance to support owners to carry out adaptations to their homes. Table 16 shows the range of adaptations and expenditure.

**Table 16: Adaptation works by sector and value 2010-2011**

Approximate Price Range	Example of Adaptation in price range	Percentage carried out		
		Council 2010/11	Housing Association *	Private 2010/2011
£1 - £100	Hand rails, lever taps, sockets, etc	24%	25%	Nil
£101 - £500	External hand rails, door thresholds, lights etc	26%	20%	Nil
£501 - £1000	Over bath electric showers, shower trays etc	9%	5%	Nil
£1001 - £2500	Pathways, steps, bathroom wet floors, doors etc	24%	15%	35%
£2501 - £5000	Bathroom alterations, automatic doors, step in showers	15%	21%	25%
£5001 - £7,500	Ramps. Kitchen worktops realignment height, lifts etc	1%	14%	7%
£7501+	Various combinations of the above	0.23%	0%	32%
<b>Approximate Total Cost</b>		£493,121	£164,948	£319,664

Source: Renfrewshire Council and housing association records. \* figure based on 5 local housing associations

Based on past trends and demographic predictions, we anticipate that there will continue to be a need for this level of activity over the next five years, however meeting demand will be challenging in the current economic climate.

### 8.3.2 Existing Adapted Stock

There remains a need to make better use of existing adapted stock. Social housing providers try to match vacant adapted properties with applicants who have specific needs for those adaptations. Information on Council adapted stock has been updated as part of a stock condition survey undertaken prior to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard works and will allow for better matching. The Council and housing associations work together when it is not possible to match from their own waiting lists.

Current social housing provision in Renfrewshire for people with physical disabilities is shown in Table 17.

**Table 17: Social Housing for People with Physical disabilities**

	Adapted for wheelchair use	Ambulant disabled	Other adapted
Council	22	546	0
Housing Association	207	103	461
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>461</b>

Sources: Housing Statistics for Scotland: S1B returns; The Scottish Housing Regulator. There may be differences in the interpretation of the criteria for housing adapted for people with physical disabilities.

Note: Housing adapted for wheelchair use: dwellings built or adapted to give extra floor area, whole house heating, and special bathroom, kitchen and other features. Ambulant disabled housing: dwellings for non wheel chair users built or adapted to general needs housing standards with a level/ramped approach, WC or bathroom at entrance level and other special features. Other adapted housing: dwellings with other adaptations, such as those with renal dialysis equipment.

However, there remains a need to gain a better understanding of the location and nature of adapted properties across all tenures.

Funded by the Scottish Government, the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living, together with Ownership Options in Scotland, is developing a Scottish Accessible Housing Register. The register is being piloted in 4 areas prior to being rolled out throughout Scotland.

Renfrewshire Council and Housing Association partners are participating in the pilot project, which will provide an on-line system for disabled households to register their requirements, allowing them to be matched to housing appropriate to their needs. Although the pilot will focus on the social rented sector, it is anticipated that the scope of the register will ultimately be widened to include all forms of tenure, thus simplifying the route into housing for disabled households. The register will also have the capacity to record supply and demand within social rented, and eventually privately owned and rented accommodation throughout Renfrewshire.

The HNSA for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area highlights an overall shortage of wheelchair accessible housing within the wider area. However, the location and level of shortage is not quantified and as such, the position in Renfrewshire is not yet clear. The Council has identified a small number of families awaiting suitable larger sized wheelchair accessible housing.

Generally new build social housing developments will contain a small number of properties fully designed wheelchair use. Local experience suggests that there is not always demand for available wheelchair adapted properties (this could be due to the location and timing of the property becoming available for let) and there is a need to improve information on localised need. The development of the Scottish Accessible Housing Register should help improve information on need and demand.

In some circumstances, re-housing a household may be a more appropriate option than adapting an existing property. This could be because of the particular needs of the individual and/or constraints on providing adaptations to that particular property. Private sector grant funding is not available to private owners for extensions where an extra room is required so re-housing may be the only solution.

The current provision for disabled people at Wallace Court, which presently accommodates 14 individuals, is considered to be unsuitable for the long term needs of residents. Options for re-provisioning are being considered by the Council.

### **8.3.3 Equipment**

Occupational Therapists and Sensory Impairment staff are also involved in the supply of daily living (ADL) equipment e.g. bathboards, toilet frames and talking alarm clocks and more specialist equipment such as hoists, bath lifts and TV magnifiers. In 2010/11, 8741 items of equipment were ordered for Renfrewshire residents at a total cost of £560,660, which includes purchase, delivery, maintenance, repairs, uplift and recycling costs.

In 2010/11, 8741 items of equipment were ordered for Renfrewshire residents at a total cost of £560,660, which includes purchase, delivery, maintenance, repairs, uplift and recycling costs.

These items are often viewed as a low cost alternative to adaptations and enable disabled people to continue living safely and independently in their own home. However, the growing numbers of disabled and elderly people living in the community has resulted in increased need for all equipment but particularly for higher cost items such as hoists and beds. Responding to this rising demand for this equipment will be a challenge in the future in the context of limited resources and budgetary pressures.

## **8.4 Learning Disability**

The number of people with a learning disability known to services in Renfrewshire has risen from 495 in 2001 to 1,135 in 2010. Approximately 600 adults live in mainstream accommodation and 237 live in supported accommodation. Supported living frameworks are in place and provide packages of care and support which allow adults with learning disabilities to live in the community. There are currently 28 units of supported accommodation for individuals with severe learning difficulties.

Additional specialist accommodation for 8 individuals with learning disabilities was completed in 2010/2011 in Paisley. This high spec development was specially designed to meet the needs of people with a high level of support needs. It was funded by the Council through prudential borrowing.

The profile of carers for adults with learning disabilities is changing as they themselves age. Many will continue to provide care into advanced old age but a challenge for services will be to plan to meet the need for suitable alternative care arrangements following carer illness or death; events which are not always predictable. Social Work services are working to provide an additional ten supported accommodation places to meet the short term forecast of need. In partnership with Social Work and Health colleagues, we will develop options for promoting independent living in a planned way.

## **8.5 Addictions and Mental Health**

Often there is no need to provide specialist housing for people with mental health or addiction issues and support can be delivered in their existing home. There are a variety of services in Renfrewshire that provide this kind of support.

### **8.5.1 Addictions**

Renfrewshire has the fourth highest rate by local authority area of alcohol related deaths for men in the UK and there are high levels of drug injecting in the area. Just over 2,000 individuals accessed alcohol and drug services overall in Renfrewshire (including GP clinics) in 2010/11. As at March 2011, 910 households were receiving treatment through Renfrewshire Drug Service (67% are male and 33% are female; 21% of males and 22% of females are aged less than 25 years old). At this point, 970 individuals were receiving services for alcohol problems (67% male, 33% female).

A number of services support service users to address their drug/alcohol use and sustain tenancies. Individuals using alcohol and drug services will have their housing needs assessed and are referred for support where appropriate to help them sustain their tenancy.

There is a need to further liaise with partners in the addiction services to fully implement the recommendations within the Scottish Government document "The Road to Recovery" and Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol. These documents are further supported in the review "Effective services for Substance Misuse and Homelessness in Scotland: Evidence from an International Review" which supports work being recovery - focussed and person centred.

Partnership working between housing and addiction groups has contributed to the creation of more robust pathways for service users and heightened awareness and practice amongst workers of the issues affecting this needs group. The Alcohol and Drug partnership has supported work at the George Street project to provide a range of intervention for homeless households. The introduction of the Homeless Addictions Liaison Officer, and associated joint working, has helped homeless drug and alcohol users to access services and stabilise lifestyles and improve outcomes in maintaining tenancies. Partnership working in relation to this continues to grow.

The creation of the new Integrated Alcohol Team will increase capacity in managing individuals with alcohol problems and further expand referral pathways and support in maintaining tenancies. This team will consist of a range of social work and health care staff.

Further to this is one year pilot in relation to persistent offending. The Persistent Offenders Programme will target individuals who are involved in criminal activity in relation to their drug use. These individuals are often not in contact with treatment services, may be in temporary accommodation and living chaotic lifestyles. This initiative will provide intensive and pro-active support to address their drug use and associated criminal activity and reduce the impact on individuals, their families and the community.

## 8.5.2 Mental Health

At any one time approximately one in six adults experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem, (Renfrewshire CHP Development Plan 2010-13). In Renfrewshire, this equates to approximately 17,000 adults.

Over the course of the last three years, there has been a focus on modernising mental health services and changing the balance of care in Renfrewshire, increasing the range of community based mental health services available. This has included the expansion of existing Community Mental Health Teams, the roll-out of the Doing Well model of primary care and the creation of a new Intensive Home Treatment Team.

Addiction and mental health issues tend to be more prevalent among homeless households and in many cases, these issues require to be addressed before applicants' housing needs can be fully resolved. However, for some people with mental health issues, housing can be part of the solution to the problem, where existing housing circumstances are exacerbating their condition.

While the location and surrounding of a person's home can affect their mental health, it is not always possible to provide the most appropriate house in the most appropriate place within the social rented stock, due to limited provision in some areas and issues around turnover and timing of properties becoming available.

There can sometimes be issues with moving on clients from supported accommodation or hospital when there is no ongoing need for mental health input.

This can often be because the client is waiting on a suitable offer of housing and their perception of what is suitable can often differ from housing and care professionals. Council services will work together to identify housing needs and where appropriate what models of housing could potentially meet these needs. This will include consideration of how the private rented sector could potentially meet the needs of this client group. The Council will also require to manage service user's expectations, particularly for those in temporary or supported accommodation, with respect to their longer-term housing options and solutions.

There are a number of people across Renfrewshire with mental health and addiction issues who are known to various Council services, housing associations and voluntary services. However there is potential for better joint working between these services to ensure that individuals' needs are met, and that potential crisis situations such as the need for unnecessary hospital admissions or homelessness are prevented.

Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership has established a prevention sub group who will undertake work to identify certain triggers that can often lead to homelessness. This will help Council services and partner agencies to work better together to prevent homelessness and unnecessary hospital admissions as detailed in Section 9.

Increasingly mental health services are being provided to older people, including those living in sheltered housing for conditions not necessarily related to dementia. Social Work services report that it is increasingly difficult to find appropriate housing for older people with mental health conditions, for example due to long term alcohol abuse.

Further work is required with Social Work and health colleagues to improve links and determine longer-term models of housing for those with addiction and mental health issues, particularly people with alcohol related brain damage.

## **8.6 Young People**

In Renfrewshire, responsibility for local planning of children's services sits within Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership (RCSP). RCSP strives to improve outcomes for all children and young people focusing on those who are vulnerable or at risk. In terms of housing, we recognise that the transition into independent living is a key milestone for a young person, particularly for previously looked after young people. This issue is further intensified if a young person faces homelessness. It is essential that transition into permanent housing be achieved in a planned way to avoid unnecessary disruption to young people. In general, young peoples' needs can be met in mainstream housing with some additional support.

Previously looked after young people may require additional support to help them settle into mainstream housing. A new supported housing project for young people is being progressed by the Council and Loretto Housing Association, providing 10 units as part of an integrated housing development in Paisley.

## **8.7 Maximising independence – housing support**

Some people live with various forms of vulnerability and, as a result, may need support to overcome the challenges of managing and running their homes, and dealing with the everyday tasks associated with this. Renfrewshire Council and housing associations also provide housing support and tenancy sustainment services. The primary purpose of housing-related support is to develop and sustain an individual's capacity to manage their home to enable them to live independently in their accommodation.

Support is often needed to manage the home and financial matters and swift intervention can prevent problems from escalating. It can also broker access to more specialist services, where a household requires additional specialist support.

A range of services and activities can be tailored to an individual's specific needs. Support provision within the home has a vital role to play in enabling people to live independently. It can also contribute towards preventing homelessness.

Housing support services should not be confused with 'supported housing or supported housing projects' (for example sheltered housing or interim supported accommodation for homeless households). Housing-related support is often referred to as "floating support", the crucial difference being this service is committed to the individual rather than to a property and can follow and adapt to the individual as required. It is also significantly less expensive than services provided through supported housing, since there are no capital costs.

The role and value of housing-related support needs to be understood to ensure improved outcomes and efficiency. Perhaps the strongest case for giving attention

to housing-related support is the costs to vulnerable individuals and to local communities of failing to do so and what this could cost the public fund. Scottish Government Research in 2008 into the effectiveness of floating support stated there is considerable evidence about the cost effectiveness in terms of:

- reducing rent arrears;
- prevention of tenancy breakdown and homelessness;
- the reduction of hospital admissions (for people with mental health problems);
- the timely discharge of older people from hospital;
- the reduction of re-offending rates; and
- addressing anti-social behaviour

All of these outcomes reduce costs for public agencies, but also have wider social benefits of helping create sustainable communities and greater social cohesion.

Housing support services would normally be provided for between 3 months and 2 years. During 2010/11, the Council have provided 426 individuals with housing support services and a further 521 with financial advice only.

The level of support needed varies and should diminish as the individual's ability to live independently increases. In some cases individuals may have slightly more specialist needs to deal with, for example an addiction or mental health issue, and this type of support is often commissioned (still on a floating basis) from a more specialist provider. During 2010/11 the Council spent around £640,000 on commissioned housing support services. Housing associations also provide support services. Housing associations have dedicated Welfare Rights Officers who provide financial advice and assistance and endeavour to maximise the household's income. During 2010/11, 267 households were assisted in areas such as securing backdated housing benefit and other benefit gains to the amount of £188,000.

A strategic approach to delivering housing related support services is essential to achieving sustainable communities; improving the health and well-being of communities; achieving success in combating health inequalities and the social exclusion of many vulnerable people.

A review of the Council's Housing Support Service is currently underway and further work is being carried out to develop a more robust monitoring system to improve how assessments are carried out and how outcomes are recorded for households who have received housing support services. The Council is currently testing the "Better Futures" web-based tool which has been specifically designed to record the support needs of individuals. It has been developed by the Housing Support Enabling Unit and focuses on 5 outcomes:

- accommodation
- health
- safety and security

- social and economic wellbeing
- employment

This assessment tool should enable the Council to build a clearer picture of each individual's progress against objectives or targets that have been set, plot progress and quantify effectiveness and outcomes.

## **8.8 Minority Ethnic Households**

The Council and local partner housing associations commissioned a study into the housing needs of minority ethnic communities in 2009.<sup>23</sup> The study found that the minority ethnic community in Renfrewshire make up a smaller proportion of the population than the Scottish average (3.2% of the total population compared to 4.5% nationally). While Renfrewshire's population is ageing, the minority ethnic community is more youthful with just 3% of the Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and African communities aged 65 and over. Half of the Pakistani community is aged 24 or less.

The survey found that for the ethnic minority community showed that for most people, their current accommodation met their needs. Of those whose accommodation did not meet their needs, the main reasons reported were; they felt their property was too small; many had an aspiration for a garden and some reported problems with youths.

Most felt that social rented housing was better value than the private rented sector. However one of the main barriers reported to accessing social housing was lack of information and awareness about the processes involved in applying for a property, particularly around information about waiting time for different areas.

The concerns raised by the ethnic minority community are not dissimilar to the ones raised by the rest of the community. The Council and partner housing associations are addressing these issues through greater information about housing access and options and this is detailed further in section 10 Access to Housing and Housing Options. The Council has also prepared a "Welcome to Renfrewshire" guide about living and working in Renfrewshire for citizens of Poland, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria which includes information about finding somewhere to live.

## **8.9 Gypsy Travellers**

There is no permanent site provision for Gypsy Travellers in Renfrewshire. Between 2008 and 2010, there were on average 28 unauthorised encampments each year. From the beginning of January 2011- September 2011 there were only five unauthorised encampments.

Most stays are short at around a week or less, although some have been for as long as a month and are linked to seasonal movement patterns and search for work.

<sup>23</sup> Housing Needs of Minority Ethnic Communities in Renfrewshire, ODS Consulting 2009

Encampments are generally located along the M8 corridor from Renfrew out to Erskine.

The Diversity and Equality Alliance in Renfrewshire (DEAR) approved procedures developed by the Gypsy Travellers working group that provides guidance in relation to the provision of services to Gypsy Travellers during their stay in Renfrewshire. The procedures detail action to be taken when dealing with unauthorised encampments on both Council and non-Council owned land. Officers from Housing and Property visit each encampment and speak to the Gypsy Travellers about their needs, including requirements for medical assistance, waste disposal and education if children are present.

We will continue to monitor the need for any site provision in conjunction with neighbouring authorities in Glasgow, Inverclyde and East Renfrewshire.

## **8.10 Students**

Renfrewshire is home to the University of West of Scotland and Reid Kerr College. The University of West of Scotland provides self catered shared flats for upto 5/6 students per flat and smaller 2-person shared furnished flats, mainly in the Paisley area. The University is building a new student residence complex in the centre of Paisley which will see the creation of 340 bedspaces in shared flats. Such a development will bring more residents to the heart of Paisley and will help contribute to the ongoing regeneration of Paisley town centre.

Reid Kerr does not directly provide accommodation, but both institutions provide information on accommodation options including private sector options. The Council's private sector team works closely with both student accommodation services to provide advice and information on private renting.

### **Key Actions**

1. Complete the conversion of the Council multi-storey flats in Gallowhill to amenity standard and implement local letting initiative to allocate them.
2. Review the Extra Care model of housing to establish effectiveness of this model to enable future planning.
3. Complete the Council new build development of 15 grouped amenity homes in Paisley.
4. Review the need/ options for housing support for older people in the grouped amenity high rise blocks.
5. Explore approaches to address existing unpopular sheltered housing complexes.
6. Investigate ways to provide new supply shared equity housing (or other low cost home ownership options) for older owners.
7. Work with partners to develop options for the future of Wallace Court.
8. Implement the Change Fund initiatives planned for 2011/12 and work with

partners to identify and implement further opportunities for future years.

9. Participate in the Scottish Accessible Housing Register pilot and determine the scope for extending this to private sector housing.
10. Establish a multi-agency working group to develop a better understanding of housing and support requirements of people with mental health and or addiction issues.
11. Complete the development of 10 units of Supported Accommodation for young people.
12. Complete the review of the Council's housing support service.
13. Further develop monitoring systems to record outcomes for households who have received housing support services.
14. In conjunction with neighbouring local authorities, monitor the requirements of the Gypsy Traveller community.

## Section 9 Homelessness

### Strategic Outcome 5

**Homelessness is prevented where possible and services meet the needs of people who become homeless**

#### 9.1 Tackling Homelessness in Renfrewshire

This section highlights key trends in homelessness in Renfrewshire and outlines our approach to tackling homelessness and meeting the needs of those who do become homeless. Highlighted below are some of the key facts on homelessness in Renfrewshire:

- An increasing number of households are approaching the Council's Housing Advice and Homeless Services for assistance – up from 1,663 in 2006/07 to 1,932 in 2010/11, which represents an overall increase of 16% since 2006.
- On average around 1,200 households, apply as homeless every year.
- Single people account for just less than three quarters of all applications. (69% in 2009/10 rising to 74% in 2010/11). More than twice as many single men apply as homeless compared to single women.
- The majority of applicants are aged 26-59, however youth homelessness is an issue with 37.5% of applicants in 2010/11 aged 25 years and under.
- The most common reasons for homelessness are being asked to leave current accommodation (37% in 2010/11) or a dispute within the household/relationship breakdown (23% in 2010/11).
- 987 households were provided with temporary accommodation in 2010/11 which is a decrease from around 1,120 in 2009/10 and 1,055 in 2008/09.
- Temporary accommodation supply is: 140 unsupported units and 95 supported units (62 units managed by external agencies and 33 managed by Council staff).
- During 2010/11, 517 homeless households were provided with permanent accommodation (341 households in Council, 176 in housing association properties).
- Homeless applicants are more likely to give up their tenancy within the first 12 months of being re-housed; during 2010/11, approximately 22% of homeless applicants terminated their tenancy within 12 months compared to 12% of waiting list applicants
- Many homeless applicants have support needs. Around three-quarters of all applicants assessed as homeless and in priority need had some form of support need and many have multiple needs such as mental health and addiction issues.

Renfrewshire Council has already met the Scottish Government's target of 2012 to 'abolish the priority need test' which gives all unintentionally homeless households entitlement to permanent accommodation. The main focus in Renfrewshire is now to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place.

## 9.2 Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015

While there is no longer a requirement to prepare a separate homelessness strategy, we felt that preparing a detailed separate strategy would ensure that Council services and joint work with partners continues to focus on homelessness.

In September 2009, Renfrewshire's Homelessness Partnership was established and the second Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015 was approved in August 2010. This recognises that homelessness is not solely a housing issue but requires action from the full range of agencies providing health, social care, advice, information and housing support.

The second Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015 was launched in August 2010. The LHS highlights the high level picture of homelessness in Renfrewshire and draws through the main approaches to tackle and prevent homelessness as set out in the Homelessness Strategy. The Homelessness Strategy focuses actions aimed at achieving 4 key outcomes.

- **Prevention** – we have prevented people from becoming homeless.
- **Access to Services** – people who become homeless have access to effective services.
- **Housing Options** – the range of housing options for homeless people has improved.
- **Sustainable Solutions** – people who have experienced homelessness are able to sustain their housing.

## 9.3 Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2010-2012

Local authorities have a duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households, so in addition to the Homelessness Strategy, we have also developed a Temporary Accommodation Strategy to ensure there is a planned approach to the provision and management of temporary accommodation. The strategy highlights how housing associations have a key role to play in assisting with the provision of both temporary and permanent accommodation for homeless households. The strategy has been endorsed by Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership.

The strategy seeks to:

- detail the current provision of temporary accommodation in Renfrewshire; including accommodation provided by the Council and other housing providers;
- consider projected need and challenges over the next two years, and outline how these should be met; and

- consider issues relating to the management and funding of temporary accommodation and identify action to ensure best value.

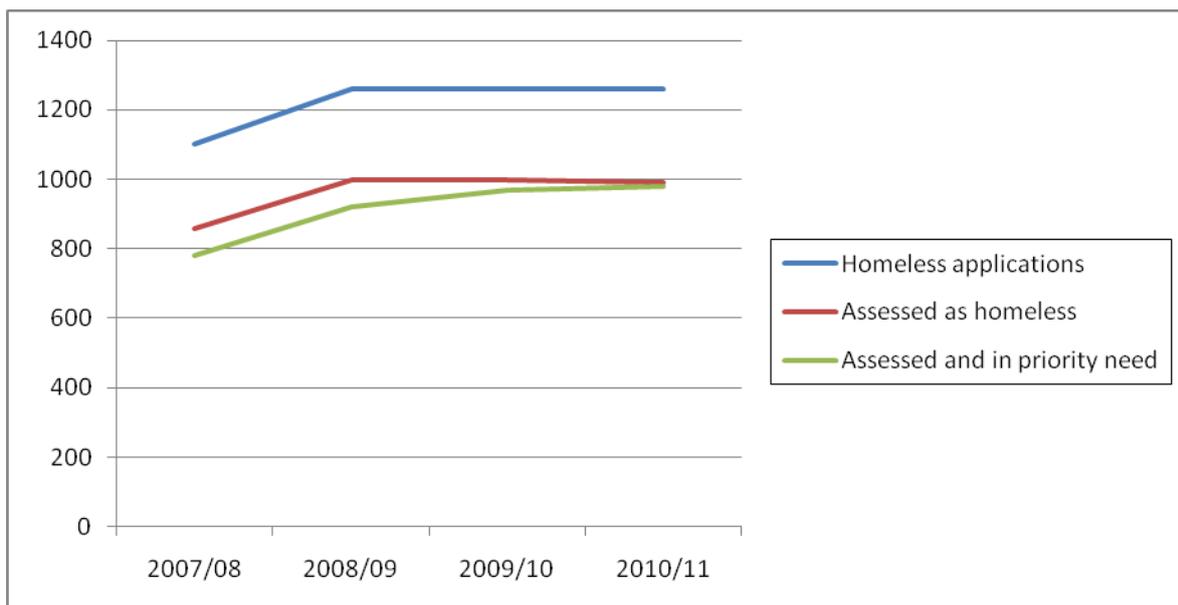
We will review the temporary accommodation strategy in 2012, taking into account the impact of Welfare Reform on housing benefits.

#### 9.4 Reaching the Abolition of Priority Need 2012 Target

The Scottish Government’s target for the abolition of the ‘priority need’ test will give all unintentionally homeless people the right to permanent housing by December 2012. Over the last two years the Council has taken steps to achieve this target by extending the age at which homeless applicants are considered a priority. In January 2011 we reached the target for abolition of priority need 2 years ahead of schedule.

Figure 10 below shows the number of homeless applications received over the past 4 years and also illustrates the progress made in awarding priority to all applicants who are assessed as being homeless.

**Figure 10: Number of homeless applications, number assessed as homeless and number assessed as homeless and in priority need**



Source: Council AVD system

The abolition of priority need has placed additional pressures on homelessness services and on the provision of temporary and permanent accommodation. This will require to be closely monitored over the next few years to get a true picture of the impact of the Abolition of Priority Need.

#### 9.5 Homelessness Prevention

The main focus for Renfrewshire is now on homelessness prevention. Prevention activities should reduce potentially significant costs to the Council in dealing with homeless people and reduce the disruption that homeless households face. The

Council have established a dedicated Prevention Team to take this forward which will focus on 3 main stages:

- (1) We will assist households to remain in and sustain their current settled accommodation;
- (2) Where remaining in their current accommodation is not option we will assist homeless households to secure alternative suitable accommodation to move on to; and
- (3) When alternative accommodation has been secured we will assist households to resettle in a planned way.

Detailed below are some of the current activities that assist us to tackle and prevent homelessness. We have also identified some priorities for expanding our prevention approach which includes developing a robust integrated prevention monitoring framework. During 2010/11, Renfrewshire Council assisted 2,369 households through identified prevention activities.

### **9.5.1 We will assist households to remain in and sustain their current settled accommodation**

#### **Pre-tenancy work**

This includes integrated tenancy management arrangements to provide an improved customer experience and improve tenancy sustainment. For example young prospective tenants can undertake a pre-tenancy “training” session, “A Home for Keeps”, run by the George Street service. We will continue to develop pre-tenancy services and assistance.

**Time to Mend** - This is an initiative which focuses on helping to improve the relationships between young people and their families during times of crisis in order to prevent the young person leaving the family home and becoming homeless – or at least ensure that they retain links with their families while moving to settled accommodation.

#### **Supporting new tenants**

New tenants are supported to settle into their tenancy with an increased focus on identifying at an earlier stage any support requirements the household may have to get them established in their tenancies. The Council also has a dedicated Housing Support Team who will provide additional housing support to households to assist them to maintain and manage their tenancy. This links in with our wider approach to independent living detailed in section 8.

#### **Preventing evictions**

Housing Associations, creditors and private landlords have a duty to notify the local authority (a “section 11” notice) when they are proceeding with court action to evict or repossess. Prevention activities in this area include working with landlords, assisting households with securing alternative accommodation and referrals to and from Renfrewshire Law Centre, Advice Works and Citizens Advice Bureau. During 2010/11 the Council received 726 Section 11 notices. While not all those referred

actively engaged with services, only 23 of those referred went on to present as homeless.

While the number of Section 11 referrals has remained fairly steady over the last years, a sharp increase has been recorded in the first six months of 2011/12 compared to the same period last year with respect to notices received from Creditors. The number of notices from private landlords has also increased. These trends will continue to be closely monitored.

Continuous performance improvement in the management of rent arrears is a key priority for the Council. There has been continued commitment to target intervention and prevention to assist in sustaining tenancies and reducing rent debt. This approach has resulted in fewer cases taken to court and a drastic reduction in eviction from 169 in 2007/08 to only 8 in 2010/11. This approach will continue in the future.

### **Mortgage to Rent Scheme**

The Council and some local housing associations participate in the Scottish Governments Mortgage to Rent Scheme where the Council or the housing association will purchase a property from an owner who is in financial difficulty. The property is then rented to the individual to prevent them from becoming homeless. Since approval was given (late 2009) to participate in the scheme the Council has purchased 7 properties and agreement has been reached to purchase a further 2. Three local housing associations also participate in the scheme and have purchased 22 properties between them since 2003 (Bridgewater HA (15), Paisley South HA (4) and Williamsburgh HA (3).

### **Understanding and addressing homelessness triggers**

Work is ongoing to develop processes to identify and track vulnerable households and reach agreement between all services of “**early warning indicator triggers**” that will help alert them to a potentially homeless household as it has been recognised many different Council services, housing associations and voluntary sector partners have contact with the same vulnerable individuals.

#### **9.5.2 Where remaining in their current accommodation is not an option we will assist homeless households to secure alternative suitable accommodation to move on to**

It is not always possible for households to remain in their current accommodation and some will become homeless. We will continue to provide good quality appropriate temporary accommodation for those households who require it while they are assisted to secure other suitable settled accommodation. The Council and partners will continue to build on existing activities as detailed below to ensure this is possible.

We recognise that a variety of accommodation types are necessary to respond to the diverse needs of homeless households, and that good quality accommodation should be available to all who require it.

Every care is taken to ensure that households are placed in accommodation most suitable for their needs. An initial part of the homelessness application process is a

comprehensive assessment of the type of accommodation that is likely to be required by the household.

### **The Abercorn Street Service**

This is the first point of contact for anyone who finds themselves homeless. Not only does the service assist with securing alternative accommodation, it provides temporary accommodation and offers housing options advice. At March 2010 there were approximately 235 properties used for temporary accommodation, 95 of these are within supported projects which have staff onsite. The Service also offers various support services which will assist the household to resettle into their new accommodation once it has been secured as detailed in 9.5.3 below. Dedicated services include:

- Housing Options Advice Service
- Young person's housing adviser
- Disabled person's housing adviser
- Prevention service
- Young person's Prevention Outreach Worker
- MAPPA Officer to deal with violent and sex offenders who may require to be re-housed
- RSL Liaison Officer
- Homeless support and resettlement team
- A team who deal with the provision of temporary accommodation
- Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme.

Housing advice is also available from housing associations and the Citizen's Advice Bureau offers an independent housing information and advice service.

Another key strand to our prevention approach is to improve the range and quality of information, advice and assistance available on the range of **housing options** available to those who are at risk of losing their home. This links in with our wider approach to housing options information and advice approach, detailed in section 10.

### **Maximising access to social rented housing stock**

Currently the majority of homeless households entitled to permanent accommodation are re-housed within the Council stock (around 40% of all lets to Council stock go to homeless applicants). The Council and housing association partners have been working closely together to increase the percentage of lets to homeless households in the housing association sector. This increased from 13% in 2009/10 to 26% in 2010/11. A dedicated specialist post was created to assist with this and to maximise these Section 5 referrals.

### **Maximising access to private rented housing stock**

We intend to undertake further work to determine what role the private rented sector could potentially play to meet the needs homeless applicants to maximise access to private rented housing stock. Section 32A of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 gives

local authorities the power to discharge duty in certain circumstances to a private let instead of providing permanent accommodation. However there are a number of issues that have to be considered before considering placing homeless households in the private rented sector, such as the affordability of rent and access to support. Although a typical short assured tenancy is usually of 6 months duration, only a tenancy of at least 12 months duration would allow the Council to “discharge” its duty.

In practical terms, we understand that landlords may be reluctant to participate in the longer term, given that there are no incentives to do so. Consequently, we could only take the decision to discharge duty to the private sector with the full informed consent of the homeless household and agreement of the landlord.

It is worth noting however that proposed changes to housing benefit, including changes to rules around occupancy and increasing the age of those eligible for the single room occupancy rate, could affect our ability to use a wider range of accommodation options to meet homeless applicants’ needs.

**The Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme** provides access into private sector housing for less vulnerable homeless households or those threatened with homelessness by providing a guarantee for their deposit. 65 landlords and 9 letting agents are now registered with the Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme and during 2010/11, 51 households accessed housing through this scheme. The Scheme will continue to develop and will be used more widely as a housing option for single people and families.

### 9.5.3 When alternative accommodation has been secured, we will assist households to resettle in planned way

Our research shows that tenancy termination rates are higher for formerly homeless households than for other applicant groups housed by the Council. Some 22% of lets to households who were formerly homeless in 2009/10 were terminated within the first 12 months. While this is an improvement on the previous two years, it is still substantially higher than the figures for other applicant groups. It is also slightly higher than the figure of 17% of lets to homeless households by housing associations in 2009/10 which were terminated within the first 12 months.

**Table 18: % of Council tenancies given up within the first 12 months, by source of applicant.**

Category of applicant	2008/09	2009/10
Homeless	27%	22%
Waiting List	13%	12%
Transfer	8%	8%
All Applicants	18%	15%

Source: Housing and Property Services, September 2011

Note: Figures relate to the year tenancies commenced

However, not all tenancy terminations within 12 months reflect tenancy 'failure'. We will continue to develop our monitoring and recording systems to better identify and understand why tenants end their tenancy after only a short period. This will be used to further develop our policy responses in the future.

We are continuing to develop our monitoring and recording systems to better identify and understand the reasons why tenants end their tenancy.

In addition to assisting homeless households to secure alternative accommodation we will also assist them to move into their new accommodation and support them to settle in, manage and sustain their new home. Detailed below are some of the activities currently in place and some priorities for the future.

### **The George Street Service**

This service is part of a multi-agency response to support households with a wide range of housing and health related issues. 607 individuals accessed services at George Street during 2010/11. The service includes:

- Drop in advice surgeries for anyone with a housing related issue;
- Agency advice surgeries on issues such as health, income maximisation etc;
- Homeless Addictions Liaison Officer (supports those with addiction issues, provides advice and assistance, provides access to other health services, tenancy sustainment and relapse prevention);
- New Start Officers (support for individuals who have gone through the criminal justice);
- Getting a home of your own for young people aged 16-24;
- Moving on to a new start (group work with young people who have recently been released from prison);
- Open doors (group work around offending behaviour and addictions); and
- Various men and women only groups.

### **Financial Advice and Assistance**

We assist homeless households to maximise their incomes, ensuring housing benefit is in place timeously for both temporary and permanent accommodation. We have dedicated officers who provide financial advice and assistance.

### **Access to Furniture**

Many homeless households do not have basic furniture to start a tenancy. We will improve access to household furniture and essential household goods through furnished tenancy schemes and furniture-recycling schemes.

In 2011 the Council started a pilot furnished tenancy initiative, providing fully furnished, decorated and carpeted properties for those homeless applicants who are assessed as requiring such a property to enable them to sustain their tenancy. The pilot will be reviewed during 2013.

Project Oskar initiative was launched late 2010. This project is run by Kibble and recycles furniture at the same time providing training and work experience for young people. Homeless households are offered subsidised rates on the recycled household goods.

### **Housing Support in Settled Accommodation**

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduces a statutory requirement for local authorities to assess the housing support requirements of anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness and to ensure that housing support services are provided. Guidance on this new requirement is due to be published by the Scottish Government in late 2011.

Many new tenants who were previously homeless are young and have no experience of managing a home. We will further develop current programmes to address issues such as lack of life skills necessary to manage a home. We will also make it easier for those who have been homeless and who have continuing support needs to access relevant services through reviewing and developing referral processes.

### **9.6 Homelessness - Addictions and Mental Health**

Over the past four years, two specialist supported accommodation projects have been developed to address the needs of homeless households with mental health and or addiction issues. Abercorn Street in Paisley provides 13 units of supported accommodation for homeless households with complex needs and Lillybank Wynd in Johnstone provides 9 units for homeless households with mental health issues. A further 10 mainstream social rented properties are available to those with alcohol dependency issues, with support and management services provided by an external provider.

People with mental health and or addiction issues often find themselves in inappropriate accommodation and may find it difficult to engage with services. Providing appropriate support is essential, including outreach work with those who are not actively engaging with services in order to tackle some of the wider issues which are linked to homelessness, to support tenancy sustainment and reduce repeat homelessness.

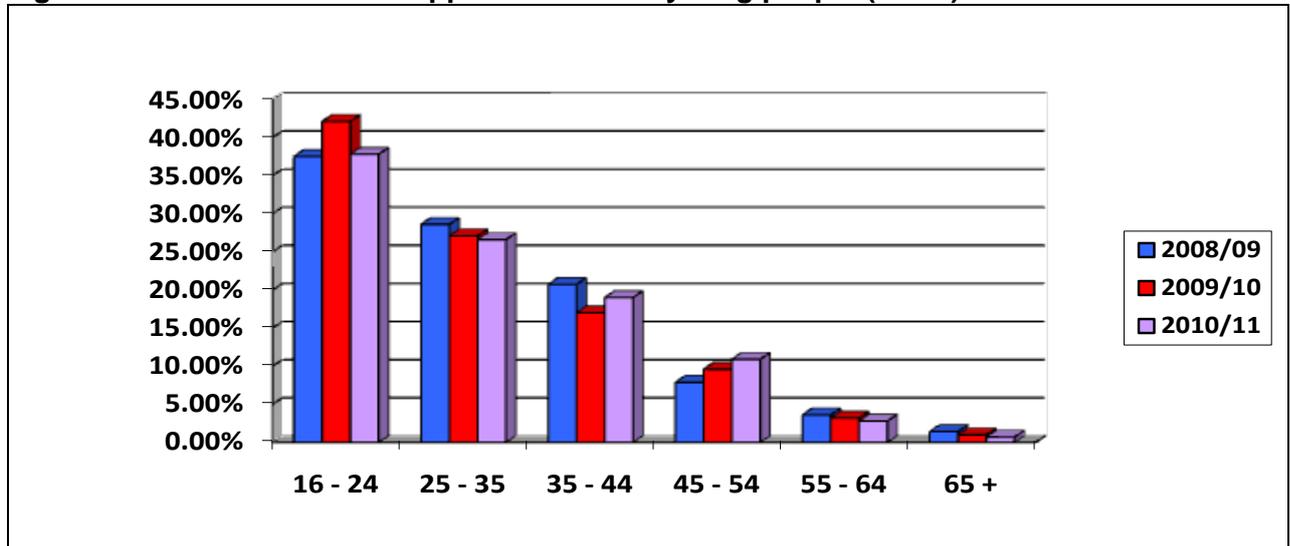
Due to tight funding restrictions, it is unlikely that any further specialist developments of this nature will be brought forward during the life of this LHS. Given demand pressures and funding constraint, it will also be challenging to continue to fund support packages for households with very complex needs and to find suitable housing.

However partners will continue to make the most efficient use of the resources available and to ensure appropriate pathways are in place so people can access appropriate packages of support.

## 9.7 Youth Homelessness

Figure 11 highlights that 38% of all homeless applications were from young people aged 16-24 in 2008/09 and this rose to 42% in 2009/10, before reducing again to 38% in 2010/11.

**Figure 11: % of all homeless applications from young people (16-24) 2008/09 – 2010/11**



Source: Renfrewshire Council Board Report 07/06/2011, Equalities Board Report 2010/11, Table 7

Young people who have experienced disruption or trauma during childhood and/or who are from poor socio-economic backgrounds are at most risk of homelessness. The main 'trigger' for homelessness among young people is relationship breakdown, usually with parents or stepparents. For many, this can be a consequence of long-term conflict within the home and may often involve violence.

Young homeless people have much poorer health than other young people, and mental health and substance misuse are prevalent. Homelessness often compounds a number of problems and it is likely to be an impediment to education, training and employment.

Since 2007/08 Council lets to young people have increased from 25% (2007/08) to 31% (2010/11) of overall lets. The rate of tenancy failure among young people however is higher than average, for example, 23% of lets to young people in 2008/09 terminated within 12 months compared to 15% of total applicants.

Young people in general may not have an identified or specific support need, but it is clear from the data available they are not sustaining their tenancies. Applications and lets are increasing in this age group and more work is required to get a better understanding of their needs and to ensure that the most appropriate forms of housing support are available to enable them to settle in and maintain their tenancies. As stated in Section 9.63 above, we will further develop programmes to address issues such as lack of life skills necessary to manage a home for those who do not have an identified or specific support need.

The Council also has a statutory responsibility for young people leaving care and has a continuing role as a 'corporate parent' and a duty to assess the needs of these young people for independent living. At March 2011, 757 young people were being looked after by the local authority.

While some young people successfully move into mainstream social rented housing, this is often not the most appropriate option and it is known that such tenancies will often fail within the first six months. Young people, particularly young people leaving care will not be ready for independent living at the same age and at the same time. Some may move on at 16 while others may be 18 or 19. Of the 757 young people who were accommodated at March 2011, 137 were between the ages of 15 – 18 and could be ready for independent living over the next couple of years. A range of housing options and housing support services have been developed and partners will continue to work together to develop the most appropriate models of housing and housing support for young people who require more than mainstream housing.

### **9.8 Homelessness – Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can lead a family into homelessness. There are currently 19 properties designated as refuge accommodation, provided by both the Council and housing associations. Renfrewshire Women's Aid manages all these. Addresses always remain confidential to ensure the safety of the women and children accommodated.

While there is no requirement to increase the overall amount of refuge accommodation, there is an identified need for the re-provision of an existing block of seven self-contained flats, which includes a staff base and communal area. These flats are 2 apartment (1 bedroom) properties, which are unsuitable to accommodate children and women or children with a disability.

## **Key Actions**

1. Review the temporary accommodation strategy taking into account the impact of Welfare Reform.
2. Improve the framework to record and monitor the impact of homelessness prevention activities.
3. Establish systems between Council departments and agencies to identify and track vulnerable households.
4. Agree “early warning indicator triggers” that will help alert services to a potentially homeless household.
5. Ensure homeless households have effective access to permanent accommodation in the Council and housing association sectors.
6. Investigate the potential of the private rented sector to meet the needs of homeless applicants.
7. Increase the use of the Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme to help households access the private rented sector.
8. Develop monitoring and recording systems to better identify reasons for tenancy failure.
9. Review furnished tenancy pilot and establish if it is appropriate to continue/extend.
10. Develop programmes to enable young people to acquire the skills necessary to manage a home.
11. Re-provide existing refuge accommodation for domestic abuse.

**Section 10**  
**Access to Housing and Housing Options**

**Outcome 6**

**A range of housing options are available, routes into suitable housing are simplified and people have access to good quality information and advice**

## **10. Introduction**

Previous sections of this LHS have identified barriers that some people face when trying to access suitable housing in Renfrewshire. These include:

- The desire to, but lack of means to access owner-occupation, either because of low incomes, insecure employment or insufficient deposit.
- Difficulty accessing good quality private rented sector accommodation.
- Difficulty finding a home that is suitably adapted.
- Lack of help and advice about the best housing options for older people including advice to help people sustain independent living in their own homes.
- Uncertainty about how housing is allocated and prioritised and lack of understanding around waiting times.

Through this LHS, we seek to address these issues. Our intended outcome is that people have access to a range of housing options that meet their needs and aspirations, good quality information and advice about those housing options, and that the routes into the most appropriate type of housing are simplified.

In this section, we set out our approach to the provision of housing advice and improving access to a range of housing options in different sectors. It also sets out our approach to ensuring that we make best use of the current affordable housing stock to provide for people's needs.

### **10.1 Housing Options Approach**

Renfrewshire Council has refined existing housing advice structures and has reviewed the way it operates key housing services including the process of applying for a house. Both these changes will lead to the provision of a more holistic housing options approach.

Prospective tenants/those looking for accommodation are invited to discuss their housing options with a housing options advisor. Options will include opportunities within the Council's housing stock as well as options within housing association stock, private renting and owner occupation. Having received realistic advice and information on their housing options at the application stage, customers will be able

to make early and informed decisions about the options and solutions best meet their need.

Expanding this approach across the social rented sector will be examined through the work currently being developed with housing association partners around harmonisation of allocation policies and the development of developing a Common Housing Register (CHR).

The following sections outline our approach to advice and access to specific sectors.

## **10.2 Access to Social Rented Housing**

### **10.2.1 CHR and harmonisation of allocation policies**

The Scottish Government are encouraging all local authorities to operate a Common Housing Register (CHR) that simplifies the process of applying for housing for applicants. Considerable work has been undertaken by the Council to move towards this. During 2011, four local housing associations implemented new allocation policies and there is now a high degree of commonality between these partners and the Council. Further work is planned to develop a common application form and initial investigations into the most appropriate IT solutions for a CHR model in Renfrewshire have taken place.

### **10.2.2 Choice Based Lettings**

Choice-Based Letting (where available properties are openly advertised and interested applicants note their interest for them), is an option that could help maximise choice. There is also some evidence that such systems attract people who might not have considered the social rented sector as an option.

The Council recently agreed to develop a pilot Choice Based Letting in an area that has particular difficulties with respect to demand and turnover. It is not the intention at this time to adopt this approach across all stock, but we will evaluate the operation of the pilot scheme and determine its viability for other areas. The evaluation will also need to take into account welfare reform changes, which could affect affordability, for example, the changes in relation to increased charges for those who are under occupying or have non dependents living with them.

### **10.2.3 Sharing information we provide on social rented stock**

Social housing providers already share information about the type, size, location and turnover of stock with applicants to ensure they are clear on the availability of stock in their preferred area and house type. The Council will further develop this information and assess the potential for using Geographical Information Systems to provide a web based format for this information.

#### **10.2.4 Making best use of social rented stock**

Making best use of existing stock is becoming more important in a time when new supply is uncertain and proposed changes to housing benefit could penalise for example those social housing tenants underoccupying their properties. Encouraging existing tenants occupying larger properties to downsize could help to address the current size mismatch in social rented stock. The Council and partner housing associations will examine the feasibility of incentive schemes to facilitate such movement to free up larger property size accommodation. However we need to take account of the limited supply of 1 bedroom properties and the fact that the majority of homeless and waiting list applicants are now single people, and the Welfare Reform changes which may put additional pressure on one bedroom properties.

A number of social housing providers in Renfrewshire are signed up to the national House Exchange web-based service that allows tenants to advertise their properties for a mutual exchange. Housing providers will encourage those who wish to downsize or move to a more suitable property to register and find a suitable swap. We will also promote this service to relevant staff in the health and social work sectors who deal with tenants in their home.

Where appropriate, the Council and housing association partners will continue to develop plans aimed at making general needs stock suitable for a wider range of needs, for example conversion of properties to “amenity standard” suitable for older people or those with a disability.

The work being undertaken around the housing options approach will also help ensure that available housing is being used most effectively. By discussing customers’ needs fully with them, we will be in a better position to identify appropriate options to meet their needs.

#### **10.2.5 Reducing Sales of Social Rented Stock**

Changes brought in by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 give Councils the power to designate specific areas and property types as “pressured” for a period of up to 10 years. This means that any social rented tenant with the modernised right to buy would be unable to buy their home. The idea behind pressured area status is to preserve existing social rented housing to ensure it is available to future generations. The Council in partnership with local housing association will undertake research in line with Scottish Government’s new guidance to establish if there is a case for designating specific property types or areas in Renfrewshire as pressured. Any decision to establish pressured areas will be subject to a consultation exercise with affected parties.

#### **10.2.6 Affordable Housing Policy**

An Affordable Housing Policy requires developers to enable the provision of low-cost homes for sale or rent on any new market housing developments over a certain size. The requirement for such a policy is determined by the level of housing need and demand and affordability levels of existing market housing. Renfrewshire Council

does not currently have an affordable housing policy, and given the current depressed state of the property market and difficulties the development sector is experiencing in general, there are no plans to introduce an affordable housing policy at this time. However, the situation will continue to be monitored and reviewed over the lifetime of this LHS.

### **10.3 Access to Owner Occupied Sector/Low Cost Home Ownership**

Home ownership remains the preferred option of most people – 69% of the stock in Renfrewshire is currently owned. However as discussed earlier, the issue of affordability for some households (especially first time buyers) remains problematic.

#### **10.3.1 Increasing the Supply of Low Cost Home Ownership**

The Scottish Government's LIFT (Low Cost Initiatives for First Time Buyers) includes New Supply Shared Equity housing, available to those working on low incomes who wish to purchase a property. We are committed to increasing the supply of such housing in Renfrewshire. This will not only help those on low incomes to access owner occupation, it will aid the development of mixed tenure communities and help the regeneration of town centres through attracting a resident population.

Just over fifty New Supply Shared Equity units will be completed (in Shortroods and Paisley town centre) between 2011/12 and 2012/13 helping first time buyers gain access to owner occupation. A further 25 units recently completed in Linwood will help existing owners participate in this regeneration scheme.

The exact number and location of new low cost home ownership will be dependent on the availability of grant funding and the potential for new units in forthcoming developments will be examined on a site-by-site basis, taking into account location and existing housing options within the area.

We recognise that those entering home ownership, especially at the lower income levels, need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, particularly around the requirement to fund ongoing maintenance of their properties. Consequently, we will encourage these households to make full use of the advice and support set out in our Scheme of Assistance.

#### **10.3.2 Supporting Home Owners**

Some existing home owners for various reasons such as age, disability, change in employment/relationship status etc, need advice and assistance to move within the sector, make changes to their home or move to a different tenure that provides the most appropriate solution for their circumstances. Previous sections have highlighted the action we will take through the **Scheme of Assistance, Mortgage to Rent Scheme and Renfrewshire Care and Repair. Housing options advices** will include information for older and disabled people highlighting all options, including those that would allow a person to stay in their own home.

**Private Sector Empty Homes** – we will identify how many long term empty private sector homes there are in Renfrewshire and why they are empty. We will identify

those where the owner wishes to bring the property back into use and provide them with advice and assistance about how they may go about this. We will also identify if there are empty homes in areas of affordable housing need that could be brought back into use to meet this need.

## **10.4 Access to the Private Rented sector**

### **10.4.1 Improving Information and communication with tenants, potential tenants and landlords**

Over the last few years, a number of initiatives have been developed to disseminate information and improve links with the private rented sector.

- Website development – dedicated pages addressing private rented matters.
- Guide to Private Renting- informs prospective and current tenants of their rights in relation to housing conditions and management standards.
- Renfrewshire Private Landlord Forum – meets 2-3 times a year.
- Landlord Accreditation Scotland (LAS) – The Council entered into a formal partnership with LAS in October 2009. This initiative will provide training opportunities for local agents and landlords and it will encourage them to endorse the National Core Standards for Private Landlords as set out by the Scottish Government.
- Strengthening working relationships with the University and college accommodation sections.
- Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme – assists households to access private sector housing.

We will continue to develop further information and maintain good links with the private rented sector. This will include encouraging landlords to take part in the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. It is our intention to develop a database for public access of all accredited landlords.

Section 9 on outlined our intention to investigate wider use of the private rented sector as an option for homeless households and those with support needs.

## **10.5 Welfare Reform – Impact on Housing Options**

The U.K Government has embarked on an ambitious programme to reform the current benefits and tax credits system. This programme will introduce the “Universal Credit” to replace a number of different benefits and will place an overall cap on the level of benefit paid. The Government still has to set out full details of the changes, which will be phased in over the next six years. From what we know already, the changes will have a major impact on those currently receiving benefits/tax credits, irrespective of their tenure.

The changes will have implications for the affordability of different housing options, particularly amongst those of working age. Changes include:

- Setting the LHA at the lowest 30<sup>th</sup> percent of local private rents, which has the effect of reducing the number of properties that are affordable to those on housing benefit.
- Up-rating non-dependant deductions in both the private and social rented sector. This could have a significant effect on households where non dependants are low paid or out of work.
- Extending the LHA single room rate from 25 and under to 35 and under in the private rented sector. This change will restrict the use of private sector housing as a housing option for this group, and will restrict the Council's ability to use the private rented sector for discharging the homeless duty.
- Limiting Housing Benefit to Property Size. Housing Benefit will be restricted for working age claimants in the social rented sector who are occupying a larger property than their household requires.

The changes outlined above will require housing providers to assess the impact of these reforms on housing options. Welfare benefits and advice services along with housing providers will need to develop a policy framework for staff training to ensure that customers are correctly advised about the implications of various housing options on their own and their families 'entitlement to benefits. A key action will therefore be to develop ways to deliver welfare advice within the context housing options advice.

### **Key Actions**

1. Further Develop the Housing Options approach within Renfrewshire Council.
2. Expand the Housing Options approach across all social housing providers in Renfrewshire.
3. Develop and implement a new CHR model for Renfrewshire to simplify routes into social rented housing.
4. Evaluate pilot Choice Based Lettings Schemes and identify if these are a appropriate model for more widespread use.
5. Review and further develop the information we provide on housing options.
6. Investigate the potential to further promote movement within the social rented sector.
7. Undertake research to determine if there is a case for establishing "pressured areas".
8. Monitor and review the need for an Affordable Housing Policy.
9. Establish the scale of empty homes in Renfrewshire, and the potential to bring empty homes back into use.
10. Develop a public database of accredited landlords.
11. Identify the likely impact of Welfare Reform on housing options for Renfrewshire residents.
12. Develop ways to deliver housing options advice in light of the planned welfare reform changes.

## Section 11

### Housing Investment Priorities and Resources

#### 11. Delivering the Strategy

Section 4 established our housing supply targets. Sections 5-10 highlighted the key issues across a number of housing and housing support related themes. Actions that the Council and partners will take to address these issues are identified throughout the document and are brought together in Section 13.

Demand for housing services is expected to rise over the next five years. At the same time there are very considerable pressures on the amount of financial and staff resources which the Council and its partners have available to deliver the strategy and resources are likely to be further reduced in the future.

The LHS is a five-year plan and in developing our actions we have tried to strike the right balance between our aspirations for Renfrewshire and our assessment of what realistically is achievable. Nevertheless, the strategy has been prepared in a period of significant financial uncertainty. Public sector bodies face pressure on budgets and need to look at delivering services and outcomes in an ever more efficient way with less public subsidy. We recognise the importance of prioritising preventative measures and working to deliver integrated services as set out in the Christie Commission report.

Developing new affordable housing and progressing identified actions requires a range of financial resources. This section summaries our priorities for investment in affordable housing, the main financial resources available and highlights some of the resource pressures that may affect delivery of some actions.

##### 11.1 Affordable Housing Investment Priorities

Our affordable housing target is 150 new homes per annum<sup>24</sup>. This is a realistic assessment of the amount of affordable housing we can deliver within the next five years, taking into account projects with existing grant approval and those we expect to progress over the next five years. The target is not an upper limit and we will seek to secure sufficient investment to allow the delivery of more affordable homes.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2011/12 to 2015/16 sets out the priorities for affordable housing investment. Based on the issues set out in this LHS and with minor amendments, these priorities still remain valid.

Affordable housing investment priorities to 2016 are therefore to:

<sup>24</sup> Affordable housing includes social rent and any other product that delivers below market cost housing

- Complete local housing regeneration programmes.
- Expand the supply of housing for people with particular needs.
- Support comprehensive tenement improvement in strategically important locations.
- Address shortfall in the areas where there is pressure on the supply of affordable housing.
- Address mismatch between the supply of social rented housing and the housing people need and want to live in (taking account of type, size, quality and location).
- Replace obsolete social rented housing (where major improvement would not be cost effective and/or sustainable) and where there is continued need.
- Enable the development of sustainable mixed communities by including affordable housing in Community Growth Areas and other large new housing developments.

## **11.2 Resources to facilitate new affordable housing**

Prior to 2011/12 affordable housing development was facilitated by an element of Government subsidy through the Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP). Renfrewshire's AHIP allocation in 2008/09 was £12.5m; 2009/10: £14.6m and in 2010/2011: £7.96m.

In early 2011, the Scottish Government introduced major changes to the investment regime for affordable housing by establishing an Innovation and Investment Fund to which housing associations, councils and developers could "bid" for funds for 2011/12. Lower housing association grant subsidy levels now apply (£40,000 unit benchmark) and councils can now apply for grant subsidy at £30,000 per unit. The funding framework for 2012/13 and future years is not yet clear.

These changes make longer term planning very difficult. In addition, changes to the grant level mean some projects will not be viable under traditional funding mechanisms and some housing association partners will be unable to develop at the grant level available.

The changes will require the Council and housing association partners to identify and use new ways of funding affordable housing and to work closely together to promote innovative approaches to development. Initial discussions are taking place with partners on how we can progress this in Renfrewshire. This will be taken forward through the annual Strategic Housing Investment Plan process over the next five years in order to maximise the potential for affordable housing development in Renfrewshire.

The Council was successful in the 2011/12 Innovation and Investment fund in securing funds for a development of 37 Council homes, utilising prudential borrowing in addition to the grant funding. The options for further development of new Council homes using prudential borrowing will be considered taking into account the ability of

the Housing Revenue Account to support this alongside delivery of the SHQS programme of improvement works.

In addition to the actions above, other ways of trying to expand the supply of affordable housing are being progressed through the National Housing Trust and Empty Homes Initiative. While these may only result in a small contribution to the overall supply, it is important in the current financial climate we take advantage of all opportunities available.

- **National Housing Trust**

The Council is participating in a national procurement exercise which could provide up to 40 units of mid market rent housing in Renfrewshire in 2011/12 through the National Housing Trust initiative.

This initiative sees homes built by a developer in partnership with the Council, the Scottish Futures Trust and the Scottish Government, which are made available at below market rents for a period of up to 10 years. Homes are funded by the Council through prudential borrowing (which is underwritten by the Scottish Government) and the developer by an equity stake and loan note. Our assessment of this model is that this could play a small role in increasing the range of affordable housing options in Renfrewshire and would work best to help diversify tenure options and assist in town centre regeneration schemes. The number of units secured (if any) through the NHT model will depend on a national procurement exercise. The Council will work closely with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Futures Trust and developers to bring forward appropriate developments.

The Scottish Government is keen to expand this model of housing for the housing association sector and is currently consulting on how this might be achieved.

- **Empty Homes**

Homes can lie empty for a number of reasons such as the owner has a long hospital stay, they are unable to sell in the current property market or are unable to afford to bring the property into a habitable state.

In partnership with Shelter's Empty Homes Co-ordinator and local housing associations we will undertake further work to establish the number of empty properties in Renfrewshire, why these are empty and the potential to bring empty homes back into use to help meet housing needs.

The SHIP 2011/12 to 2015/16 will be updated early in 2012 and will reflect any further changes in relation to resources available to develop affordable housing.

### **11.3 Private Sector Housing Investment**

Prior to 2009/10, the Council's investment in private housing in Renfrewshire was based on a ring fenced grant from the Scottish Government. From 2009/10 onwards a revised needs based methodology has been utilised as a national guide to resource funding based primarily around the number of houses failing the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. The methodology is being phased in over the 5 years to

2013/14. However from 2010/11 onwards the ring fencing of Private Sector Housing Grant was removed and it is now allocated by the Scottish Government as part of the general local government revenue and capital support. Therefore whilst a revised national allocation methodology is being introduced and forms a guide to private sector investment, it is the responsibility of each local authority to determine the actual level of resources to be provided on an annual basis.

For financial year 2011/12 the Council approved a budget for investment in private sector housing of £2.342m. This is founded on a base programme of £1.688m, plus approved carry forward on delayed comprehensive tenement improvement projects carried out in partnership with local housing associations. The gross budget also reflects savings implemented as part of the Council's 'Transforming Renfrewshire' and 'Planning for the Future' agendas.

The level of resources available from 2012/13 onwards will reflect the Council's overall financial position, with the likelihood that the annual level of resource available to fund the programme will fall below the base programme for 2011/12 and for the foreseeable future thereafter. This will have a significant impact on the Council's ability to meet the various demands for grant support funding to private owners, and will place a greater emphasis on non financial support and advice introduced in April 2010 as part of the Scheme of Assistance.

In terms of private sector grant support the Council's broad investment priorities in future years will be as follows:

- **Assistance to older and disabled owners** through the provision of grants for disabled adaptations, and via the Renfrewshire Care and Repair Initiative.
- **Assistance to owners participating in programmes to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.**
- **Tenement Repair and Improvement Schemes** either in partnership with local housing associations, or with local owners. The Council's ability to promote and support this form of project, which historically has formed the core of the private sector programme, is likely to be increasingly challenged, by the need to secure increasing levels of owner occupier and private sector landlord support to carry out the common works, and the changes recently introduced nationally as part of the process for assessing and approving for Housing Association Grant projects

#### **11.4 Town Centre Heritage Initiative**

In June 2009, Renfrewshire Council secured £1.5million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Paisley Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). In addition to this grant, the Council was awarded £738,000 from Historic Scotland to fund a conservation area regeneration scheme (CARS). The Council and Paisley Vision Board also contribute to the total funding package. Targeted on the Causeyside area of Paisley, this project aims to regenerate the rich historic fabric of the town centre.

A particular dimension of this scheme was the refurbishment of tenement properties in Orchard Street. Changes to the affordable housing investment regime outlined earlier, meant that the cost associated with the tenement rehabilitation would be prohibitive and an application to the Innovation and Investment Fund 2011/12 for this project was unsuccessful. This has necessitated changes to the overall funding package and priorities and a total funding package of £3.4m will be focussed to provide a comprehensive heritage-led regeneration of the town centre. The Council and Paisley South Housing Association will work together with the Scottish Government to determine the best way to facilitate the rehabilitation of the identified tenement properties in this area.

### **11.5 The Change Fund**

In 2011, the Scottish Government established a national allocation of £70m to a Change Fund to enable health and social care partners to implement local plans for making better use of their combined resources for older people's services. The aim of the fund is to facilitate shifts in the balance of care from institutional to primary and community settings.

Ensuring that suitable housing and housing support services are available is essential to achieving this aim.

Renfrewshire's allocation for 2011/12 is £2m and the change plan details how this will be spent across a range of health and social care services. The national Change Fund will continue on an annual basis until 2014/15.

### **11.6 Housing Support and Supported Housing**

In addition to the resources required to fund investment for affordable housing, funding is also required for the provision of supported housing which includes sheltered housing and interim supported accommodation for homeless households. The Council also provides housing support services to residents in their mainstream tenancies. These services cost the Council in the region of £1.5m each year. Partners will work together to maximise efficiencies and to respond effectively to an anticipated increase in need for housing support services.

### **11.7 Other funding streams**

The Council and partners have accessed various other funding streams to facilitate ongoing work and to progress new initiatives. Examples include; Climate Change Challenge Fund, Community Energy Savings Programme, Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) funding the Universal Home Insulation Scheme funding and Wider Role Funding. Not all of these will continue over the lifetime of the LHS. Some will be replaced (for example the Green Deal will replace some of the energy schemes) while others such as Wider Role Funding are not expected to be replaced. At the same time, new sources of funding are regularly announced such as the New House Building Infrastructure Loan Board, announced by the Scottish Government in September 2011. The Council and partners will seek to take advantage of new funding streams that will help deliver our outcomes and will think creatively about how such funding can be used to help drive forward our plans.

## **Section 12**

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

## **12 Introduction**

This section summarises our approach to monitoring and evaluating our progress in achieving the outcomes set out in the LHS.

### **12.1 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Each outcome has a number of actions that will be delivered by a combination of the Council, partners and voluntary organisations. These are summarised at the end of each Section and brought together in Section 13. Indicators and targets set out in the outcome templates in this section will tell us if we are on track to meet our desired outcomes.

The Housing Information Partnership, consisting of representatives from Renfrewshire Council Housing and Property Services, Planning and Transport, Social Work, Environmental Services health, local and national housing associations and the voluntary sector will continue to meet to monitor performance in relation to this strategy.

Annually we will produce an LHS update, setting out key achievements, progress against actions and progress in meeting targets. If progress is not as planned, we will examine why this is the case and adjust actions where necessary.

The economic and policy context and the availability of resources will continue to be subject to change over the next five years. The LHS update will report on any significant developments that require us to change our approach or that will affect our ability to deliver actions.

### **12.2 Reporting**

The LHS update will be reported to the Council's Housing and Community Safety Board annually and placed on the Council's website. Progress on the LHS is also reported through the Community Planning Partnership.

## **Local Housing Strategy Outcomes**

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data type/frequency/source	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 1</b> <b>Residents live in good quality housing.</b>	Number of households provided with advice/assistance	Scheme of Assistance. Includes grants, advice & assistance (excluding Care & Repair and information to private landlords), co-ordination of mixed tenure common works.	2,200 per annum  (Owner Services Feb 2011)	5% increase per annum	Annually
	% of dwellings with any urgent disrepair	Scottish House Condition Survey: local authority report	41% (SCHCS 2007-09)	4% decrease per annum	Annually
	Number of households receiving advice through Care & Repair	Care & Repair statistical return	373 (2010/11)	250 per annum	Annually
	Number of Small Repairs completed through Care & Repair	Care & Repair statistical return	1,749 (2010/11)	1,600 per annum	Annually
	Number of landlords registered	RC records	3,705 (at March 2011)	Indicator only	Annually
	Number of properties owned/managed by accredited landlords/agents	RC Housing and Property Services	500 (April 2011)	5% increase per annum	Annually
	SHQS compliance rates	RC Investment Strategy  Scottish Housing Regulator Annual Performance & Statistical Return 2009/10	2.78% (2010/11)  80% (Housing associations in Renfrewshire average 2009/10)	100%  100%	2015  2015

	Reduction in SHQS Elemental failures in Council stock	RC records	83,032 elemental failures (2010/11)	58,930	2012
	Number of owner occupied homes in mixed tenure blocks covered by pilot RC property factoring service	RC records	35 blocks (2011)	10% increase per annum	Annually

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/source	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 2</b>  <b>Homes are energy efficient, fuel poverty is minimised and the environmental impact of housing is reduced.</b>	% of Renfrewshire residents living in fuel poverty	Yearly; Scottish House Condition Survey	21% (7% below Scottish average) (2007-2009 SHCS report)	5% below Scottish average	2016
	Number of referrals received by the local Energy Savings Scotland advice centre (ESSac) from Renfrewshire residents	Yearly/Energy Savings Scotland advice centre	2,541 (2010/11 as at mid March 2011)	3,000	2012
	Average National Home Energy Rating	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	6.6 (2007-2009 SHCS)	0.2% increase year on year	Annually
	Percentage of private homes with an NHER rating 6-10	Annual/Scottish House Condition Survey	74% (2007-09 SHCS report)	4% increase year on year	Annually
	% of Council housing stock which is energy efficient	Annual/Council records	45 % (2011)	56%	2012
	Number of projects using renewable technology in social rented homes	Councils/Housing associations	1	1pa	2012
	Reduction of carbon emissions from domestic stock	Council records	3.83 tonnes CO2 per capita from housing baseline (2008)  2.87% reduction 2010/11	1.5% reduction pa	Annually

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/source	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 3</b>  <b>Regeneration programmes are progressed to create stable mixed communities that are attractive places to live.</b>	Number of new affordable homes	Annual/local authority and Scottish Government	Av. 210 pa (2004/05 - 2010/11)	150 pa	Annually
	Number of new private sector homes completed in regeneration areas	Annual/local authority	Av. 33pa (2004-2009/10) (LHS update 2010)	Data only indicator	2016
	Demolitions of obsolete social rented stock	Annual/local authority/Housing associations	Av. 383 pa Total = 3831 (01/02 – 10/11) (LHS update 2010 and demolitions report 2011)	Data only indicator	2014
	% of Council stock classed as low demand	Council records	18% (2010/11)	Data only indicator	Annually
	Turnover rate of social rented stock	Annual/Council and Housing associations	Council – 11.9% (2010/11) 5 Local Housing associations – 11% in 2009/10	Data only indicator	Annually
	Tenancies sustained for more than 12 months	Annual/Council records	Council 85% 2009/10	85%	2012
	% of Council tenants very satisfied or satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live in	2 yearly/Council	76% in 2009	2% increase per biennial survey	2012
	% of housing association tenants satisfied	<i>FLAIR</i>	tbc	tbc	

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/source	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 4</b>  <b>People are able to live independently in suitable housing with appropriate support.</b>	Number of social rented housing properties adapted for people with a physical disability	Annual RC/RSL Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator returns	2,079 (2010/11)	Data only indicator	Annually
	Number of adaptations carried out in Council properties	Annual/Council records	434 (2010/11)	Data only indicator	Annually
	Number of Private Sector Housing Grants awarded to disabled tenants to adapt private homes	Annual/Council records	94 (2010/11)	Data only indicator	Annually
	Number of adaptations carried out in local housing association properties	Annual/Scottish Government	tbc	Data only indicator	Annually
	Number of households accessing housing support service	Council Monitoring Records	Support 364 Financial 521 (2010)	5% increase annually	Annually
	Number of new affordable homes for particular needs	Council/Scottish Government records	Average 63 per annum (2004/05-2010/11) Total 443	Data only indicator	Annually

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/source	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 5</b>  <b>Homelessness is prevented where possible and the services meet the needs of people who become homeless.</b>	% of all social rented lets to homeless households	Council records  Council and RSL records	35% (2010/11)  26% (2010/11)	45% pa  In line with Council	2012
	% of repeat homeless presentations within 12 month period	Annual monitoring report HL1 and HL2	8.2% (2010/11)	tbc	
	Homelessness: Proportion of those provided with permanent Council accommodation who maintain their tenancy for at least 12 months	Council records	77% (2009/10)	78%	2012
	% of homeless /potentially homeless households assessed as having a priority need	Annual monitoring report HL1 and HL2	98% (2010/11)	100%	2012
	% of Section 11 referrals who engage with prevention service	Council AVD monitoring reports	12%	5% increase pa	March 2012
	Number of Council furnished tenancies	Council monitoring report	0 (April 2011)	100	2012
	% of Council furnished tenancies sustained for more than 2 years	Council monitoring report	Baseline available 2013/14	60%	2013/14

Local Housing Strategy Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data type/frequency/source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
<b>Strategic Outcome 6</b>  <b>A range of housing options are available, routes into housing are simplified and people have access to good quality information and advice.</b>	CHR developed	Council/Housing associations	10% complete (2011)	100%	December 2013
	RC Housing Options Approach developed	Council records	30% complete (2011)	100%	2012
	Housing Options Approach implemented across all social housing providers	Council and housing association records	10% complete (2011)	100%	December 2013
	Numbers accessing Private Rented Sector through Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Service	Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme records	69 (2010)	2% increase annually	Annually
	Number of Mortgage to Rent applications accepted	Council Records RSL records	7 (since start of scheme) 28 (since start of scheme)	Indicator only	Annually

**Section 13  
Action Plan**

**Outcome 1  
Residents Live in Good Quality Housing**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.1	Investigate alternative ways to progress tenement improvement programmes.	Renfrewshire Council, Scottish Government, housing associations	2013
1.2	Promote the Scheme of Assistance to support owners to maintain their properties.	Housing Investment Manager, RC	ongoing
1.3	Review the Scheme of Assistance, including financing arrangements, by 2015.	Housing Investment Manager, RC	2015
1.4	Prioritise grant assistance for disabled adaptations.	Housing Investment Manager, RC	Ongoing
1.5	Complete implementation of the SHQS investment in Council and housing association stock by 2015.	Housing Investment Manager, RC and all Housing Associations	2015
1.6	Provide assistance, including grant assistance where appropriate, to secure owners cooperation in SHQS investment programmes.	Housing Investment Manager, RC	Ongoing
1.7	Evaluate the pilot property management (factoring) service and, dependent on findings, extend the service throughout Renfrewshire.	Housing Investment Manager, RC	2012
1.8	Promote the Landlord Accreditation Scheme through the Private Landlords Forum.	Property Manager, RC	Ongoing

<b>1.9</b>	Undertake private rented tenants' survey to gain a better understanding of private sector issues.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2012
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## Outcome 2

**Homes are energy efficient, fuel poverty is minimised and the environmental impact of housing is reduced.**

Number	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
2.1	Work in partnership with the local Energy Advice Scotland advice centre to promote energy saving and the Scottish Government's Energy Assistance Package.	Fuel Poverty Steering Group	ongoing
2.2	Promote the use of micro renewable technology amongst private householders.	Energy Manager, RC and Energy Savings Scotland advice centre.	ongoing
2.3	Pilot the use of renewable technology in suitable existing Council stock.	Corporate Asset/Energy Manager/Housing Investment Manager, RC	2013
2.4	Identify opportunities and sources of funding for the use and generation of renewable energy/heat in Renfrewshire.	Corporate Asset/Energy Manager, RC	ongoing
2.5	Quantify the reduction in carbon emissions from energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock in Renfrewshire.	Corporate Asset/Energy Manager, RC	annually
2.6	Ensure the Local Development Plan considers sustainability issues as a high priority.	Policy and Regeneration Manager, RC	2014

### Outcome 3

Regeneration programmes are progressed to create stable mixed communities that are attractive places to live.

Number	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
3.1	Update the SHIP each year and progress affordable housing projects as detailed in the SHIP and in line with identified needs.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2012
3.2	Develop ways of encouraging private developers to build housing in regeneration areas and other key brownfield sites.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Principal Estates Surveyor, Policy and Regeneration Manager, RC	2015
3.3	Develop and implement detailed plans for the implementation of the ADF for Paisley West End.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Policy and Regeneration Manager, RC	2015
3.4	Improve the monitoring and sharing of localised housing information between partners and develop joined up approaches across services to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC, Housing Associations	2014
3.5	The Council and housing associations will continue with initiatives to enhance neighbourhood housing services and support households in disadvantaged areas	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC, Housing Associations	ongoing
3.6	Work with partners to develop housing projects which would increase the number of people living in town centres.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Policy and Regeneration Manager, RC	2015
3.7	Review options to deliver the tenement improvement project at Orchard Street/ Causeyside Street.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC, Housing associations, Scottish Government	2012

3.8	Develop and implement a masterplan for the South West Johnstone Community Growth area, including provision for some limited new affordable housing.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Principal Estates Surveyor, Policy and Regeneration Manager, RC	2016
3.8	Maximise opportunities for new affordable housing in the Bishopton Community Growth area.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2013

### Outcome 4

People are able to live independently in suitable housing with appropriate support.

Number	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
4.1	Complete the conversion of the Council multi-storey flats in Gallowhill to amenity standard and implement local letting initiative to allocate them.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2013
4.2	Review the Extra Care model of housing to establish effectiveness of this model to enable future planning.	Social Work, Housing and Housing Associations	2015
4.3	Complete the Council new build development of 15 grouped amenity homes in Paisley		
4.4	Review the need/options for housing support for older people in the grouped amenity high rise blocks		
4.5	Explore approaches to address existing unpopular sheltered housing complexes.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC and housing associations	2015
4.6	Investigate ways to provide new supply shared equity housing (or other low cost home ownership options) for older owners.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2015
4.7	Work with partners to develop options for the future of Wallace Court.	Social Work and Housing	2012
4.8	Implement the Change Fund initiatives planned for 2011/12 and work with partners to identify and implement further opportunities for future years.		
4.9	Participate in the Scottish Accessible Housing Register pilot and determine the	Housing Strategy	2013

	scope for extending this to private sector housing.	Manager, RC	
<b>4.10</b>	Establish a multi-agency working group to develop a better understanding of housing and support requirements of people with mental health and or addiction issues.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC, Renfrewshire Community Health Partnership, Social Work, RC	2012
<b>4.11</b>	Complete the development of 10 units of Supported Accommodation for young people.	Loretto Housing Association	2013/2014
<b>4.12</b>	Complete the review of the Council's housing support service.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	2012
<b>4.13</b>	Further develop monitoring systems to record outcomes for households who have received housing support services.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2012
<b>4.14</b>	In conjunction with neighbouring local authorities, monitor the requirements of the Gypsy Traveller community.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	ongoing

### Outcome 5

Homelessness is prevented where possible and services meet the needs of people who become homeless.

Number	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
5.1	Review the temporary accommodation strategy taking into account the impact of Welfare Reform.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2013
5.2	Improve the framework to record and monitor the impact of homelessness prevention activities.	Homeless & Community Services Manager, RC	2013
5.3	Establish systems between Council departments and agencies to identify and track vulnerable households.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2013
5.4	Develop “early warning indicator triggers” that will help alert services to a potentially homeless household.	Renfrewshire Homelessness Partnership	2012
5.5	Ensure homeless households have effective access to permanent accommodation in the Council and housing association sectors.	Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, RC and housing associations	ongoing
5.6	Investigate the potential of the private rented sector to meet the needs of homeless applicants.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2013
5.7	Increase the use of Renfrewshire Deposit Guarantee Scheme to help households access the private rented sector.	Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, RC	ongoing
5.8	Develop monitoring and recording systems to better identify reasons for tenancy failure.	Housing Services Manager, Housing Strategy and	2012

		Development Manager, RC	
<b>5.9</b>	Review furnished tenancy pilot and establish if it is appropriate to continue/extend.	Housing Strategy Manager, RC	2013
<b>5.10</b>	Develop programmes to enable young people to acquire the skills necessary to manage a home.	Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, Housing Strategy Manager, RC	ongoing
<b>5.11</b>	Ensure homeless households have effective access to permanent accommodation in the Council and housing association sectors.	Housing Strategy Manager	ongoing

### Outcome 6

A range of housing options are available, routes into suitable housing are simplified and people have access to good quality information and advice

Number	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
6.1	Further Develop a Housing Options approach within Renfrewshire Council.	Housing Strategy Manager RC, Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, RC,	2012
6.2	Expand the Housing Options approach across all social housing providers in Renfrewshire.	Housing Strategy Manager RC, Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, RC,	2013
6.3	Develop and implement a new CHR model for Renfrewshire to simplify routes into social rented housing.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC, housing associations	2013
6.4	Evaluate pilot Choice Based Lettings Schemes and identify if these are a appropriate model for more widespread use.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2015
6.5	Review and further develop information we provide on housing options.	Renfrewshire Council and housing associations	2012
6.6	Investigate the potential to further promote movement within the social rented sector.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC and	ongoing

		housing associations	
<b>6.7</b>	Undertake research to determine if there is a case for establishing “pressured areas”.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC and housing associations	2012
<b>6.8</b>	Monitor and review the need for an Affordable Housing Policy.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2015
<b>6.9</b>	Establish scale of empty homes in Renfrewshire, and the potential to bring empty homes back into use.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager, RC	2012
<b>6.10</b>	Develop a public database of accredited landlords.	Property Manager	2012
<b>6.11</b>	Identify the likely impact of Welfare Reform on housing options for Renfrewshire residents.	Renfrewshire Council, housing associations, DWP	2013
<b>6.12</b>	Develop ways to deliver housing options advice in light of the planned welfare reform changes.	Housing Strategy Manager RC, Housing Advice & Homeless Services Manager, RC, housing associations	2012

## Appendix 1 LHS Development and Consultation Activities

### Developing the LHS

Four themed short life working groups consisting of appropriate Council and partner organisation's staff were established in 2010 to examine key housing and housing related issues. The working groups prepared "issues papers" on the main issues and potential actions.

Following this, three public consultation/workshop events were held Paisley Town Hall in June 2010 attended by representatives from community groups, community planning partners and members of the public. Results from this event suggested our working groups had identified appropriate issues, and helped to inform actions we needed to take.

Work continued on the Housing Need and Demand Assessment in conjunction with seven other local authorities over the period 2009 - June 2011. The draft HNDA was issued for public consultation in January 2011 and finalised in May 2011.

A draft LHS was submitted to the Housing and Community Safety Board in April 2011 and formal consultation took place from April to mid July 2011. Consultation activities during this period included:

- The draft Strategy was placed on the Council's website [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk) with a survey monkey questionnaire, enabling the public to provide feedback online.
- A copy of the Strategy and questionnaire was sent to all registered Tenants and Residents Groups, community councils and partner organisations.
- Council officers gave presentations to Renfrewshire's five local area committees on the draft strategy and ways to make their views known.
- A meeting was held with all social housing providers in Renfrewshire to discuss the draft. They were all also invited to make formal feedback/comments.
- A public consultation half day event was held in June 2011. This consisted of a short presentation followed by workshops based on the six key outcomes in the draft strategy. The event was attended by just over 40 people with a range of interests from members of the public, private landlords, Homes for Scotland and staff from other Council departments.

### Consultation Feedback

In addition to the consultation event and informal comments at meetings, a total of 24 written responses were received. Below is a summary of key points raised through consultation which we have tried to address in the final version:

#### General

- Good comprehensive document.
- Over optimistic view on employment and economic activity.
- Very well thought out.
- Will need lots of resources.
- Very informative and well researched report.

- Reads like a Council document.
- The information included in the document is especially comprehensive and very useful in setting development targets in context.
- Does not reflect the current situation in relation to the changing financial climate and the uncertainty around this and how this impacts on our ability to deliver.
- Needs to reflect changes around the Welfare Reform and how this all impacts on regeneration etc.
- The outcomes sought with the Draft Strategy are clear and achievable.
- Outcomes are only aspirations.

We specifically asked if readers would prefer some of the detail taken out and placed in a separate appendix. Most people said no, however some people reported they did not understand all the graphs and figures. Therefore we have kept the detail in but tried to simplify the way it is presented. We will also prepare a short summary version.

### **Summary of comments relating to each proposed outcome**

#### **Outcome 1 Residents live in good quality housing**

- People need to be more aware of their responsibilities as home owners e.g. in relation to maintenance.
- Lack of confidence in factors – could “Care and Repair” or the Council become factors? If not, what about accreditation for factors?
- Issue of poor quality housing exists in rural areas as well as urban areas.
- Equity release schemes do not currently represent good value for money but if there was a national scheme people could use this to improve their properties.
- Tighten up landlord registration.
- Educate landlords on their roles and responsibilities- many become landlords reluctantly because they can’t sell.
- Provide more support and education to young people gaining new tenancies.
- Homes in owner occupation are falling into a state of disrepair, reluctance of older age group to take out loan.
- Consider targeting students with energy advice.

#### **Outcome 2 Homes are energy efficient, fuel poverty is minimised and the environmental impact of housing is reduced**

- Provide education about how to reduce energy bills/usage.
- Ensure new build properties are more energy efficient.
- Work with University to promote alternative ways of insulating older properties.
- Renewable technologies may not be financially achievable in terms of return and sustainability savings. Offer incentives to become more energy efficient.

### **Outcome 3 People are able to live independently in suitable housing with appropriate support**

- What happens to cared for adults, with their particular needs, when their parents are no longer able to support.
- Not enough information sharing across services.
- Redevelop complete tenement flats for clients with specific needs.
- Struggle to match previously adapted properties to clients needs.
- Owners should use equity to fund adaptations.
- Disabled adaptations need to be a priority for all in need of them – but it will be hard to find the money.
- Look at different models to provide housing and care for elderly e.g. provide health and social care in complexes.
- Provide low level service provision focussed on befriending as social isolation is counter-productive to all other forms of care provided – volunteer sector should be seen as strong partners in this.

### **Outcome 4 Homelessness is prevented where possible and services meet the needs of people who become homeless**

- Concerns over welfare benefit reform.
- Client group of people who will never be able to sustain a tenancy.
- Need to deal with social problems – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of non working households. Tap into education to stop this trend.
- Deal with cases before they become crisis. Share information to prevent people having to present as homeless.
- Develop stronger links with student support services in Renfrewshire.
- Raise awareness amongst health visitors, CPNs other health and social care professionals of “homelessness triggers”.

### **Outcome 5 Regeneration programmes are progresses to create stable mixed communities that are attractive places to live**

- Paisley West End requires totally different approach – housing led regeneration will not work - need community led type initiatives. Need to consider what the community wants. Use empty shops for various initiatives.
- Villages also need to be considered as well as town centre regeneration.
- Need strategies to link together – its not just about housing. What about health/social impact.
- More open consultation required with affected towns and villages.
- What is going to happen to town centre projects aimed at regenerating old mixed tenure tenements given changes to affordable housing funding regime.
- Put plans into place – don't delay.

**Outcome 6 A range of housing options are available, routes into suitable housing are simplified and people have access to good quality information and advice**

- Mid market rent needs to be considered as a housing option – particularly for the transient working population.
- Local lettings initiatives are must as housing option – these should be considered as part regeneration strategies.
- Health and social impact need to be considered as part of any regeneration strategy.
- Private landlords should be consulted to scope out the provision of different models of tenure. Public private linkage is key to this type of initiative to work. Concern about security of tenure in the private sector.
- Clearer understandings of what options are actually available needs to be portrayed.
- Consultation with elderly residents and those under-occupying their home to determine what type and model of housing the elderly actually want and what would make someone who is under occupying consider moving.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Glossary of Terms**

Affordable housing	Broadly defined as housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes
Affordable Housing Investment Programme	A programme managed by the Scottish Government's Housing Investment Division used to provide grants to registered social landlords to build new homes for rent and low-cost home ownership
Amenity housing	Similar to Sheltered Housing, and incorporating many of the design features usually associated with that kind of housing, but without any communal facilities or warden service
Below Tolerable Standard	A term used to describe properties which fail to meet the basic minimum housing standard
Carbon Footprint	The total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> )
Carbon emissions	Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide in the atmosphere, produced by vehicles and industrial processes
Choice based lettings	Vacant properties are publicly advertised and applicants are invited to notify an interest in particular properties
Common Housing Register	A single housing list for social landlords in Renfrewshire
Extra Care Housing	This is very sheltered housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind with varying levels of care and support available on site
Fuel Poverty	A household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, it would be required to spend more than 10% of its income (including Housing Benefit) on all household fuel use
Greenhouse Gases	Gases in the atmosphere that are the fundamental caused of global warming. The primary greenhouse cases are carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and ozone
House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	Property where a number of households share basic amenities(e.g. kitchen or bathroom facilities)
Housing Association	A not-for-profit company registered by the Scottish Government to provide social housing. Also known as "Registered Social Landlord"

Housing Association Grant	Funding from the Scottish Government which supports housing associations to develop new housing
Housing Land Audit	Annually revised document which provides details of all housing sites in Renfrewshire
Housing Need and Demand Assessment	An exercise that seeks to identify the balance between housing supply and demand, the scale of need for affordable housing and the demand for market housing, and the extent to which affordability is an issue
Local Plan	This document sets out the local authority's policies and proposals for land use and development, to assist in the evaluation of planning applications
Main Issues Report	A document that highlights key changes from previous plans and which highlight the Strategic Development Planning Authority's vision for future development. An engagement and consultation document, it helps set the direction of the final Strategic Development Plan
Median	The middle value of an ordered set of values
Mixed Tenure	A combination of different types of property holding (e.g. social rented housing and owner occupied housing are different 'tenures')
Private Sector Housing Grant	Grant assistance from local authorities to the owners of properties in need of improvement or repair
Strategic Development Plan	A document used to explain the Strategic Development Planning Authority's overall vision for the long-term and the development strategy needed to deliver that vision.
Scottish Housing Quality	A standard of housing which social housing should comply with by 2015
Sheltered Housing	Housing designed to meet the needs of elderly people or other groups with special housing needs. Some form of communal social area and a warden service is usually included
Single Outcome Agreement	Agreements between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships which set out how each will work towards improving outcomes for local people within the context of the Government's National Outcomes and Purpose
Social housing	Housing provided for let by a local authority or housing association
Supported accommodation	Housing for client groups requiring additional management support (e.g. people with learning difficulties, young people at risk)
Tolerable Standard	A term used to describe properties which

	meet the basic minimum housing standard
Under occupation	A property which is too big for the needs of the family who live there
Very Sheltered Housing	Very sheltered has the same features as sheltered housing and it offers extra support to residents, including at least one main meal a day, additional warden cover, and special bathroom facilities

## Appendix 3

### Supporting Documentation for Local Housing Strategy

- [Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/HP-KW-HomelessnessStrategy>

- [Fuel Poverty Strategy 2010](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/hp-kp-fuel-poverty-strategy>

- [Paisley West End ADF](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/pt-lc-PaisleyWest+End>

- [Anti-Poverty Strategy 2009-2011](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/ce-gm-Anti-Poverty-Strategy>

- [Renfrewshire Addiction Strategy 2008-2011](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/sw-mc-Renfrewshire-Addiction-Strategy>

- [“Supporting People to Have Equality in Life Choices and Opportunities” A Joint Strategy for People with Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment 2009-2014](#)

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/sw-mc-PhysicalSensoryStrategy>

- [Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016 Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\) Database](#)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/SustainableDevelopment/14587/SEAG>

- [Housing Need and Demand Assessment – Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority](#)

[http://www.gcvsdpa.gov.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=39:housing-needs-and-demands-assessment&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=8](http://www.gcvsdpa.gov.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=39:housing-needs-and-demands-assessment&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=8)

## **Appendix 4      Contacting the Council about the LHS**

**If you would like to speak to anyone in the Housing Strategy Team, please contact us at:**

Housing Strategy and Development Team  
Housing and Property Services  
Renfrewshire Council  
Cotton Street  
Paisley  
PA1 1JD

Email: [HousingStrategyQuality.hps@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:HousingStrategyQuality.hps@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

Phone: 0141 840 3602